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OPPORTUNITIES  
AND CHALLENGES  
OF 'WAR  
ETHNOGRAPHY':  
ANTHROPOLOGICAL  
ENGAGEMENT IN THE  
AFRICAN GREAT  
LAKES REGION

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# Opportunities and Challenges of ‘War Ethnography’: anthropological engagement in the African Great Lakes region<sup>1</sup>

*John M. Janzen*<sup>2</sup>

## **Abstract**

This paper on ‘war ethnography’ derives from the author’s 1994–95 participation in one of 150 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working under the auspices of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in the post-genocide Great Lakes region – Rwanda, Burundi, and South Kivu of the Democratic Republic of Congo (then Zaire) – as an anthropologist to “listen, analyze, and offer philosophical reflections of what happened.” Alongside an account of the settings of this engagement, the paper examines the sources and applications of anthropological expertise acquired during relief and mediation fieldwork; contextualizing the narratives collected in terms of community settings and events; balancing the ‘ethnographic imperative’ of informants’ desire to tell their story with full identification, vs. preserving their anonymity along the lines of academic and human rights protocols, while determining rights violations and protecting subjects from revenge attacks; reading the emotional register of the narratives – an indicator of trauma; explicating the ethical dilemmas and standards for anthropology in conflict situations; assessing ownership and control of expert knowledge; and offering recommendations to young anthropologists/ workers with NGOs in conflict situations.

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<sup>1</sup> An earlier version of this paper was presented to the Joint Colloquium of Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology and the Institute for Social and Cultural Anthropology of the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg (winter semester 2014/15) on the theme ‘Anthropology and Consultancy: expert knowledge in the service of decision-making. Lessons from practice’ I wish to thank Marie-Claire Foblets for inviting me to develop my retrospective thoughts and to share them with the Colloquium. I also thank Norman Schräpel for an outstanding discussion of my paper and presentation. Several of his remarks are incorporated into this revised paper. I also want to thank Marie-Claire Foblets and Christian Laheij for their comments on an earlier version of the paper.

I also wish to acknowledge the cordial accommodation afforded me by the Research Group ‘Law, Organisation, Science and Technology’ headed by Richard Rottenburg of the University of Halle-Wittenberg, where I was a guest researcher from October to December, 2014

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## Prologue on Anthropological Expertise

The conjuncture of anthropology and consultancy appeared in high relief during my work with a non-governmental organization in the African Great Lakes region following the Rwandan war and genocide of 1994–1995. What I call ‘war ethnography’<sup>3</sup> came to include questions of appropriate methodologies of information gathering in such war settings, the power of individual stories, the need to contextualize such stories, ethical and moral concerns having to do with the control of individual and collective identities, and uses of knowledge gleaned and expertise gained. These are questions and issues that echo anthropological theory and doing of ethnography in general, and the applications of such knowledge and expertise to a range of academic and non-academic settings, including policy debates.

Looking back at this experience twenty years later, it is apparent that at some point I become an ‘expert’ with ‘expertise’ that others sought to gain from having me ‘consult’ with them. As an academic anthropologist, I began to use the Great Lakes narratives, photos, and stories in my teaching. Invitations to lecture to academic and non-academic audiences seemed more like a request to talk about having ‘been there’, with the opportunity to make sense of shreds and patches of impressions. From 1995 through 2005, Reinhild Kauenhoven Janzen and I gave over 40 such presentations. Some of these presentations turned into publications. I now also realize that this experience at the beginning of my decade of directing the African Studies Center at the University of Kansas tempered my leadership. Cumulative knowledge flowing from this experience continues right up to the present, with requests for lectures and specialized writing.

The three most common queries to me by expertise-seeking agencies are these: (1) Jurists and courts dealing with asylum cases from the Great Lakes and eastern Congo wanted to know whether the applicants’ lives would be endangered were they to be repatriated to their home regions. (2) The policy-makers at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other governmental settings wished to know how to improve the ‘resiliency’ of Burundi society, and lessen its ‘fragility’. (3) Peace Section researchers with the Mennonite Central Committee were studying how to intervene as Peace Church relief and mediation workers in violent situations, including state-sponsored violence; whether they should endorse or work with international police actions such as the UN and African Union. These applications of expertise will be discussed more fully later in this paper.

## Core Insights

Through many lectures, course segments, focused publications, and expert testimonials over a period of twenty years, a more focused understanding has emerged of what might be the ‘expertise’ I had acquired and could claim. I propose four ‘insights’ in the 1994–1995 experience.

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<sup>3</sup> Use of the term ‘war’ has been contested in connection with the 1994 events in Rwanda. Rwandan professor Pierre Ndilikilikisha (personal communications, 1999) argues that there was very little direct combat between the two armies (the old Rwandan Armed Forces, and the Rwandan Patriotic Army). Several authors have used the generic term ‘conflict’ (Prunier 1995; Faulkingham and Goheen 1998 in a special issue of *African Studies Review*), many others have stressed ‘genocide’. We understand the term ‘war’ in a more general sense as “a state of open hostility or competition between opposing forces or for a particular end” (*Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* 1989) which permits us to include ‘low-grade warfare’ in Burundi and the entire region, as well as the term ‘genocide’ defined by the United Nations as a special circumstance within war in which the elimination is attempted of an entire people or category of society.

- Differential violence in a war or major societal conflict leads to differential trauma in individuals, yielding a range of emotional-moral profiles (e.g. ‘perpetrator’, ‘victim’, ‘unwilling participant’, ‘risking life to act on one’s conscience’, etc.) and sequels (‘seeking vengeance’, ‘preventive further killing of witnesses’, ‘forgiveness’, ‘memory’, etc.);
- Individuals, communities, and agencies work with these profiles and sequels – spontaneously with traditional concepts (e.g. confrontational forgiveness, seeking vengeance), or more deliberately through institutionalized judicial actions and commemorations;
- Comparative contextualization of locales and their experiences or initiatives establish a broader picture of the society, and the points where it fractured in the breakdown of justice, mass killings, and ethnic cleansing, or where it held together;
- Insight into causes of polarization and avenues to restoration of civility; interpretation of the evidence, picking up the threads of restitution and reconciliation: explicating verbal concepts and actions; identifying judicial procedures; methods of conflict mediation, both customary and those fostered by professional mediators.

In the following pages I will return to the settings in which we worked and offer background that provided the impetus for these insights, enhancing them in terms of relevant social theories.

### **Listening, Providing Analysis, and Philosophical Reflections**

Reinhild Kauenhoven Janzen and I became involved in the aftermath of Great Lakes war when we responded to this ad in August 1994: “Urgently Needed: French-speaking volunteers with excellent relational and organizational skills to spend three months in eastern Zaire<sup>4</sup> working among Rwandan refugees (...).” (Mennonite Weekly Review 1994) In October 1994, we negotiated a ‘between semesters’ term from mid-November 1994 until late January 1995. We joined the massive action by over 150 international semi-governmental, non-governmental, and religious agencies that provided airlifts of blankets, medicines, food, and shelter to the refugees and displaced in Rwanda, Burundi, eastern Zaire, and Tanzania following the catastrophes there 1993–1994. Relief work in the entire region was coordinated by the UNHCR. Some of the larger and better known agencies included the International Red Cross, which dealt with the unaccompanied children, the Red Crescent, Oxford Famine Relief (OXFAM), Cooperative for Assistance & Relief Everywhere (CARE), as well as Church World Service, World Vision, and the international agencies of Islam, Buddhism, Bahai, Sikhism, and other faiths.

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<sup>4</sup> Zaire and Congo will be used interchangeably in this essay, depending on which historic moment is being described. Readers should know that the sequence of names of the large Congo Basin country is: Congo Free State, Belgian Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Republic of Zaire, and again DRC. To add to the proliferation of similar terms, the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) is the country north of the DRC. Kongo refers to the ethnic region of the BaKongo in northern Angola, western DRC, and western Republic of Congo.



Rwanda, Burundi, and surrounding countries. Dotted line at top shows approximate extent of incursion of Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) from Uganda in 1990; arrows show paths of flight of Rwandans in the 1994 war, as first a few Tutsi and moderate Hutu fled the genocide, and later militant Hutu and many civilians as the RPF began its armed take-over of the country from the north. The 'Zone Turquoise' in southwestern Rwanda was a protective area created by the French military in July 1994 for fleeing government troops, the militia, and civilians. Names in the box near Bukavu are those of the refugee camps in which the author worked (map by author; previously published in Janzen and Janzen [2000: 7]).

The organization with which we worked was the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), a 90 year old umbrella organization sponsored by all Mennonite and Brethren in Christ groups of North America with approximately 1,000 workers around the world.<sup>5</sup> MCC responded to the Congolese Mennonites' wish to assist the eastern Congolese communities overwhelmed by refugees.

A task-force of Congolese Mennonites and MCC representatives visited Bukavu early on in the crisis, and determined to work with several local communities through the Zairian Council of Churches, with the collaboration of CARE. Harold Otto from Central Illinois, a veteran of MCC work in western Zaire, and a graduate of the Kennedy School of International Affairs at Harvard University, directed the MCC effort in the Great Lakes region. The international team we were part of included several Congolese pastors, a Congolese businessman, a Congolese social worker, an American nurse, a French pastor, and an Ethiopian journalist.

MCC's response to the crisis in Rwanda and Burundi had several parts: firstly, material aid in the immediate aftermath of the war, in the refugee-flooded communities southwest of Bukavu and garden seed distribution in communities inside Rwanda; secondly, peace education and reconciliation. In Burundi, through the Burundian Quakers, material support was distributed in the form of lentils from the Canadian Food Bank, apportioned equally to both sides of the simmering low-grade war in the conflict-stressed locale of Kibimba. MCC work on peace education concentrated in Bukavu; MCC also provided a 'peace presence' in specified settings and among groups of individuals on both sides of the conflict.

Although we – Reinhild and I – participated in the food and material aid distributions in the camps, very quickly we were introduced to a range of individuals for interviews by Harold Otto or other team members. In all, we conducted about 75 interviews that ranged from 30 minutes to several hours in length in several visits. These listening sessions were concentrated in Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi, and Kibimba, a Quaker Mission and commercial center that had been engulfed in violence after the assassination of President Ndadaye and attempted coup d'état in October 1993. In Rwanda, our base was the capital Kigali from where we visited Butare, the center of the university and research establishment, and two communes, Kayenzi, to the west, and Giti, to the northeast of Kigali. In Zaire, we were based in Bukavu, from where we traveled daily to the four refugee camps being served by the combined teams of Eglise du Christ au Zaire (ECZ), Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE), and the MCC. Some of our conversations were chance encounters, others were planned and integral to the MCC work setting. We spoke with displaced persons and refugees; peasants and tradespersons; medical, educational, and research workers; government and military officials; church officials and clergy; writers, museum administrators, and artists; journalists and diplomats. We spoke with individuals, but also on occasion with clusters or 'focus groups', such as the displaced widows of Kibimba, or the Rwandan administrators in the refugee camps of Zaire. Reinhild sought out opportunities to obtain children's drawings of their wartime experiences in several of these settings. We each traveled with one bag, a notebook, and a small camera, using whatever local transportation was available, and mostly our legs, which did set us apart from the dominant NGO presence and their white vehicles.

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<sup>5</sup>The Mennonite Central Committee had its beginnings in the 1920s when 'Central Committees' were in vogue. Its first project was to send food, wheat seed, and agricultural machinery to starving post-revolution and civil war Russian Mennonites and their neighbors. In post-World War II Europe, MCC distributed food, conducted refugee relocation, and organized housing construction. During the Vietnam War, MCC tried to meet human need in a neutral way in the conflict, a stance which meant it kept workers in Saigon after the end of the war. Today, MCC is involved in such work as removing bombs and mines in Laos, providing support for mediation work in South Sudan and North Uganda, and providing teachers, health workers, and community development assistance in fifty countries around the world.

We stayed in Catholic guesthouses, with friends who worked for World Hunger, the Salvation Army, or in simple hotels. Our food and lodging and travel were paid for by MCC and we were given a small personal allowance.

This process of being ‘embedded’ ethnographer-anthropologist and art historian in a relief team offered a unique opportunity to carry out our assignment of ‘listening, providing analysis, and philosophical reflections’ on the conflict and recent events in the Great Lakes region.<sup>6</sup>

### **Sites of Engagement in an Anthropological Perspective**

In the manner that Sally Merry (2005) describes the overlap of anthropology and activism in her work with human rights initiatives, these places where we were involved in relief and reconciliation work also constituted sites of our anthropological observation. Rather than feeling constricted by this dual nature of our engagement, our overseer often introduced us to possible contacts we had not anticipated. Yet, I will here sketch the scenes and settings in terms of their general characteristics, our connection to them, and how I approached them anthropologically.

These sites of our engagement in the Great Lakes region also require being put into temporal or historical perspective. Mid-November 1994 through late January 1995 now appears to have been an interlude of relative calm between the Rwandan war and genocide of mid-1994 and the sweep of Kabila’s Alliance through Kivu and into Congo in 1998. During this period, the UNHCR, backed by the United Nations Assistance Mission to Rwanda (UNAMIR), assured both relative physical safety in the region as well as food and healthcare for the masses in the camps in eastern Congo, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi, and internally in Burundi and Rwanda. There certainly was a sense of tension in the air. Our interlocutors told of horrendous violence in their recent past. But we outsiders felt relatively safe moving about during the daytime.

#### *The Refugee Camps along the Bukavu-Uvira Road*

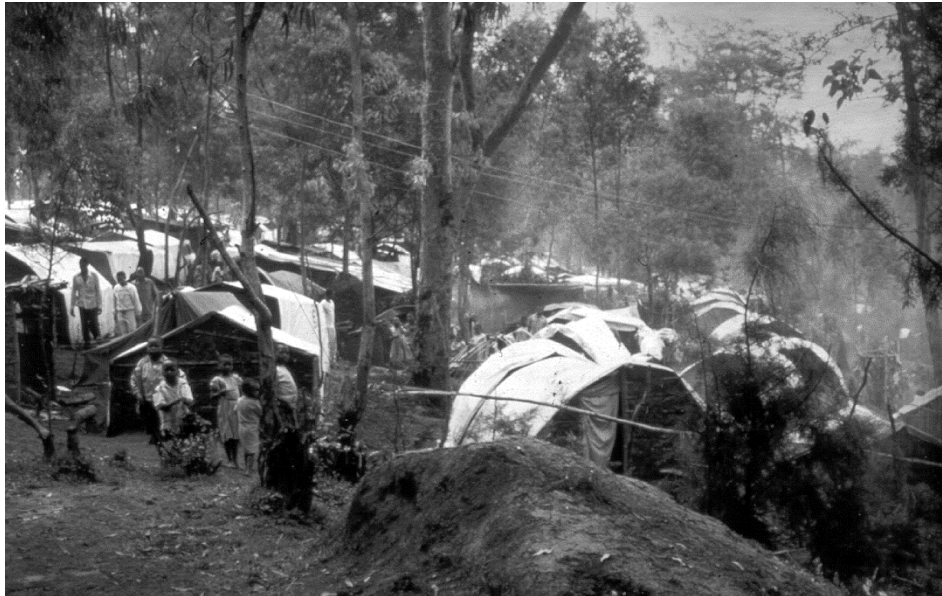
Muku, Mushweshwe, Bideka, and Izirangabo, the four refugee camps in which our MCC unit collaborated with CARE and the Protestant Church of Congo, were small by comparison with the city-camps laid out along Lake Kivu, in the distant hills, and along the roads of South Kivu. These camps were inhabited largely by Rwandans who had fled the advance of the Rwandan Patriotic Front into the French-protected Zone Turquoise in southern Rwanda, and then, when that area was invaded by the RPF, these people fled further through Bukavu and into Zaire. The UNHCR and UNAMIR had separated the old Rwandan military from the civilian population into separate camps.

The core of the small camps we oversaw were all local Congolese church-related communities, situated along the Bukavu-Uvira road. Thus, initially these communities had decided to welcome the refugees and assist them with their daily needs, including incorporating the children into the schools. Feeding stations were set up, UNHCR tents in some places gave way to more permanent houses with tin roofs. The organization of the camps was done through the NGOs with a Rwandan

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<sup>6</sup> Torrents of words have been written about the Great Lakes crisis in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Here is a sketch of the sources I have found useful. From journalists: Gourevitch 1998; human rights specialists: African Rights 1994, 1997; Des Forges 1999; historians: Prunier 1995; Newbury 1995; legal analysts: Reyntjens 1996; political scientists: Newbury 1998; Lemarchand 1994; Mamdani 2001; anthropologists: de Lame 1996; Malkki 1995; Taylor 1999; Janzen and Janzen 2000; entire special issues in area studies journals: Faulkingham and Goheen (eds.). 1998. *African Studies Review*, Jewsiewicki (ed.). 1999. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*; specialized disciplinary journals: Mays et al. (eds.). 1998 *American Psychologist*; in terms of the All-Africa War I: Stearns 2011.

overseer who related to the refugee inhabitants. Each community had its own parish/school organization that related to the NGO organizations. The refugee inhabitants included some family groups from particular towns and hillsides in Rwanda. Other noticeable groups in the camps were former government and party administrators, who continued a shadow administration in their new setting. Encounters, observations, and interviews in the camps formed the basis of Chapter 1, “Rwandan in Zaire”, of our book *Do I Still Have a Life?* (Janzen and Janzen 2000: 17–61).



*Mushweshwe camp, on the Bukavu-Uvira road. Top: tents provided by UNHCR; below left: rations station, food distributed by combined efforts of MCC/ECZ/CARE; below right: Harold Otto, unit director, enjoys the irony of the moment as he graciously accepts a few beans in an expression of a child's spontaneous generosity. (Photos by author)*

The initial welcome to the refugees in these small communities soon gave way to tension, resentment, and hostility. The refugees helped themselves to the trees for firewood used in cooking and natural building materials to construct their shelters. The ready handouts of food, blankets, and clothing to the refugees evoked envy on the part of the local residents, whose standard of living was barely on par with the newcomers. Some Rwandan teachers, who helped out in the schools, were accused of playing favorites to the Rwandan students. Another source of tension within the



camps was the continuing conflict of the war and genocide. Although most refugees were ‘Hutu,’ a few came to us outsiders to express their fear of being identified as ‘Tutsi’ or sympathizers. We assisted some in returning to Rwanda for their own safety, or removal to a more neutral setting in Bukavu.

Anthropological interviews and observations were relatively straight-forward in these camps. Those local residents and refugees with secondary and university education understood what we were and, in the case of the refugees, welcomed the attention and the stimulation afforded by interviews and conversations. Some, particularly the more committed to Hutu ideology, wished to share their story with us in the hope that we would ‘tell the world’ that they were the real, long-term victims of genocide. I interviewed the following groups of individuals: government administrators from a governor down to mayors and assistants; church officials representing several Protestant conferences; the Rwandan administrator of the camps; members of several families; a number of individuals.

#### *Internally Displaced People (IDP) Camps – Butare and many other locations*

The IDP camps in Rwanda were mainly, like the one in Butare, made up of Rwandan Tutsi who had fled from their homes while under attack and had found refuge in locales protected by RPF soldiers and provisioned by NGOs working with UNHCR personnel. They were encamped in UNHCR tents within the large Catholic parish compounds in Butare. Daily, they would walk to the market to purchase vegetables and other goods to supplement their NGO-provided rations. This particular camp also included a number of animals that belonged to the inhabitants, animals presumably taken on the flight.

The IDPs availed themselves of the services in the large cathedral of Butare on the Sunday we were in the city. A surprisingly full church was due to the IDPs who replaced the regular parishioners who had taken flight or been killed in the war. The presence of IDPs in Butare not far from their homes some months after the end of open hostilities raised in our minds the question of why they had not, or would not, return. The answer, we were told, was due to their fear, and the fact that so many in their families had been killed. These were the remnants of large, extended families who were awaiting the arrival of kin who had survived elsewhere so they could regroup, reorganize, and get on with their lives.

The conduct of anthropological research in this setting, with the IDPs, was difficult. One did not know where to begin. I interviewed numerous Rwandan scholars in the university who had returned from exile to take up positions under the new regime. We visited the National Museum in Butare that had suffered the destruction of its record system, not the exhibitions or collections. The director had been able to flee. We held extensive interviews with a surviving academic-priest who was in charge of a program of church renewal. In Butare, we were faced with the moral destruction of a society and the attempt by a few brave souls to rebuild and carry on.

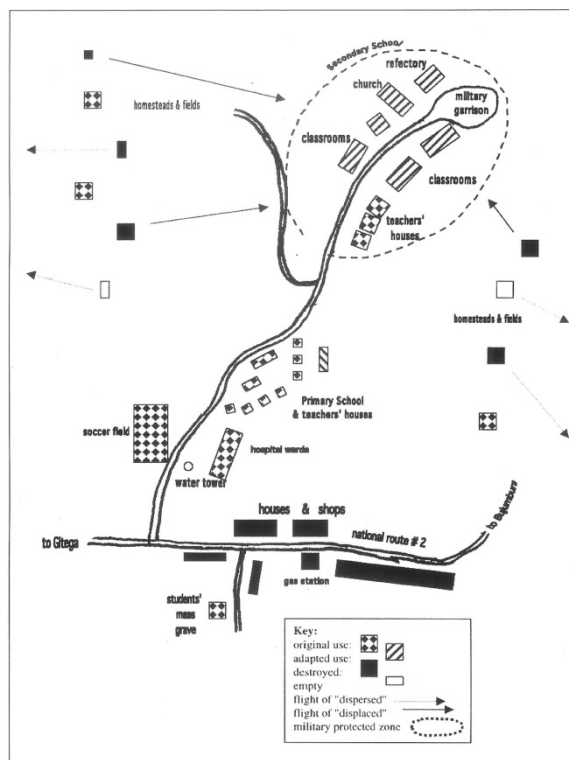
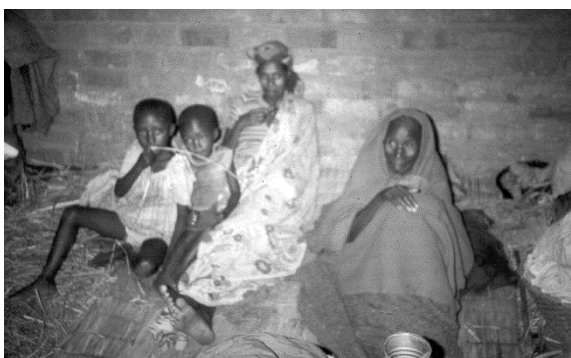
#### *Home Communes, Towns, Centers – Kayenzi, Giti, Kibimba*

My anthropological eye sought to find a way to examine local communities in order to grasp how the violence had affected individuals, relationships, and institutions in conventional society. One could have followed this perspective anywhere, but what was required was a connection to somewhere. The two mentioned communities – Kayenzi to the west of Kigali, and Giti in the north – emerged in different ways as suitable, and contrasting, local societies. Kayenzi had experienced

extensive killing in the genocide, as well as flight to Zaire by many individuals and families. We first encountered these individuals in one of the camps where we were engaged southwest of Bukavu. Later, we managed to travel to Kayenzi in connection with the distribution of garden seed. In the course of interviews with persons from Kayenzi, I was able to meet and interview two of the succession of three Kayenzi communal mayors from before, during, and after the genocide, as well as members of six families in the camps and 'at home' in Kayenzi. The identification of Giti commune as an interesting, and comparative, site came by accident, in a conversation in our Kigali guesthouse with an Irish doctor who was related having worked in a hospital where parents of a stillborn child were 'grieving normally'. This, in contrast to the many cases elsewhere where he had seen much loss of life and no open weeping, rather stony shocked silence. When asked why he thought Giti parents grieved normally, he suggested that it was because there had been no genocide there. We travelled to Giti and met with hospital workers and a young history student who confirmed this story. They recommended I speak to the then mayor. Several days later he sought me out in our Kigali hotel to explain how he, a member of the then ruling party, had resisted sending youth for militia training, how he had pursued justice for victims of attacks, and how he had resisted the genocide once the orders were given (Janzen 2000). The presentation of our interviews and visits to Kayenzi and Giti formed the basis of Chapter 2, "Inside Rwanda", of *Do I Still Have a Life?* (Janzen and Janzen 2000: 63–90).

Pursuing an anthropological research agenda in these bounded, rooted, and historically identifiable communities was the easiest of all the sites, especially from a conceptual perspective. Conventionally anthropological topics and processes like clans, land tenure, political institutions, colonialism, economy, and authority were readily accessible for the asking. Interviews with three of the four mayors who had figured in the recent history of the two communes offered invaluable comparative understanding of patterns of conflict, the relationship between internal and external pressures, and the culture of leadership in Rwanda itself. The mayor I was unable to interview was the genocide-leading head of Kayenzi, who had fired the first shot, killing his veterinarian, who had resisted him. He was said to be in the camps in Zaire, but he did not come forward to converse with me. Opportunity to mediate the conflict within the family members I saw in Zaire and Rwanda demonstrated how difficult it would be for Rwandans to reconcile. Rumors of vengeance seeking, of outsiders grabbing empty houses, of arbitrary arrests of innocent individuals, were rife. When we delivered letters from individuals in the camps to those in the home community, we were told by the local authority to stop because it contributed to the spreading of harmful rumors and interfered with the post-genocide operation of justice. Activism or diplomacy did not mix well with a straight-forward anthropological documentation of both, or multiple, perspectives to conflict.

In contrast to Rwanda, where the conflict appeared to have run its course with one side being the clear winner, Burundi presented itself to us as an on-going simmering conflict. While there were refugee communities of Burundians in Tanzania and Zaire, many more Burundians were in internally displaced camps not far from their homes. Some even returned to their homes and fields during the daytime, spending the nights in a more protected locale. The old Quaker mission of Kibimba, mid-way between the Burundian capital of Bujumbura and the provincial town of Gitega, presented such a reality, most vividly. Our MCC unit was involved with the Burundian Quakers in distributing lentils and other food supplies from the Canadian Food Bank to both sides in simmering conflicts. This was part of MCC's support of initiatives in mediation.



*The map of Kibimba commercial center, Quaker school, hospital, church post, and surrounding homesteads, shows a pattern of attacks, flight, destruction, and polarized regrouping. Tutsi women and children spend their nights in an ad hoc fortress at the top of the ridge under the protection of an army unit; Hutu peasants are hidden in the valley forests with Hutu militants. The extent of the polarization is evident in the status of buildings that are destroyed or empty (e.g. the commercial center, peasant homes), whose residents have fled (homes), or which are reassigned a new function (schools, church). (Map by author; previously published in Janzen and Janzen. [2000: 156]. Photos by author)*

One task of outside volunteers was to accompany local leaders as they continued their rounds of schools, hospitals, and usual obligations. It was generally thought that a Burundian civilian with a responsible position was much safer traveling with a conspicuous foreigner. Other NGO workers – nurses, teachers – were posted at Kibimba and in Bujumbura; we met with them to review strategy. Typical of a longer-term pattern in Burundi, tensions between Hutu and Tutsi parties occasionally erupted in local skirmishes or on occasion national events. Thus, in 1993, following a carefully brokered election and the victory of the first Hutu president, the army, controlled by Tutsi, staged a coup in which the new president was murdered. National counter-attacks were widespread. At Kibimba, Tutsi secondary school students were hauled out of school and locked into a petrol

station, which was then set on fire. Tutsi fled the countryside for secure posts such as Kibimba mission. The Tutsi-led army installed a garrison within this IDP camp that was located within the school and church grounds. From this garrison, the soldiers would drive out nightly to punish whoever they thought had violated the cease-fire, to assert their presence.

Although Kibimba was not a traditional village or town, it was in many respects as bounded and rooted as the communes in Rwanda described above. The residents in the area worked their fields every day, the merchants went to the market, the teachers to their schools, the nurses to the hospital. What was unusual was that the local residents were also night-time IDP residents who slept in the church and schools. The soldiers' garrison was right in the schoolyard. Peasants whose homes were scattered about the landscape near their fields, left their homes at night to sleep in the forests, for fear of being attacked by the soldiers. An anthropological investigation of this set of tense relations folded over on top of itself, although unusual, still meant scoping the landscape, observing activity, and above all interviewing key people. Thus, one evening we were told that the military garrison commanding officer would welcome our visit with the school director. So we walked up the hill through the school buildings, past the church where many women and children were preparing their evening meals, into the camp where soldiers, guns stacked around or slung over shoulders, were drinking beer and entertaining their women. We explained our role in the present situation, church NGO distributing food and encouraging peaceful resolutions of conflict. The commander described his upbringing, school, and career, and his hope for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. We walked back to our lodging in the dark feeling a bit safer. But another day, in Bujumbura, with gunfire in the distance, we remembered the military forays to attack 'partisans' in the hills. Our furtive visit with a Hutu parliamentarian in a back room in Bujumbura reminded us that peace was nowhere close. Simmering civil war was a way of life.

*Cities, Corporate Organizations – Bujumbura, Kigali, the churches, the Rwandan government*

The spatialization of anthropological data as 'sites' seems well suited for refugee camps, IDP camps, and bounded or centered settlements. But it is far less suited for corporate organizations, power structures and hierarchies, and what goes on in large metropolitan cities. The urgency of understanding the fate of organizations and of the states involved in the Great Lakes region drew me to seek out encounters with, and interviews of, individuals who were, or had been, in positions of power. Thus, just as we had contacted families and mayors of communities inside Rwanda and in the refugee camps in Zaire, so we found former heads of several church denominations in 'our' camps, and upon returning to Kigali met their successors. This dual encounter offered a vivid recital of the moments of war, and also of the polarization within the church organizations and the difficulties they faced. Related to this reality of fractured power was the initiative of our unit to participate in a reconciliation and mediation conference for Rwandan Protestant pastors in Tanzania.

The fate of mixed urban communes in the region's largest cities also caught my anthropologist's eye as an important indicator of overall social and political transformation. Burundi's relative chaos contributed to a riot of newspapers. One of my most profitable mornings was spent in a coffee shop trying to make sense of the 'conversation' between the various official news organs of the political parties. Later, an interview with a Burundian writer and two theater directors in the French cultural center provided insight into the local elite's perspective. The writer's observations, his sharing of unpublished writings, were of great importance because of his earlier work as a mayor, first in a

rural commune near Gitega, and later in an urban commune in Bujumbura. His commentary on the importance of the judicial and communal councils in Burundian political life, and their destruction as a tactic of extremist ethnic parties, was highly revealing.

Finally, the remarkable opportunity to attend a number of briefing sessions for NGOs within the Rwandan ministry of foreign affairs afforded a glimpse into the strategy of the newly ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front for consolidating power in the Rwandan state. It was here that the government spokesperson in no uncertain terms accused the NGOs of enabling the genocidal party to regroup and stage a counter-attack. Government pressure was one of the reasons the MCC pulled out of its Zairian camps by August of 1995. For this anthropologist, the briefing sessions were highly insightful into the power struggle not only between the new government and the old, exiled power, but between the new government and the international community.

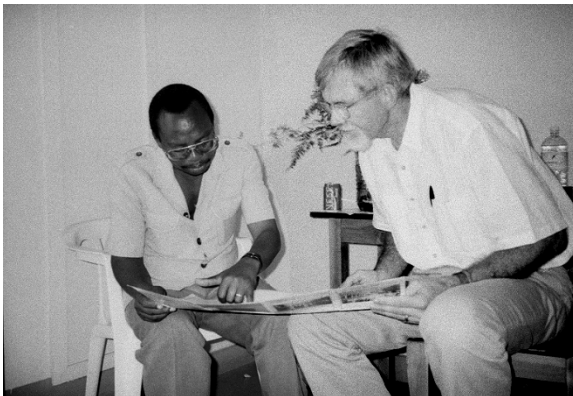
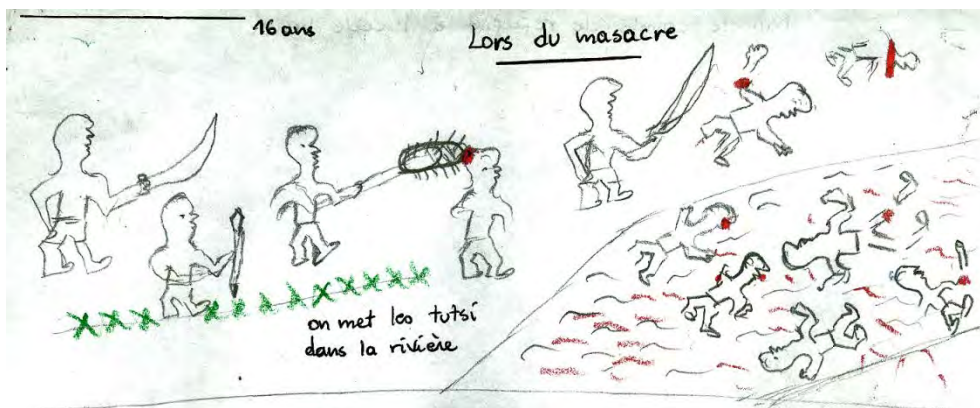
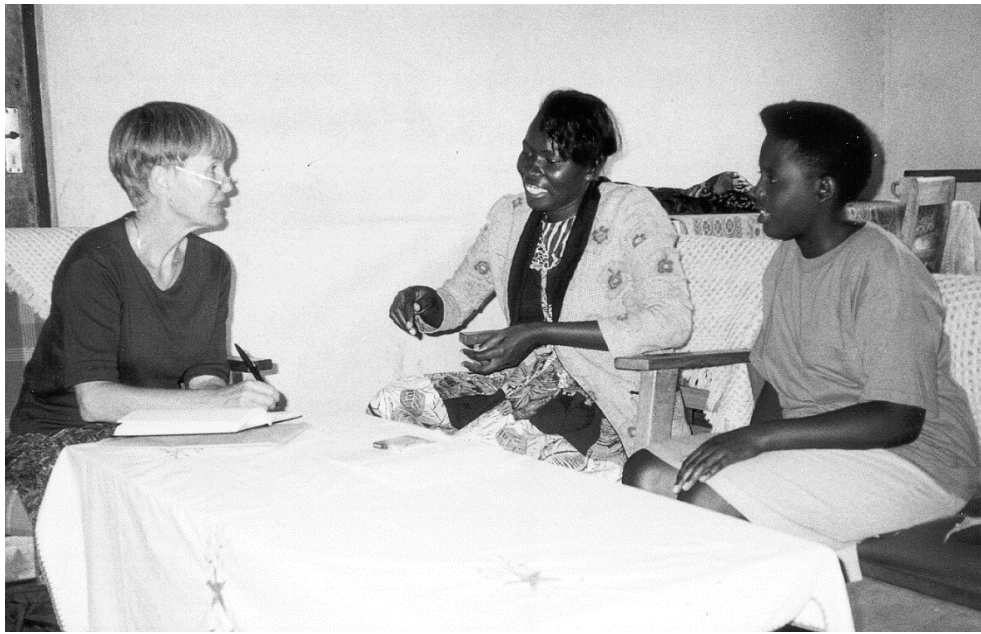
In sum, these various sites, personalities, and points of contact offered an original collection of narratives and observations with which to gain a view of the whole.

### **Listening to the Voices**

First and foremost we listened to individuals and recorded their individual stories. Invariably, people responded to our introductions as “volunteers with MCC, relief organization, anthropologist and art historian (...)” with eagerness to tell their stories. These stories, almost like a scripted plot, included the personal trauma of the war, the encounter(s) with death, accounts of family and lineage members killed, the naming of the killers when they were known, the flight, seeking and finding refuge, followed by great uncertainty and continuing fear. These stories were often prefaced or concluded with the plea to “be honest, above all tell the truth of what happened.” Here are three examples of personal narratives offered at random, but containing the principal themes we heard again and again.

“At 5:00 a.m. [on October 22, 1993] the chef de colline called people to put up barricades. And they began to bind up Tutsi, and ran around to find others, beginning with the men, then the women. They were hunted even in the toilets where they were killed. Their houses were destroyed, and the contents stolen. Then they killed the women and children, even the pregnant women. Some collines now have no Tutsi left at all. (...) Their goal is to eliminate the Tutsi (...). We have no hope for a better life.”

This Burundian widow, whose husband was killed in the first round of attacks after the death of the president fled with her eight children to the military camp at Kibimba mission. Hers is a voice of despair, fear, and pain, covering barely hidden emotions of anger. Although hers is a ‘Tutsi’ voice, she reveals that she is in fact Hutu, having been married to a Tutsi man and therefore the mother of Tutsi children, thereby evidencing the paradox and the pathos of these identities of ‘Hutu’, ‘Tutsi’, and ‘Twa’ that have so torn up the Great Lakes region of Central Africa, Rwanda, Burundi, and eastern Congo.



War ethnography resembles other ethnography, with a focus on observation, interviews, and attending meetings. Upper left: Reinhild Kauenhoven Janzen interviews Uwimana Josephine about her rescue of neighbor girl Carin, whose drawing (upper middle) depicts the genocide in Kayenzi, Rwanda; lower left, John Janzen interviews Giti mayor Eduard Sebushumbe with map in hand showing location of Giti commune, with no massacres, to Mirambi next door whose mayor led massacres; lower right, meeting in Kigali of NGO representatives with United Nations and Rwandan government spokespersons, December 1994. (Photos by author, except for lower left, by Reinhild Kauenhoven Janzen)

“I would like to know of your impressions and understandings that you have gained after your visit, first with us refugees, then in Rwanda and Burundi. There the situation resembles for the moment a ripe abscess that threatens to burst open and to turn Burundi's situation into the same that Rwanda has lived through. If possible, could you give me a profound analysis of the situation in the two countries, an analysis of information you received and your personal understanding. That could help me in particular and others to better prepare for our future.”

This is the writing of a Rwandan social worker, in a letter to us in early 1995. He was a disillusioned Rwandan Hutu civil servant who had left a government position a year before the war broke out in 1994 to work in a private social service agency. He fled the country in 1994, during which time his wife died, and found himself in a refugee camp in Zaire where he became the Rwandan representative and coordinator of a committee charged with administering four small refugee camps southwest of Bukavu. Newly disillusioned and fearful of returning to Rwanda, he earnestly sought our advice as he was contemplating seeking permanent exile.

“We need one thing – the truth: spiritual and scientific. The outside perspective could help.”

This former functionary of a Rwandan government ministry also found himself in a refugee camp in Zaire. His call for spiritual and scientific truth was not a request for an open examination of evidence, but rather a request for serious consideration of the injustices against the Hutu Revolution. In other words, his call for truth assumed that the side of the perpetrators of the recent genocide was in the right and that outside investigation would vindicate that perspective.<sup>7</sup> This was a voice of denial that harbored the willingness to carry out further acts of vengeance against those who would thwart his cause.

These voices heard in the aftermath of the Rwandan war of 1994, and the related yet independent Burundian conflict, illustrate the diverse and perplexing situations in which the speakers found themselves. Neighbor was often pitted against neighbor, family member against family member, one national party against another national party, rich and powerful against poor and weak. Everything and everyone was affected. Some families survived in name alone, others were regrouping around the only remaining adult. Many who survived the camps and the military conquests of the Zairian liberation struggle returned home (Janzen 2003). Others wondered if they would return home in their lifetime. Emotions of guilt and grief, anger and the urge for vengeance were borne simultaneously by many people.

The simple act of listening to and recording these stories, even if not understood, was important because the burdens of particular persons' experiences were great, and the questions facing many individuals very perplexing. Giving voice to these burdens and questions was a first step toward their tellers' regaining humanity, and contemplating solutions. In this light, the first and main objective of our work was to publicize – to tell the world – the individual narratives that were entrusted to us.

In our work, we sought to situate the individual voices within the context of their communities, nations, and regions so that they could be fully human, within the one world we all shared, not as distant faceless masses. At a pragmatic level this high-minded humanization of the refugees in the

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<sup>7</sup> See Malkki (1995) for a similar mind set among Burundian Hutu refugees in Tanzania.

Great Lakes region was meant to confront the brutal reality of shifting armies and alliances, foremost of which was the rapid consolidation of power of the new Rwandan Patriotic Front inside Rwanda. As the Rwandan government put increasing pressure on the NGOs to end their support of the ‘refugee business’ – promoting refugee settlements at the expense of repatriation – MCC decided to close its Bukavu unit in May 1995 and to support local Zairian peacemaking and community development efforts. Despite initiatives by the United Nations, the Zairian government, and other agencies to move the Rwandan refugees home, few in fact returned voluntarily. The camps continued to be supported by the UN, CARE, and other agencies until they were broken up by Kabila’s advancing Alliance troops in late 1997 and early 1998.

### **The Ethnographic Imperative: the challenge of representation**

The eager compulsiveness with which those whom we met told of their war experiences left us with the challenge of what to make of this emotional tone, and with the content of these accounts, as we began to translate them into ethnography. What did the narratives actually convey, and how might we best represent them in some kind of understanding, the ‘philosophical reflections’ we were requested to make. Although we continued to seek to understand the emotional logic behind these encounters, several years of study and thought have given us the advantage of hindsight, and perhaps insight, into our project. Our listening in a non-judgmental way acknowledged the teller’s humanity and dignity. The mere offer to listen already did this. Deep trauma, even the dark experience of having killed, or as in the cases of some, the combined trauma of having participated in the genocide and then having had to take flight, were experiences that isolated individuals from their former selves, their ordered world, and the rest of humanity. We became aware of our own role in the shaping of these narratives. The very fact that we were outsiders representing ‘the world beyond’ gave a certain recognition to our interlocutors. The narratives were thus built around a dialogical relationship rather than monologues uttered in a vacuum; they figured in a moral construct of the whole scene (Zigon 2012), lending affirmation to these many individuals who had been through horrendous but varied traumatic experiences.

The emotional subtext of these stories was more challenging than the ‘plot’. The narration of these personal stories of war would come out in a tone that impressed us as being flat and emotionless. At first we did not know what we were hearing. We wondered how persons having experienced such horrors could relate them with such calm, such a seeming absence of feeling. But we came to recognize this flat tone as an expression of deep and damaging trauma. This was true not only of Rwandans and Burundians, but of some Europeans and Americans who had experienced the war, and needed to tell us their stories as well. Yet there was significant variation in the pattern of trauma-affecting violence. Some individuals experienced or perpetrated far greater violence than others, whereas others acted heroically, intervening to save or hide the threatened. Our initial puzzlement gave way to a method of analysis inspired by the post-genocide renewal movement of the Catholic Parish in Butare (Ntezimana 1994) that identified the different trajectories of the population in the parish, and their differing emotional, spiritual, social, and material needs. Early in my speaking and writing of this differential violence and trauma I coined the phrase “emotional-moral profile” (Janzen 1999; Janzen and Janzen 2000) to distinguish “instigators of the massacres”, “those who killed to save themselves”, “those who risked their own lives to save the threatened”, “survivors of assault”, and “the true victims, the dead”. These profiles



were followed by a range of “sequels” that include “revenge or retribution”, “seeking justice”, “forgiving those who threatened you or your kin”, and “remembering”. Each of these profiles, in our experience, had a different tone of voice and demeanor.

### **Contextualizing the Narratives**

However important such personal stories may be, they alone do not capture the larger picture of a genocide within a war. They must be situated within a broader social and historical context. They are parts of dramatic events that include other actors within fuller scenes, which are in turn parts of a greater play. A kind of strategy unfolded in our work whereby we sought to situate individual accounts within settings that appeared to offer microcosmic case studies of the genocidal crisis and the war. Thus we tried to obtain multiple accounts by persons on opposite sides of issues and events: the refugees who had fled, as well as those in the home community who did not flee; those in communities who had been engulfed with violence, and at least one community that had resisted; those who believed in the racial theory of ethnic categories, and those who did not.

One aspect of the ethnographic imperative then is to reconnect these individual narratives, the situations of their narrators, to the larger world. Context may be social, that is other people within scenes and events. It is definitely temporal, in the telling of the sequence of events that shaped people’s lives. Context also includes the cultural dimension of experience, that is the ideological, moral, and sensory frameworks within which these life-defining experiences occurred. The ethnographic imperative includes attention to variation within local social events and spaces. In his review of Daniel Goldhagen’s *Hitler’s Willing Executioners* (1996), Alex Hinton (1998) identifies the distinctive features of an anthropological perspective on the World War II holocaust that Goldhagen presumes to follow. Hinton criticizes Goldhagen for overly generalizing all Germans, rather than to seek to find distinctions between individuals in settings where atrocities were committed. He re-examines the evidence of one case used by Goldhagen in which a German police battalion was ordered to execute a community of Jews. Differential willingness, even outright resistance to kill, is evident in this case. This difference between individuals, that is also very evident in the Rwandan and Burundian cases, is an important feature of the anthropological perspective in this subject matter, argues Hinton.

Not just individual variation defines the contextual dimension of ethnography, but also the differentiation between settings. Comparison, long a hallmark of anthropology, becomes a tool for analysis in a subject such as war and genocide. An important preparatory contact prior to leaving for work in Central Africa was with Murray Last of University College London, who has studied issues surrounding the aftermath of war (in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, South Africa, Angola, Namibia). He recommended that we not dwell only on the catastrophic side of war, but identify those persons, settings and situations in which the fabric of civility had held, or in which persons were again initiating such civility. This led us to also seek situations in which there had been no massacres, or where individuals and groups on opposite sides of the conflict began to repair the breach through reconciliation. Thus, the comparative method common in anthropology is quite transparent in our work. The stories of the war in two communes in Rwanda (widespread massacres in Kayenzi; no massacres in Giti) and three communities in Burundi (Kavumu, where peace held; Kibimba, polarization, selective massacres, continuing tension; Bwiza in Bujumbura, ethnic integration within communal council, until militia-led intentional ethnic cleansing), offer

contrasting insights on the role of local authorities and the councils in alternatively fanning or dampening the flames of conflict. These comparisons demonstrate the importance of local justice and local leadership in maintaining and restoring peace, or in alternatively instigating conflict and violence (Janzen and Janzen 2000; Mamdani 2001; Schlee 2008). Close-up ethnography shows the critical role of individual action rather than group hysteria in shaping the course of events.

Within ethnography, there is typically a tension between the individual account and the social, cultural, and historical dimension of context. Although the individual lives and particular accounts lend ethnographic poignancy and face, the context often enhances understanding of particular actions, institutions, or changes. But no single perspective or line of analysis will capture the whole truth of what happened, or why. Therefore, the individual voices in all their complexity and contradictoriness will provide 'data' to the long-term effort to comprehend one of the most horrifically systematic attempts at extermination of the 'other' in recent times.

### **Responsibility and the Ethical Dilemmas of War Ethnography**

The centrality of the individual voice in ethnography, especially war ethnographies, carries with it certain dilemmas. North American anthropology, like medicine, a range of laboratory sciences, but unlike journalism and perhaps history, has 'protected' the individual from public gaze by the use of aggregate data or through the use of pseudonyms, or, in the case of desired publicity, then only with informed consent. Although these methodological controls persist in anthropology, efforts have been made in recent years to bring 'voice' and 'agency' back to the individuals and communities involved in ethnographic coverage.

Yet, the desire to relate personal stories in the aftermath of genocidal war in Central Africa collides head on with the anthropological effort to protect the anonymity of the informant. Other issues make the dilemma even more poignant. From the early days after the 1994 war, Rwandans and many outside journalists began identifying perpetrators and victims by name. To identify the victims was to honor them. Thus, the Rwandan Catholic journal *Dialogue*, temporarily removed to Belgium, published a special issue in July/August 1994 devoted to detailed accounts of 206 clergy and lay priests and nuns killed in the events of April and May (Theunis 1994). African Rights of London set the tone of reporting on rights violations in its massive *Death, Despair and Defiance* (1995) that identified by name and role figures deemed responsible in the killing, as well as victims. In *Bisesero: resisting genocide* (1997), African Rights also named perpetrators, victims, and survivors of this remarkable story of a region where refugees and local residents came together and at a great price resisted the forces of genocide. In 1997, the government of Rwanda began to publish an alphabetized internet list of thousands of names of participants in the genocide and war-time roles and identities, leading up to massive arrests and prosecutions.

One can understand the reasons for the publication of individual names in these writings. Yet, acute ethical dilemmas persist. To identify someone in print as a genocidal killer before a court has gotten around to trying that individual, would of course be the worst kind of slander if it were wrong. We heard many accounts of individuals believed innocent who had been imprisoned. We also were told that many such accounts may involve duplicitousness; that the easiest way to settle an old grudge, or acquire someone else's house or land, was to tell the authorities that that

individual had been seen with the Interahamwe,<sup>8</sup> or had been witnessed at the scene of killings. It would be years before the Rwandan Tribunal and International Tribunal of Arusha could try all those imprisoned on such charges. The reactivation of the traditional Gacaca popular tribunals would process many of the ‘lesser crimes against property and persons’. We became aware of some individuals whom we had interviewed who were on these lists. In the camps in Congo, we were aware of the presence of perpetrators of genocide amongst those to whom we were providing food and shelter.

The most difficult dilemma however concerns writing about those who stood up to their neighbors and authorities in the heat of the madness of April and May 1994 and who risked their lives to rescue prospective victims. These persons’ stories should be told, because they bespeak of a profound humanity. Yet, these are precisely the persons whose lives are most at risk by others whom they witnessed killing, or who may even have threatened them. Just as witnesses who came forward in tribunals were killed for telling their stories, or to silence other would-be witnesses, so these heroes of sanity in the midst of genocide are at risk at the hand of those who may accuse them of having broken ranks with the party of the genocide perpetrators. The awful problem for the ethnographer here is that the identification of these heroes and the full-context-telling of their heroism may endanger their lives.

We discussed these dilemmas with editors and scholars and reached an uneasy compromise: to veil some names and situations where we believed the individuals’ safety would be compromised; to leave public figures’ identities intact because their prominence makes them well known already. The fine reasoning of an anthropological ethic was brought into the picture only after the fact, since our initial involvement in this work was so full of shifts and turns that we did not know for what or how to prepare. With hindsight, we exercised a kind of middle ground between a universalist (Widmer 1992) and a contextualist (Koepping 1994) ethic. The former argues for a universal application of standards of human altruism, avoiding racism and preserving diversity, supporting the well-being of the greatest number, morality for the majority based on self-fulfillment of the rights of individuals, and urging societies to live by the terms of their own moral teachings, holding violators accountable for their actions. Radical relativism is held by this view to be a failed foundation for anthropological ethics and action. In contrast, the contextualists argue for an ethic within particular relationships in the doing of ethnography. This is different from a relativistic withholding of judgment. It is rather an adherence to a negotiated mutual ethic of the moment and context of the ethnographic encounter. The conduct of research and the application of knowledge gained from such research continue to be fraught with ambiguity. The anthropological consultant may well need to face such ambiguities by having recourse to one’s own moral framework all the while keeping the moral and the epistemological axes conceptually apart.

### **Applications of Expertise: keeping or losing control**

Alongside the twenty-year course of lectures, writings, and teachings about the Great Lakes crisis experience, there is a series of more focused applications of my expertise in judicial and policy arenas. Each had its unique opportunities and challenges, which could be conceived as successfully applying and/or losing control of such expertise. These arenas were (a) as ‘expert witness’ in

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<sup>8</sup> Literally, in Kinyarwanda, “those who work together,” the widespread name for youth militia organized by the pre-war ruling party Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement (MRND).

political asylum cases from the Great Lakes and Congo Basin region to the United States; (b) as resource specialist to U.S. government workshops on the region; (c) as participant in MCC workshops on program policy formulation for relief and development work in the post-9/11/2001 world, in regions of extreme violence and collapsed order like Sudan, Zimbabwe, Iraq, Palestine, and the Great Lakes region.

In being asked to serve as expert witness in political asylum cases I was being asked to intervene in the fate of another individual, and my knowledge would swing that fate toward the granting of a visa vs. being repatriated. The easiest of half a dozen I did were those that allowed me to write my answers to legal counsel's questions in an impersonal manner. The most challenging was one in which I sat face-to-face with the defendant and his lawyer. The defendant was a young man who claimed he had fled Ruhengeri, in northwest Rwanda, where he had lived with his Hutu mother. The implication, shared by the lawyer, was that he was Hutu, therefore his life was endangered in that setting should he return to Rwanda. Knowing that Rwandan society is firmly patrilineal, I asked the identity of his father. To my surprise he said his father was Tanzanian Swahili, from Dar es Salaam, where his father now lived. I learned further that his mother had sent him to live with his father in Dar when the violence had escalated at one point. From there he had applied for U.S. asylum. So, I asked, why he did not just go live with his father and claim his Swahili identity? He refused to accept this alternative and with the lawyer's support insisted that he be given asylum because of the danger to his life in Rwanda, as a Hutu. The dilemma I felt was that the lawyer did not understand the complexity of East African descent and gender rules, nor did he seem to grasp the defendant's duplicitous narrative. In my written summary I registered my disbelief of the defendant's story and tried to explain the young man's identity in social terms of the region. Yet, I had the distinct impression that my 'ethnographic account' was going to be used to argue for the justification of life threatening circumstances in the young man's 'home' town. I had lost control of my analysis. Or, had it been intentionally misappropriated, with my status and reputation as anthropologist-expert being used to justify the self-serving narrative?

A second area of application of my expertise of the Great Lakes region is illustrated by my participation in a two-day workshop at USAID in 2005 to assess the 'fragility and resilience' of the Burundian state, economy, and civil society. This was a somewhat typical exercise that brings scholars, technical experts, development workers, NGO operatives, and diplomats together to produce analyses and policy recommendations for the agency in question. An summary-abstract of the guidelines of the Fragility Assessment Framework provided by Tjip Walker on July 27, 2005 at the opening of the workshop will suffice to convey a sense of the host's assumptions of this exercise.

"The team will perform a multi-faceted analysis aimed at three inter-related goals: (1) to understand sources of fragility and resilience within a state, (2) to highlight sources of fragility that pose the greatest threats, either because of their likely durability and/or magnitude of potential impact, and (3) to identify measures that USAID could undertake to support stabilization efforts. This assessment's methodology draws on the Conflict Assessment Framework (CAF) and the DG Assessment Framework, but adds an overall perspective and specific diagnostic elements from the Agency's 'Fragile States Strategy.'" (Walker 2005: 1)

In my preliminary response to the workshop expectations I had prepared a short paper stressing the land pressures I had seen in Burundi, that the postcolonial increase in population had made extremely acute. I also noted that judicial institutions had become paralyzed, from the high courts in the capital to the local councils that had once included all segments of local society. I furthermore noted that the impulses for representative government had been completely short-circuited by the military takeover. In the presentations and discussions my report, and my verbal account was listened to. However, I had the distinct impression that all consultants present were expected to submit their observations to the common denominator of the ‘fragility and resiliency’ model. Once again I sensed that my anthropological knowledge was somehow being subverted, or neutralized, by the formulaic terms of the model.

A third area of application of my expertise in Great Lakes conflict ethnography and African Studies generally was an invitation to participate in a Peace Research Project from 2004–2006 sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section headed by Bob Herr and Judy Zimmerman. This research explored principles and practices to guide Mennonite agencies “seeking the security of persons whose lives are endangered by breakdown of public order” (Friesen 2003). The project entailed a series of discussion colloquia in Canada and the United States with ethicists, peace activists, political scientists, theologians, and an anthropologist. With our knowledge of the work of MCC and affiliated agencies in conflict zones around the world, we were asked to formulate our disciplinary-grounded opinions on a number of dilemmas. In a general effort to promote peace, reconciliation, and justice, what would be our stance toward the endorsement of police action or the work of an international peace-keeping force in a situation of unrest? Using the measure of historic peace church principles, what initiatives would we recommend to reinforce the state, that is order, in a collapsed state setting like Somalia, Darfur, and South Sudan, or other locales?

A report of this project was submitted to the board and executive committee of MCC and published as a monograph (Friesen and Schlabach 2005). Although the lines of application from our expertise during a North American conference and interventions in East Africa is not clear, our work and related efforts at understanding flowed into MCC thinking and related peace work in a range of East and Central Africa settings: reconciliation of Protestant pastors in Rwanda; formation of reconciliation groups in eastern Congo; support of Quaker peace and reconciliation efforts in Burundi (Niyonzima and Fendall 2001); mediation efforts in Somaliland, Somalia (Sampson and Lederach 2000), and South Sudan (e.g. Assefa 1987, 1993); and in support and mediation for the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative in Northern Uganda, an ecumenical group of Catholics, Anglicans, and Muslims (Soto 2009).

In sum, the applications of my ‘expertise’ may have affected the fates and fortunes of some individuals in ways I have not followed. The opinions expressed in consultancy situations may have led to overall enlightenment of decision-makers. However, I cannot say that I ‘controlled’ the process. I have always thought that the knowledge I share in publications, lectures, classrooms, and otherwise enter the public domain where it takes its course in a random way.

## Lessons Learned, Recommendations

Young scholars considering doing consultancy work may wish to take into account these words of experience and recommendation.

- Your work as a consultant will follow you through your entire career and lifetime, and beyond. Therefore you may wish to check out the employer's or decision-maker's track record of recognizing consultants and following their ideas and analyses with integrity, of adhering to your ethical convictions.
- Be prepared to be identified as anything but an anthropologist in your work – a social worker, a journalist, a spy, etc. – even though you may still wish to adhere to your distinctive anthropological methods and principles. Not many agencies care which discipline offers them advice, nor do many even know what makes anthropological analysis unique. It is your responsibility to inform them.
- Share your prior published research with both your prospective employer or user of your expertise as well as with informants as you negotiate and conduct interviews. Having your own track record and predictable course of action, your own identity as a scholar, or activist, will clarify many potentially ambiguous situations.
- But be prepared to receive the scorn of some anthropologists who may accuse you of having 'sold out' or given up your principles; at the same time you may make some new friends among non-anthropologists who finally see how your work gives them a better understanding of anthropology and what it is 'good for'.
- Negotiate agreements over confidentiality, public release, degree of use of source name or confidentiality, or pseudonym, at the time of the interview if possible, with paper documentation and signature.
- Inform yourself of the proprietary dimensions of your knowledge and writing, of rights issues in forthcoming publications.

The anthropology of consultancy is full of opportunities and challenges. War ethnography is especially challenging. One does not know in advance what the questions will be, or the settings may offer. But the inherent adaptability of the anthropological gaze and the relativizing grasp of 'the other' will serve most anthropologists well in whatever situations they find themselves. As we discovered repeatedly in our engagement in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa, war has no victors. Therefore the ultimate goal of the anthropologist must therefore be to uphold the rights of subjects and to humanize those who have been dehumanized, even if they have themselves engaged in dehumanizing violence.

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