

## Chapter 5

### MEMBERSHIP AND DISMEMBERMENT

#### THE BODY POLITIC AND GENOCIDE IN RWANDA

##### **Introduction**

This chapter is concerned with the relationship between the human body and the body politic. More specifically, the focus is on the dismemberment of the body as a mode of destroying the body politic and the disfigurement characteristic of genocidal killing?<sup>1</sup>

This chapter is an exploration, not a definitive thesis. But it comes with a warning. The material in this chapter contains some gruesome detail. This introduction is written like the ads before TV shows in Canada that indicate that this show contains scenes of violence and horrific descriptions and may not be suitable for all people, particularly those who are sensitive and/or squeamish. I do not write this to shock, but to try to throw some light on both genocide and the body politic.

My concern will be focussed on the case study of Rwanda against the background of Burundi. In doing so, three themes of genocidal scholarship are taken up in successive order: 1) exile and return; 2) the relationship between the civil war and genocide against the background of biblical narrative taken from the Book of Judges in the Bible<sup>2</sup>; and 3) the mode in which genocidal massacres took place as a way of differentiating genocides from other large scale massacres.<sup>3</sup> In the course of the latter analysis, a number of issues about genocide will be raised related to the debate between inherent tribal hatreds versus the political manipulation of ethnicity and the relationship between self and other in constituting the body politic.<sup>4</sup>

I do not want to go into the depths of the philosophical grounds for this chapter. But in order to frame the discussion, I will outline the phenomenological perspective of the chapter. A self is related to other selves in four ways. The self sees the other as a reflection of the self. Secondly, the self projects onto the other that which it rejects in itself. Thirdly, the other may be regarded as totally other unrelated to the self except as an obstacle. Finally, the self is capable of seeing and respecting the other as an independent other in a mutual and supportive relationship to the self. I refer to these four modes of constituting the other as the Reflective Other, the Projective Other, the Rejected Other, and the Accepted Other.<sup>5</sup> In other words, the self is defined in relationship to:

a) those with whom one identifies - the self as other; b) those with whom one identifies while rejecting that identity - the proximate other as a non-self; c) those whom one defines as the enemy other who threatens oneself; d) the other as the stranger who may not be known but whom one is open to knowing. The first two are basic to a struggle with one's self-identity. The third is characterized in self-interested realist politics. And the fourth is implicit in the vision of humanitarian realism.

As with others in the phenomenological school of thought, I share the conviction that it is

through the treatment of our own bodies and the bodies of others that we can grasp the relationship that is at work and how that relationship is constituted, but I do not share the conviction that the world is given to us primordially in our flesh even though our mythologies, religions, philosophies, sciences and ideologies do their best to inscribe their messages in our corporeal beings.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, I do not believe that the body as oneself is constructed *de novo* or that contemporary society is the result of an interaction of intention and the body. (Turner 1996, 20) From my perspective, the basic interaction is between the communicative body and the corporeal body. These relations are discovered in how we constitute the corporeal subject rather than the *cogito*. Thus, although “human embodiment functions to create the most fundamental bond between self and society,”<sup>7</sup> it is also the mode by which the bonds of society are destroyed. As O’Neill depicts this bonding of the communicative body, we seek out other bodies as mirrors of ourselves. And the communicative body is defined as something radically other than the physical or biological body, an active self rather than a physical object. Thus, the communicative body is analogous to Hannah Arendt’s public being who speaks and acts<sup>8</sup>, while the corporeal body is based on needs and labours to meet those needs; the body driven by wants, the working body in Hannah Arendt, represents the product of the dialectic between the corporeal body and the communicative body.

This chapter, however, is concerned with the self who also defines others in our society as opposites rather than mirrors, with the self who divides the body politic in two rather than creating a united body politic, with the self who splits the vision of the physical body into radically differentiated phenotypes, and then seeks the elimination of the other in the quest for the purity of the self.<sup>9</sup> This is accomplished by the treatment accorded to the physical or biological body, the body in which we exist as separate entities, rather than the communicative body which relates to others. When our physical bodies are classified and characterized in terms of group membership, the physical body becomes a tool in the communicative body’s quest to destroy communication between one group and another.

### **Exile and Return<sup>10</sup>, Dreams and Memory**

The split between the corporeal body and the communicative body, between the isolated physical body and the communicative body in relationship with others, is exaggerated in exile.<sup>11</sup> To be at home is to be at home in one’s body, where one’s body feels at home. To be in exile is to be forced to live as a communicative actor dealing with other bodies with whom one does not feel at home. To be home means to be able to circulate in the homeland with impunity and safety. To be at home means to be in a place in which the other appears as a reflection of oneself. “Home is, therefore, the association within a homogeneous group and the association of that group with a particular physical place.”<sup>12</sup>

To be in exile means to be outside one’s country of origin, forcefully banished from one’s home, and unable to reenter without permission. Unlike the foreigner, one is barred from reentry to the only place where one felt an inherited right to circulate freely. The empowered community has characterized the banished individual as an outlaw. Exile also means that one experiences that situation as being outside oneself, since “exile” derives from “ex”, out of, and *salire*, “to leap”. As Joseph Conrad

conveyed the experience, it was like taking a “standing jump out of his racial surroundings and

<sup>13</sup> To be in exile is to experience oneself as outside of one’s body, as a permanent spectator of oneself, and, thus, split in two. As Warner put it (1994, p. 168) “The situation of the refugee is the physical incarnation of the rift in being. Further, liberal mathematics tries to offset the rift by reducing the self to an integrated mathematical integer in dealing with refugees.” Liberal mathematics stifles creativity by postulating simplistic idealism,” such as the priority of repatriation as a durable solution.

There is a cure to this split. Return home or, very much harder for one’s imagination, find a new home in which one feels at one with oneself. Unless the first appears prohibitively difficult, the possibility of return will be an ever-present part of one’s imaginative being. That poses a danger for those who do not want an exile to return. There is one way to prevent the possibility - kill the individual before he or she goes into exile.

One manner of killing Hutu refugees in Burundi entailed first splitting a bamboo in two parts and then splitting the body in two by driving the bamboo up through the anus, or taking a hammer and “splitting the forehead in half,”<sup>14</sup> as if the mode of killing was intended to send the spirit of the dead into permanent exile, forever alienated from one’s home so that for evermore that individual could never again dream of recovering the imagined lost land as one’s inland. That is the constant dream of the exile, so that the homeland becomes a dreamland, a paradise unrecognizable in reality, one’s unreal estate.

That place from which the exile is blocked becomes the model for the place in which he resettles his imagination.”<sup>15</sup> But a perfectly mutilated victim in ethnic massacres is sent into eternal exile from his or herself as well as his or her native land.

For those who survive, the imagination continues as does the dream of homeland and the nightmares that sent one into flight. Even the spectators from the outside cannot escape the nightmare. I am haunted by the corpses of Rwanda. This was not simply the result of my undertaking the joint evaluation of early warning and conflict management of the genocide in Rwanda with my Norwegian colleague, Astri Suhrke. That was an academic study, a horrific intellectual duty, but nothing that directly assaulted my senses other than written words. But I remain haunted with the 18,652 corpses that I walked among that were laid side by side in room after room in a technical school in the south-west of Rwanda when I revisited Kigali in September of 1996 after the study had been published. Those corpses were recently dug up from a newly discovered mass grave. The vision revisits me several times a day. I expected the sight to just drift away. Fergal Keane described the hope that, “the dead had

<sup>16</sup> But once one experiences a genocide, the smells infuse every pore of the body. The nightmares recur.

I am asleep and become aware of hands creeping up and down my body. They prod and probe until I am awake, and in a startled moment I realize that I am lying at the bottom of a pile of rotting corpses. But they are moving, like a mound of eels at a fishmarket, or like snakes, things that slip and slither. I am being passed up through the

layers of the moving dead. That is why the hands are touching me, pulling and pushing me up to the top. But I do not want to go to the top. Because there is a man with a machete. He is looking for me. He has spent all day looking for me and is sure that I am hiding in that pile of bodies. The corpses are intent on betraying me and I am paralysed with fear. There is nothing I can do. I am helplessly pushed up through the smell of the dead towards the sunlight, where a man is waiting to kill me...If I am lucky the blow will cut my skull in two, massive brain damage, instant death.<sup>17</sup>

Split in two. That is the connection between my nightmare and Keane's. It was his skull that he saw being split in two, his soul divided for all eternity. The corpses weighed on him so heavily that in his nightmares he sought the surcease of death in the wish that the bodies would also deliver him up to the murderers. The action of the murderers was "the violation of the peaceful earth, the trench which animated by blood, evokes the departed spirits and these, thirsting for life, receive it in the action of self-consciousness."<sup>18</sup> From the perspective of the killers, their act of slaughter disturbed the tranquility of natural existence and divided the unity of Nature. From the perspective of the Spirit of those who died, their thirst for life was expressed through the deliverance of his body from the bloody mound of corpses into the air where Keane could breathe and think, and, more importantly, act on the basis of that thought. Thus, on one side, Keane's nightmare was a fear of joining those who had been killed. But it was also the expression of the possibility of his own redemption through action on behalf of those who had been slaughtered. So Keane suffered in fear and trembling from ending up with his spirit divided forever in two as he woke up in a sweat from the dream without deliverance either from the weight of the corpses or the recognition of how he could redeem those who had died.

The killers had done their job. The survivors, even the non-targeted witnesses, live in a Catch-22. They cannot escape the weight of memory of the corpses. But the fear is that death will not bring release either for they have become spectators of their own bodies and do not know how to accept the responsibility for redeeming those murders in action and in life..

The people were arranged all around that trench and the soldiers shot them. They fell in the hole. After, dust was put on top. The instrument which had dug the hole covered the cadavers. It is an instrument which moves on chains, which goes very slowly. It weighs a lot. This same instrument went on the filled hole [pressing down the earth] so that if by accident there is one still alive, he will not be able to climb out.<sup>19</sup>

My nightmare is not of slithering, slippery corpses grasping at me and passing my body up, but of dried skeletons laid row after row, some with the rotting and decaying flesh still on them after two years because the corpses had been packed so thickly that the flesh had not all decayed. I remember counting - counting and counting to check whether the figures were accurate. But I only got to 7,321 because I could not take the sight of skeleton after skeleton lying side by side anymore. I especially could not take the sight of approximately 200 children's skeletal remains laying in parallel rows in one small room. And I could not take the smell that I can still sense when I write this description. I had been

particularly mesmerized by the skeletons with cracks in their skulls, especially those of small children. Or the women whose pelvises were cracked. I wanted to calculate how many of the total had been treated this way. I was not able to count, as if my whole body and the memory system of my brain revolted against turning the disfigurement of the dead into a calculation, a figure for posterity. I was not able to disassociate enough to focus on the task at hand.

But I am also haunted by memories of misfiguring as well as figuring and disfiguring. In the study that Astri Suhrke and I undertook on Rwanda, in the draft report we wrote that approximately 500,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed. For the published report we were able to change the number to “500,000 to 800,000.” Before December of that year, after the report had gone to press, a group of scholars meeting to publish an edited book on Rwanda agreed that the actual figure was at least 800,000 dead from the genocide based on all of our studies, and we agreed to use that figure. I have subsequently determined that the figure had to be in excess of one million.<sup>20</sup>

What is the relationship between counting the dead and constituting the living? What is the relation between disfiguring the living when murdering them and constituting the body politic? Is there any connection between figuring and disfiguring? We are all aware that a main target of Holocaust deniers is the effort to cast doubt on the authenticity of the figure of six million Jews killed in the Holocaust. But such battles occur in other genocides as well. And they are important. In Rwanda, many standard texts state that 14% of the population in Rwanda were Tutsi. If we take the population of Rwanda before the civil war and invasion to have been eight million, that means that there were 1,120,000 Tutsis resident in Rwanda. If an estimated 80%+ were killed in the genocide, that means that approximately 900,000 were slaughtered. But if the number of Tutsis was in fact higher, and many Tutsis tried to pass themselves off as Hutu, the number of dead could also be higher. And the proportion of Tutsis in current Rwandese society, even with the return of many of the up to one million Tutsi refugees in exile, will no longer be even 14% of the population of Rwanda. Unless, of course, many Tutsi who had posed as Hutu, and many Hutu as well, now declare that they are really Tutsi. Further, who are we numbering? If we count them as Tutsi, we perpetuate the Hutu/Tutsi divide. If they are numbered as Rwandese, we bury the reason why they were killed in the first place in the effort to institutionalize a new policy in Rwanda in which there are no longer significant differences between Hutu and Tutsi. Do we sanction using these state designations as a new version of homogeneity, which, incidentally, verifies the Hutu extremist belief that this is the essence of the Tutsi plot to eliminate a sense that one is a Hutu, or do we remember and risk perpetuating the Hutu/Tutsi divide? How does the politics of numbers in constituting a state relate to disfigurement in genocide?

This is important in the debate over what characterizes genocide. Article II of the UN Convention restricted the application of the term ‘genocide’ to situations in which a national, ethnic, racial or religious group were the target. Kurt Jonassohn complained that such a definition failed to include other political, economic, social groups.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, the act was seen by others as too broad since it applied to the intent and not the deed, so that an act could be genocidal even if not one single person was killed.

The trouble with Jonassohn's broader definition is that politicides are mass murders for functional gains in land, wealth or power. There is no need to mutilate the other. The quicker the victims are dispatched, the better. On the other hand, functional terms are used "in terms of the quest for individual rewards through a psychology which gives legitimacy to material greed." (Turner 1996, 10) But the essence of cruelty is that it is generally non-functional. Most mass slaughters are not cruel but have a totally utilitarian function. There would seem to be a fundamental distinction between those killed in Hiroshima or the blanket bombing of Dresden and genocide. On the other hand, genocide seems most frequently to occur under the cover of war.<sup>22</sup> However, the total war against the enemy other is not to be confused with the genocide of the other who is near but is said to be totally other - the proximate other defined as an enemy other. War may be conducive to fostering the conditions for genocide.<sup>23</sup> But the victims of war are not the same as the victims of genocide. The indiscriminate killing of innocent women and children is indeed horrific and inhumane, but the massacres have nothing to do with reifying the identities of the perpetrators.

Nor does it suffice to separate genocide from mass murder through politically induced famine or indiscriminate mass slaughter of enemy populations by the disparity in power between the perpetrators and the victims of genocide, and the absence of such disparities between the perpetrators and victims of mass warfare.<sup>24</sup> Not only because such disparities may also exist in massacres in war, but because the relationship between the self and the other, even if there is an acquisitive and power component, is distinct in genocidal slaughters. For the genocidal killer defines his or herself by and through the death of the other. That is why disfigurement and dismemberment are central to genocidal murder and peripheral in mass warfare where it is restricted to the actions of psychopaths.

I suggest the following:

1. There is a symbiotic relationship between the split that the communicative body of the refugee in exile experiences, and the split symbolically committed against the physical body in genocidal acts; similarly, there is a symbiotic relationship between the vision of homogeneity of the one and the division of the polis by forcing and keeping the other group in exile;
2. 'Being home' and the definition of 'homeland' - that is home for whom and by whom - are integral to the imagined self-definition of both groups - the exile community and those who sent them into exile - but the imaginative constructs are radically at odds as is clear in the ideologies of the PARMAHUTU and the Tutsi-dominated ideology of a Rwandese nation;
3. There is a complementary relationship between counting the living bodies of a polity, counting the dead bodies for a reborn polity, and not counting the dead bodies of a genocide by the killers when they still control the body politic;

Genocide is always and only committed against the proximate other who, by the genocide, is defined as other than the self in the effort to equate the other with the enemy other. Levinas wrote:

War can be produced only when a being postponing its death is exposed to violence. It

can be produced only when discourse was possible: discourse subtends war itself. Moreover violence does not aim at simply disposing of the other as one disposes of a thing, but, already at the limit of murder, it proceeds from unlimited negation. It can aim only at a presence itself infinite despite its insertion in the field of my powers. Violence can aim only at the face.<sup>25</sup>

For Levinas, violence is a product of a communicative body. But in this essay, I differentiate between violence which negates the other as a thing, an obstacle in the path whom the violator need not confront or face, in contrast to violence which aims to deface the face, which figures on disfiguring the body. The latter is genocide; the former is not no matter how many are killed. The state of war may suspend morality (Levinas 1969, 21), but the act of genocide undermines morality. Genocide is not a trial by force, since the other is generally virtually impotent. Genocide is not a test of the real, but aims to injure and annihilate persons as well as destroy their continuity, not only in this life, as is the aim of war, but in the exile in any possible hereafter. That is why, unlike war, genocide is a religious act however obscene that may sound.

Golda Meir said that she could forgive the Arabs for killing Israelis, but she could not forgive them for making the youth of Israel kill. For in turning teenagers into soldiers that kill, the youth no longer recognized themselves in the roles they were forced to play. That is war. It corrupts the self. But genocide does not transform the members of a people into that which they are not naturally, but transforms them through genocidal murderous acts into who they purportedly should naturally be. War makes the other faceless; genocide defaces the other. War creates a mask for those forced to kill; genocide unmask the mythological cultural face beneath the sur-face of civilization. That is why, though war may be enacted on behalf of religion, genocide is a religious act. As such, it is well to turn to a religious text to understand the difference between war and genocide.

## **Judges**

The Israelites were double exiles. First, they came to a land which they acknowledged was not theirs, and settled on it. They were immigrants from another place. Secondly, they became environmental refugees, forced to go to Egypt for food, and then kept there as slaves (according to their self-narrative). In the second coming “home”, they had to conquer the land and take it from the local inhabitants. Joshua led that conquest.

The book of Judges is situated in the Bible after the book of Joshua and before the Book of Ruth and the First Book of Samuel, where Saul is crowned as the first king of Israel. After Moses died, *Joshua* depicts the crossing of the Jordan River by the twelve tribes of Israel, the conquest of the land and driving out the local inhabitants, the Amorites, the division of that land among the twelve tribes, and the encounters between the Israelites and their neighbours, including the acceptance of local practices into the religion of the Hebrews. Joshua ends with the Israelites rededicating themselves to the service of God and obedience to a set of laws and ordinances decreed by Joshua before he died.

The Book of Ruth takes place during the period of Judges, and in the Talmudic tradition is attached to *Judges* when there was law but no rule of law since there was no ultimate coercive authority presiding over the Israelites to enforce the law. In Saint Augustine's description in *The City of God*, the people were a body politic united by consent of law and a community of interest but no ultimate earthly authority or head.

*Ruth* begins with the rationale for emigration. There had been a famine in the land, and Elimelech of Beit Lechem migrated to Moab with his wife Naomi and his two sons. While there, the two sons had married Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth, but Elimelech and his two sons all died. After failing to dissuade Ruth from going with her lest Ruth encounter discrimination as a foreigner, Naomi returned with Ruth to the land of her ancestors, and, with Ruth's seduction of (Ruth lies down on the threshing floor at the foot of the sleeping Boaz) and remarriage to the very recently widowed Boaz, a relative of Naomi's husband, Naomi successfully redeemed the land of her husband. King David was a descendent of the marriage of Boaz and the Moabite, Ruth. The story of Ruth's piety is legend. (Ruth follows the laws of her adopted religion strictly, even restricting her right to redeem the gleanings of the field to two ears of corn even if more are dropped) The loyalty of a *shicksa* stands in sharp contrast to the message of wariness of foreigners, their disloyalty and corrupting influence in *Judges*. There were clearly two opposite tendencies under the system of law without a ruler to enforce them. On the one hand, there was the lofty morality exhibited by Ruth who accepted responsibility without asking for reciprocity in advance. On the other hand, there is the distrust, wars and violence described in the same period in *Judges*.

I will concentrate on the atrocity and war story of *Judges* 19-21, but I first want to put the story in context of the immediately preceding stories. Chapter 16 ends the familiar story of Sampson and Delilah with Sampson's death. The story is a heroic tale of strength and power, deception, and destruction in the rivalry between the twelve tribes of Israel and the Philistines, the sea people living along the coast. It is also a tale with a moral against mixed marriages and fraternizing with the surrounding peoples. In the Hutu refugee camps of Tanzania, the story of Sampson and Delilah was retold. "Among biblical analogies, this was a regularly recurring one. It associated marrying the other with betrayal and deception, just as it did in the mythico-history of the past. The Delilah in the past, the archetypal "beautiful Tutsi woman" was cast as "bait" for enticing Hutu men into servitude and, finally, into death. The connection between intermarriage and death was quite concrete, and Delilah's betrayal was attributed [to] malicious forethought and instrumentality."<sup>26</sup>

Chapter 17 introduces Micah, tells a tale revealing that the tribe of Dan were idol worshippers, and that Levites of the priestly clan sell their services to idol worshippers for a steady salary.<sup>27</sup> Chapter 18 begins by telling us for the umpteenth time that Israel lacked a king or rule of law, so that every man did what was right in his own eyes. In other words, Israel was then a "failed" or "collapsed" state,<sup>28</sup> or an incomplete state. Though the story says that the Danites or members of the tribe of Dan<sup>29</sup> had "no inheritance", this does not mean they were without land, but that they did not have enough land to pass



onto their children.<sup>30</sup> Just as Joshua was chosen by Moses, five men were chosen to “spy out the land”. And where did they go? To the hill country of Ephraim; in particular, they went and stayed with Micah. When they recognized Micah’s employee as a priest, they asked the Levite whether their trip to find land will be successful. The Levite priest assures them that their quest for land will indeed succeed.

The five spies and explorers locate La’ish, inhabited by a wealthy, but quiet and unsuspecting people. Further, they were far from the Sidonians (Sidon is in Southern Lebanon today) and seemed to have “no dealings with anyone.” In other words, they were not part of a regional defensive military alliance. Six hundred warriors set forth to conquer this spacious and fertile land.<sup>31</sup> But before they set out on their conquest, they not only stole Micah’s graven image and other religious objects of worship, seduced the priest to join them to serve a whole tribe rather than just one family, but they abducted Micah’s children and stole his cattle. (*Judges* 18:21) They fractured the most basic laws of the land by abusing the hospitality of their Ephraimite host. Then they went La’ish, killed all the people, including women and children, and burnt their dwellings. There is no record of the number killed or how they were killed, only that they were all taken by surprise and effectively slaughtered. The Danites, idol worshippers, abusers of hospitality in a most heinous way, and mass killers in the quest for land, are not portrayed in a very favourable light

But the slaughter was not a genocide. All the members of the group were killed, not because they were proximate others whom one wanted to define as enemies, but because they were enemies who simply stood in the way of the Danite need for *lebensraum*. There was no need for the imagination either to remember the dead or to erase the dead from memory. The others considered as enemies, even though perfectly innocent, even though children and women were included in the atrocity, were murdered but not effaced. The Danites then rebuilt the city of Dan on the ashes of La’ish,<sup>32</sup> but note that La’ish was destroyed in order for Dan to be build. The destruction is not hidden and the slaughter is recorded.

Now to the main story I want to tell. Like the previous story, this tale begins with a Levite sojourning in the northern hills, in the territory of Ephraim. His concubine<sup>33</sup> had a fight with her priestly husband and ran back to her father’s home in Bethlehem. She was there four months before her husband followed to persuade her with kind words to return. The concubine’s father and her husband spent a few days together eating and drinking, the father inducing his son-in-law to stay one more day, and then one more day again. But this time, the Levite determined to leave even though it was already late in the fifth day of his visit.

Starting late, the Levite and his entourage could not reach home that day. The travellers refused to stay with the non-Israelite Jebusites<sup>34</sup> even though it was late. When they arrived at Gibrāh<sup>35</sup>, a town of the tribe of Benjamin, no one would take them in. This was a double sin. The fundamental law of hospitality to strangers had been breeched. By failing to treat the Other as a guest, a division was immediately made in the people of Israel, for the Other, the Levite, was not treated as like unto like. Secondly, this particular stranger was a Levite, a priest. Eventually, someone from the tribe of Ephraim,

then sojourning in the Benjamite town, invited the Levite family in. Thugs came to the house and demanded that the stranger be turned over to them. The Ephraimite refused; instead, he offered his own virgin daughter and the concubine for them to rape. The thugs rejected the offer, but the visiting priest threw his concubine out to them. The thugs gang raped her all night and then killed her.

This is where the gruesome part of the story really starts. The Levite returned home with the corpse of his concubine, cut her up into twelve pieces, and sent the parts to all the tribes of Israel, including the Benjamites in other towns nearby.<sup>36</sup> The tribes and their chiefs gathered at Mizpah (400,000 armed men) where the Levite told the story of the abomination that had been committed. Not taking in a stranger who is a Levite is one thing, but raping and killing a priest's concubine is a crime of a completely different order. (Evidently, dismembering her corpse, not giving her a proper burial, and transporting the parts around Israel were not heinous sins compared to the offense committed against the Levite, presumably because the gang rape and killing had already abominated the body.) Unanimously, the warriors agreed to wreck revenge on the town of Gibeah. They sent 10% of their forces to Gibeah to demand the surrender of the perpetrators of the crime so that they could be put to death. The Benjamites refused, mustered 26,000 men and 700 additional original inhabitants of Gibeah who lived with them; these were left handed sharp shooters who never missed with their sling shots. The volunteers from the tribe of Judah were chosen to fight on the first day on behalf of the allied Israelites.

The battle was a slaughter, not of the Benjamites, but of the allies gathered against them. 22,000 fell in that first day. On the second day, 18,000 were slain. The non-Benjamite Israelis seemed wary of fighting their brethren for a third day, but God instructed them to go to battle and promised to deliver victory to them. This time they set up an ambush as well as a decoy to draw the Benjamites away from the city and the deadly accurate blows of the stones from the slingshots on the walls of the city. Though only thirty men were lost in the decoy, the Benjamites thought they had victory and began to rob the people on the highway. Just then those in ambush sent up a smoke signal, the fleeing force turned and, along with those who were in ambush, attacked and defeated the Benjamites who lost 25,100 men altogether. The Benjamites turned only to see that their city had been burnt in the meanwhile. They tried to flee to the wilderness, but the opposing force pursued and cut them down. 18,000 warriors were lost in the battle and the retreat. The Benjamites then lost another 5,000 on the highways and 2,000 who had sought safety in Giddon. Finally, 600 who had fled to Rimmon and hid there for four months were found and massacred.

Horrific enough? It gets worse. For although the rest of the Israelites had destroyed a good part of the tribe of Benjamin, they were not interested in committing genocide and wanted the tribe to survive. This is critical for it indicates a commitment to the preservation of diversity and plurality within the body politic of Israel in contrast to the politics of an authoritarian polity.<sup>37</sup> We are told how many died and how many were left. However, the major Benjamite city had been destroyed with all the people in it. How were the remnant of Benjamites to reproduce? The Israelites had vowed not to give their own daughters in marriage to the Benjamites.

In the process of saving the tribe of Benjamin, they produced more slaughters and mayhem to punish while facilitating the survival of the remnant. The Israelite warriors turned on local towns - specifically the Israelites of Jabesh-Gilead (the same town that Saul would save before he became king) - who had not volunteered soldiers. More specifically, 12,000 turned on Jabesh-Gilead and put to the sword women and children and infants. But the people were not all slaughtered. The Israelites allowed 400 virgins to live, gave them to the remnant of their Benjamite brother warriors. Since this number was still insufficient, they then allowed the Benjamites to abduct women from Shiloh while the young ladies were dancing among the vineyards in a religious celebration, for that would not literally be giving the Benjamites their daughters. Shiloh was the centre of Israelite worship at the time, site of the tabernacle and where inter-tribal problems were settled (such as the division of the conquered territory amongst the twelve tribes - *Joshua* 18). So the tribe of Benjamin was allowed to survive. And Judges ends with its propagandistic apologetic refrain for a monarchy: "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man *Judges* 20:25)

Anarchy. Life that was violent, brutish and short. Brother turned against brother. A sharp contrast to the deep motherly love and self-sacrifice of Ruth, the Moabite and mother of the Davidic line. The numbers of foreign peoples, including men, women, and children, slaughtered by the Danites in their conquest of the north and search for *lebensraum* were not even estimated. The most fundamental norms of a civilized people were wantonly transgressed - hospitality was not only refused to strangers, but the concubine of that stranger was gang raped and killed. Further, she was not given a decent burial, but was dismembered by her husband to arouse the passion for revenge. Huge numbers were lost in battle on both sides- 25% of the total Israelite warrior population. The numbers killed in battle are faithfully recorded. Except for some virgin teenagers, the population, including infants, children and women, of a nearby town were slaughtered. Other women were abducted just so the tribe of Benjamin could survive after the major phalanx of the tribal male warriors were slaughtered.

These are not pleasant stories. Further, God seemed to sanction the whole enterprise. Seemed! Were not the people of Dan idol worshippers? Had not a Levite joined in the idol worship? I leave these theological questions for another time and place. My concern is the counting of friendly enemies - the Benjamites - and the discounting and non-counting of the enemies considered as totally other. My concern is the dismemberment of the raped and murdered concubine by her priest/husband who uses those body parts to arouse the passion for revenge of the Israelites. I differentiate the killing of others in battle and the slaughters depicted, and contrast them with genocide.

## **Genocide**

In Spielberg's film, *Schindler's List*, Amon Goeth, the Nazi villain, was antithetical to Jews because they celebrated memory. He was determined to destroy their memories, their pictures and their places. Recall Amon's boastful speech about how the Nazis were making history by destroying over 500 years of Jewish history in Krakow. The identity of the Jewish community built over time was ruptured by deportations and disappearances. In a system which celebrated the arbitrary *under the*

*cover of bureaucratic regularity*, and which systematically set out to destroy any sense of history, the goal of Greek ethical thought - to "make the goodness of a good human life safe from luck through the controlling power of reason"<sup>38</sup> - was impossible.

The destruction of the memory of the Jews was a critical part of the genocide. Routinized torture was another part. It was used to negate the humanity of the Jews and undermine the foundations of liberalism rooted in the dictum that, "cruelty is the worst thing we do".<sup>39</sup> If wiping out the past is one part of genocide, debasing the physicality of the body is the other. The battles described in Judges were not cruel even though approximately 65,000 soldiers were killed in three days. Even the destruction of La'ish, with all the women and children, was horrific, but it is not described in terms of cruelty. Cruelty entails deliberately inflicting suffering, not just death. Those who inflict cruelty take pleasure in the pain and distress of another human being. Carlyle wrote somewhere that the puniness of man is the centre of a cruel and frowning universe. But whatever the reason, murder in itself is not necessarily cruel. What the thugs did to the Levite's concubine, gang raping her all night and then leaving her for dead, was cruel. But it was not a genocidal act. *In genocide, an act must be both cruel and be intent on destroying a proximate other group defined as an alien or enemy other.* It means destroying the memory of the other and defacing the other as one whom one cannot face. In the capture of La'ish, the existence of a community was indeed destroyed, but the memory of the act, even the name of the town they occupied before it became Dan, was preserved. The act of destroying La'ish was immoral, uncivilized, and inhumane. But it did not entail the destruction of memory.

Thus, I want to differentiate between a massacre which results in the destruction of a specific group from its existence on earth, and genocide which entails two additional steps - carrying out the act in a cruel way which dehumanizes the people in the process and, further, aims to eliminate the memory of the people from history.<sup>40</sup> Such an act is only inflicted on people who are both other and proximate. The enemy other can be destroyed but it will not be an act of genocide.

Is genocide then a spontaneous act of murder driven by primitive tribal passions as a spontaneous expression of tribal hatred? Or is it a calculated political act? Although the latter accurately characterizes the political instrumentalism necessary to bring about a genocide, the point of this essay is to argue that the phenomenology of genocide reveals an even deeper and more profound meaning. The object is to purify the self in relationship to proximate others. And in doing so, the other must be deconstructed as a physical self to deny its existence as a communicative agent. The manipulation depends on reifying one's own ethnic group and depicting the ethnicity of the other in terms of a physical phenotype reflective of a debased culture.<sup>41</sup> The self is purportedly returned to its natural, pure state before the alleged invasion of the other so that one can turn one's back on the Proximate Other, so that one can efface the other. Mutilation of the other is the means of pushing the proximate other into the camp of the enemy other.

### **Hannah Arendt: Genocide, the Self and the Other**

## The Self and the Other in Rwanda<sup>42</sup>

In the mythology of both the Hutu and the Tutsi peoples (suggesting the peoples had common origins), the Hutu were said to be earth or grave-diggers while the Tutsi were mythically said to be God-like creatures descended from the heavens.<sup>43</sup> Malkki describes the Hutu myths of autochthonous origins and purity versus the veil and deceitful origins of the Tutsi who portray themselves as Rwandese, not Tutsi. (Malkki 1995, 72) Rene Lemarchand (see endnote 30) has done the same. Genocide is a religious ritual of self-purification in terms of a reified image of the self divorced from the Other. In confronting the Other, the genocidal Hutu does not see a reflection of itself. Nor does the genocidal Hutu see a Proximate Other, a neighbour with whom he can live. At the same time, this Hutu sees himself as the expression and embodiment of the true spirit of the nation, alienated from that true spirit because of the presence of the alien Other disguised as part of Oneself. Whatever the shortcomings of the genocidal Hutu, he throws off what he considers his slavish morality and becomes certain of himself as the embodiment of the true spirit of the nation. In Hegel's words, the Hutu "is now a self-consciousness that communes with its own self."<sup>44</sup> In doing so, he comes to worship a particular shape of himself, to make an idol of himself, in contrast to the false idolization of the Tutsi that he believed he was previously forced to kneel before.

Further, unlike the imported Catholic religion from Europe, in the religion of Hutu idolatry and the smashing of the Tutsi idols, religion becomes a part of everyday life lived in the real world. The genocidal Hutu, conscious of him or herself as an actor in the world, was imbued with a spirit, a sense of being attached and part of a life force. The new idolotrous religion in worship of a reified Hutu demands that the combination of spirit and religion dedicated to reconceptualizing the self and deconceptualizing the other become one as the spirit of the idolotry of the 'natural' Hutu must be realized by the destruction of the face of the Tutsis now perceived as false idols.

The old Tutsi idolotrous religion was perceived as a false and deceitful one in which Rwandese nationality was used to reinforce the servitude of the Hutu and make them into slaves. Religion was taken to be a succession of shapes, the shape of the Tutsi corporeal body as tall and thin and aristocratic and covered up by the sacrificial idol of Jesus on the cross as the mode of using the imported religion to keep the Hutu in subjection by ostensibly reverencing the weak and the humble. But the shape of Tutsi idolatry was a false religion which must be succeeded by a revolutionary religion that turns the Hutu into a truly sovereign people free from their former masters.

(T)he 'shapes' which are the 'shapes' of the totality of *Spirit*, display themselves in a temporal succession; for only the whole has true actuality and therefore the form of pure freedom in the face of an 'other', a form which expresses itself as Time.<sup>45</sup>

The problem is that the idolotrous religion of Hutu nationalism must be constructed on the revolution against the idolotrous worship of Tutsi superiority, by, at the same time, effacing the former idols, destroying them as graven images, denying their existence in real time, at the same time as the

exaltation of the new religion is built on the glorification of that act of destruction. The goal is to make oneself whole again, to recover one's integrity, to overcome one's self-alienation, one's mythical long migration from one's true self during the false reign of the Tutsi conquerors. One wants to become whole, but the process of becoming whole calls for two very contradictory acts - glorification of the revolution against the false idolotry of the past and the destruction of those idols, and the effacement of the memory of those false idols. The Spirit can only know itself as a Spirit beyond such self-contradictions in the frenzy of destruction of the old idolotry.

The Hutu attempted to overcome this dichotomy by writing a narrative in which the Hutu travels backwards rather than forwards in time, where one sets out to discover the Natural self before the imposition of false gods and rulers, where one was immediately in touch with oneself. And one does so in the ferment and fire and rediscovery of the self in the revolutionary fervor when the idols of the old order were smashed and the PARMAHUTU revolution took place. The self was reborn. In the dawn of the new order, in the sunrise of a new era, when the lord and master were displaced, both the inner masters in the form of the Tutsi, and the external masters in the form of the Belgian colonialists, were exiled; the shape of the new Hutu has yet to be formed. This shapeless shape and the shaping of the shapeless constituted the new national idol. In destroying the inherited structure, the genesis and rebirth of the nation was experienced.

But in the worship of a shapeless form yet to be shaped while contending it was fully shaped as a natural inheritance, the new nation lacked both direction and structure. It develops without either aim, stability or the guiding hand of intelligence until it is overthrown in a military coup by Habyarimana in 1973. The previous regime depended on the persecution of the Tutsi as the alien proximate other for giving itself whatever definition it had. The second revolution required no such justification, and the persecution of the Tutsi was stopped. The Hutus discovered that they were subjects and not just objects, agents of history and not just its victims, but only by producing victims and only by defining themselves in opposition to the overthrown Other. The Hutu now had power, but they did not yet have a vision of what it was for, except the negation of the rule of the Other.

Habyarimana set out to give that new idol an authentic shape in creating a productive and honest if authoritarian administration. In the next ten years, the economy boomed, international aid flowed in, and Habyarimana managed to spend the smallest percentage of the national income on the military. Rwanda seems to have discovered the shape of itself as a unitary Hutu nation with a Tutsi minority. But then reality hit. Tin prices dropped. The price of its even larger prime export, coffee, plummeted. The artificial unity of government and business as a synergistic mutual supporting group now revealed itself to be, not a unitary nation, but a multiplicity of individuals vying for a larger segment of an ever-shrinking pot. In the place of self-sacrifice, self interest and corruption revealed themselves under the force of the World Bank and IMF dicta to restructure. The selfless self in service to the nation was replaced by self-interested selves competing to get at a shrinking trough. The religion of nationalism was quickly turning into the religion of material greed.

The multiplication of political parties in the move to democratization was not so much an exemplification of competing ideologies vying for the favour of the sovereign people, but the destructive competition of warring groups using politics to foster their proximity to the trough. Instead of one national spirit, a host of competing and antagonistic national spirits emerged in the name of political pluralism and the construction of a democratic regime. But it was not primarily a struggle for ideas or for the hearts and minds of the people; it was an animal fight to the death for a life now envisioned as a system of spoils.

Propelled by the invasion of the exiles under the banner of the RPF, Habyarimana had transformed himself from the successor to the shapeless and formless PARMAHUTU regime, and the true founder of the shaping of the Hutu nation of Rwanda, into the manipulator mediating between the hardliners of the old religion<sup>46</sup> as the guise for corruption and greed, and the proponents of the new religion of democracy and pluralism to cover the various attempts to get a piece of the action. Habyarimana, the manipulator and player of one against the other, ostensibly stood above the fray. But if the master manipulator was too fluid and flexible, he was deemed to be betraying the rigidity of the old order. If he took too rigid a posture, a swarm of bees stung the frozen form to reveal that the spirit of the nation had deserted the embodiment of the new idolotry. More and more, Habyarimana revealed himself not to be the mover and the shaker, but a lifeless force being pushed this way and that by forces that had gone out of his control. Almost four years after the beginning of the civil war, after the opening to multi-party government and the respect for human rights and freedom of speech as the new imposed order, Habyarimana was not even in a position to negotiate the peace signed at Arusha on 4 August 1993. All he could do was stall the onset of his retirement into a lifeless role as a ceremonial head of government, or be delivered from his impossible predicament by being cast aside as a corpse in sacrifice to the last hurrah of the revival of an even more purified Hutu religion which required the actual destruction of the faces of the Other as part of the Hutu nation. For the Tutsi, with their allegedly fifth column of Hutu allies, were considered to be an evil force sucking out the spirit of the pure nation from within.

With the murder of Habyarimana and the shooting down of his plane after he had agreed to implement the final stages of the Arusha Peace Accord, the orgy of the idolotrous religion of a purified Hutu nation had its last hurrah in the murder of over a million Tutsi and moderate Hutus. The spirit of the pure Hutu nation has turned to destroy the images of those who had led the invasion from outside by destroying the face of their reflections in their midst. The worst genocide since World War II was perpetrated under the eyes of an international force specifically tasked to protect civilians as well as preserve the peace. If Hitler had accomplished in four years what the interhamwe had accomplished in four months, all the Jews of Europe would have been murdered in eighteen months.

### **Counting the Living and the Dead<sup>47</sup>**

The order maintaining and order transforming functions of government<sup>48</sup> had given way or were usurped by the order destroying efforts of the genocidal extremists. The calculative rationality of a

regime of a government had turned its energy into organizing the most efficient destructive orgy of modern times. There were two wars - the civil war against the RPF and the war against the proximate other, the defenceless Tutsis in their midst. The real energies were fixed on destroying the proximate Other and not the war effort against the RPF, even though the RPA, the government army, outmanned and outgunned the attacking forces.

In the Arusha Accords, very precise divisions were debated in the sharing of power among the various political groups and in the integration of the new army with very specific ratios allocated between the RPF and the RPA in the officer and enlisted contingents. The demobilization was to proceed according to a precise numerical plan. Even the 900,000 internally displaced were to be restored to their homes according to an exact timetable over the next twelve months, but after the signing of the Peace Accord, the 600,000 internally displaced who could move home were back in the next two weeks.

Counting as the very foundation of an enlightened rational government order was constantly being upset by the disorder of the world. When General Dallaire thought he needed eight thousand soldiers as peacekeepers in Rwanda, and was ready to get by with five thousand, he was told to request 2,400, for that was all the United States would approve; needs or demands were displaced by domestic political perceptions. The Arusha Accords had asked the United Nations to assume responsibility for recovering hidden arms caches, but the mandate of the peacekeepers in the haunting aftermath of Somalia said that the peacekeepers were only to help the gendarmie and the army to reclaim the arms, even though everyone knew that the extremists in the military bore prime responsibility for hiding the arms. Promises were made for helicopters and armoured personnel carriers, but were never delivered by the bean counters. And when Ndadye, the first Hutu elected head of government in Burundi, was assassinated in October, and over 300,000 Burundian refugees fled into Rwanda to provide ready recruits for the extremists and reinforce support already strengthened by the assassination itself, the upholders of the rational order kept rigidly to the agreements already signed, even though the transition to the new government was already being stalled.

The *cogito* would not allow itself to see what it did not want to see if seeing meant the deployment of more corporeal bodies to foster the peace. Even when assassinations were traced to the Rwandese army by the peacekeepers, even when arms caches were uncovered, and even when the precise plans of the genocide leaked by the best possible source were cabled to New York by General Dallaire on 11 January 1994, reason remained senseless and stupid, and the planning for genocide proceeded apace. And when the genocide began, what did the UN do - check out when 10 UN peacekeepers were mutilated and killed, call for peace and the restoration of negotiations between the genocidal killers and the RPF. Rationality had turned its efforts to performing as a blind witness and remaining insensitive to the atrocities being committed.

And what of the genocidal killers? They now had the sanction of a government, however illegitimate that power was. And the international community did virtually nothing to delegitimize the



authority of that government.<sup>49</sup> The religious passion of defining the other as the source of evil was now reinforced by the capture of the seats of a purportedly rational authority. The Proximate Other as the embodiment of evil and injustice had been reinforced by propaganda and the new idolatrous religion of the worship of the purity of the Hutu nation. The state had now become the embodiment of both power and religious orthodoxy.

If governments largely insisted in the name of rationality and order in remaining insensitive and blind to the emergence of this genocidal murderous regime, what about the eyes and ears of the world, the international media? While 2500 reporters flocked to South Africa in expectation of reporting on a blood bath when Mandela took power, the events in Rwanda had gone largely unnoticed and unrecorded. There was a small mention of the crash of Habyarimana's plane. Then nothing. Until the bodies started floating down into Lake Victoria.

The coverage of violence in Central Africa, beginning with the horrors in the Congo in the sixties and seventies, has followed a predictable pattern. As soon as the news of the killings begins to spread, the cameras arrive and the focus of attention is almost universally on the body count and the plight of the survivors...Where television is concerned, African news is only big news when it involves lots of dead bodies. The higher the mound, the greater the possibility that the world will, however briefly, send its camera teams and correspondents. Once the story has gone 'stale', i.e. there are no new bodies and the refugees are down to a trickle, the circus moves on. The powerful images leave us momentarily horrified but largely ignorant, what someone memorably described as 'compassion without understanding.'" (Keane 1995, 7)

The real coverage began with the crossing of what was reported as one million Hutu refugees in one day into Goma. That, and the presence of Western humanitarian aid workers, really captured the imagination of the media, disregarding the fact that at least 10% of the refugees were probably genocidal killers. Numbers counted. The more the better, even if the result was the recording of 1,200,000 refugees in Zaire when there were likely only 800,000.

The fact is, counting is the fundamental foundation for a rational order of government. But it can also be used to ignore and hide from oneself the combination of religious passions and interests that turn into a deadly combination. Blind reason and religious visionary passion combined to produce genocide in Rwanda.

## **Dismemberment and Membership**

Christianity had differentiated between the mystical body of Christ and the physical body of Christ. Christ as a corporeal body could die on the cross but the mystical body of Christ would live forever. By becoming part of that mystical body, salvation was offered to everyone for eternity. The corporeal body had been split from the communicative body in order to escape the original sin which

Saint Augustine had claimed was an inherent aspect of the corporeal body. Even the mutilation of the flesh could be justified in the name of salvation. This meant that humans were inherently in exile from themselves.

In mediaeval political theory, the king was said to have two bodies, his corporeal, flawed and mortal self, while he was considered immortal with respect to his role in the body politic and the respect rendered to his person.<sup>50</sup> That is why, from the perspective of the sovereign in his role, in his communicative body, there was always a radical alterity between the sovereign and his/her subjects. In modern Cartesian philosophy, the self was divided between the *res extensa*, the corporeal body, and the mind. This division of the self recurs in many forms in ancient, mediaeval and modern thought. But the stress in Kant and post-Kantian thought has been on searching for a way to integrate the divided self rather than to reinforce the division.

But in modernity, when dismemberment of the self is turned from a virtue into a fault, the cause of that divisiveness is often projected onto another. I am not at one with myself because the social order has divided me from my true self. The source of the division can be projected onto a ruling class, a political oligarchy, or a group of people living in one's midst who are said to have corrupted the body politic and prevented oneself from being raised as an integrated being. So we project our division onto the other as a mode of integrating the self. This is the root of ethnic hatred and racism. "The ethnicity of the body is built into its dismemberment and disfigurement. Violence constructs the ethnic body as the metonym of sectarian social space."<sup>51</sup>

That is why we disfigure those we do not want to figure or count as part of the body politic. We want to strike at their soul through their corporeal being. We want to ex-communicate the communicative body.

We feel the other's e-motional being is central to them, to their identity, to their ability to be with us, in a way that is not quite true of other modes of apprehension. The other's thoughts are the key to their 'insides', as in their imaginative life or their memorial life, but somehow we experience these as somewhat more of a foundation of their history than we do the other's emotional life, which seems to define them in a way more determined by their facticity at that moment, in a way analogous to what we feel about their embodiment. We know that their thinking is not likely to change on this or that subject, but it doesn't seem quite as much part and parcel of the core of their being as do their emotions with which we identify them.<sup>52</sup>

Merleau-Ponty (*The Phenomenology of Perception*, 146) wrote that, "the body is essential as expressive space." To reduce that expressiveness, one attacks the face of that body in the Proximate Other as the foreign, the unnatural, the evil versus the merely expendable who we murder and slaughter in war. That is why those who laid siege to the weak remnant in the town of Israelites that had not come forth to fight with the Israelites against the Benjamites (Samuel I:11) refused to accept their

surrender and servitude. Those who had laid siege to the town, instead, threatened to mutilate them by gouging out their right eye. They are not simply interested in conquest. They want to humiliate Israel by taking on the weakest, those who had just been punished by the rest of the tribes of Israel. Instead, of course, Saul responded by destroying those who had laid siege. Saul practiced war. The enemies of Israel wanted to practice genocide.

## **Implications**

Assuming these insights into the difference between warfare and genocide have some truth, assuming that genocide does indeed consist of the attempt to mutilate the corporeal body of the Proximate Other in order to ex-communicate the communicative body of the unwanted part of the body politic, does this have any implications for how we respond to genocide? I suggest it does. For we are forced to turn back and try to understand why our rational, realist perspective helped both to blind us to the events underway and to undercut any efforts at stopping the tragic course that the Hutu/Tutsi conflict was taking. We are so concerned with the counting constitutive of rational theories of membership in the body politic, as if the body politic were just an aggregate of individuals, that we do not even understand why we cannot even count in our blindness to the forces that seek to dismember one part of the body politic in the quest for purification of the remainder.

I suggest that the reason for that blindness is that we are sufficiently inattentive to the same forces in our own body politic.

## ENDNOTES

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1. The body may be a corporeal entity, but in the social embodiment of the body, what we make and do with bodies and how we represent them, sometimes reveal how that body is regarded in social space. Structural, functional, and class analysis had dominated sociology. Bryan S. Turner's *The Body & Society* (London: Sage, 1984; 1996), closely followed by John O'Neill's works, inverted traditional sociology by arguing that the body in all its dimensions, rather than social rational abstractions, ought to be the axis of sociological analysis in which major social and political processes are problematized in and expressed through the body. Only one finds no analysis in that literature of the most heinous social crime of all to the body - genocide. Further, Turner's neo-logistic theory of contemporary late capitalist or post-modern society as a *somatic society* seems redundant since all societies engage in this activity; the body is not simply the vehicle for expressing though its condition political and social problems. While much of the literature on embodiment is concerned with contemporary uses of the body to express the good life in a fit, healthy and beautiful body while rejecting the aged, the diseased, and damaged body, where the body is seen as the centre of a culture of hedonistic practice, this story is concerned with the more fundamental ontological possibilities of embodiment. So I am not interested in reading more papers on cults or punkers who pierce, colour and tattoo bodies as signs of membership in a tribe. Much of the phenomenological tradition of embodiment concerns itself with the fragility of life and brutality. This essay starts with fragility and brutality to contrast those processes which transform that fragility and brutality into a system of order. That means that, unlike Michel Foucault and his followers, who, influenced by Kojève, see the essential mode of intervention between two bodies as one of power, this analysis sees the inter-subjective relationship as a tension primarily between the use of the other for self and the effort of the self to define itself. The primary character of that self is **not** control over the other, but narcissistic self-absorption, what Hannah Arendt called "thoughtlessness", the inability of the communicative body to empathize and enter into the thought processes of someone who thinks differently.

2. The use of the Bible may seem strange since we are dealing with Hutu/Tutsi violence in the heart of Africa, but one should remember how often biblical stories are told among both peoples to illustrate a point, for most of the Rwandese were raised as Catholics. But the use goes deeper. In Hutu mythological lore, a Hutu woman told Liisa Malkki that, "We are the descendants of Israelites. History says so. This was seen in 1972 when President Micombero proclaimed on the radio [that] we are Israelites. Our habits very much resemble the habits of Israelites." (Liisa H. Malkki, *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology Among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995, 100)

<sup>3</sup> This does not mean that there are not other killings that are akin to genocide. For example, cf. James Allen, Hilton Als, John Lewis and Leon F. Litwack, *Twin Palms*, 2000, and the review essay, "Hometown America's Black Book," by Larry McMurry, *New York Review of Books*, XLVII: 20, December 21, 2000. McMurry describes a generic kicking of a Black in which the victim "would have been hanged, burned, castrated, possibly flayed, shot, and dismembered, most of which did happen to a black man named Jesse Washington in Waco, Texas, May 16, 1916, while an estimated fifteen thousand people watched...A photograph of the burning of Jesse Washington, with a large white man pulling a chain to adjust him on the kindling like a slab of barbecue provides the endpapers for *Without Sanctuary*...When Jesse Washington, who had 'confessed' to the killing, tried to climb the hot chain to escape the hotter flames, his fingers were cut off and distributed as souvenirs." (p. 28) In contrast, white thieves, robbers and murderers were just hung.

4. Cf. Rene Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnocide as Discourse and Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994 where ethnicity is depicted "as a political resource deliberately manipulated by ethnic entrepreneurs for the specific purpose of facilitating their entry into the political arena." (P. 5) Essentialist Hutudom is merely a cultural construct inflating, objectifying, and ultimately distorting the cultural givens in response to changing conditions in a strategy designed to maximize ideological appeal.

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5. Cf. Arthur Frank, "For a sociology of the body: an analytic review," in M. Featherstone, M. Hepworth and B.S. Turner, eds., *The Body: Social Process and Cultural Theory*, London: Sage, 36-102. Frank discusses the two dimensions of the self related to itself and to the other, but defines another dimension in terms of desire and control, while I take desire as the fundamental character of the communicative body which determines the four possibilities of relationship to itself and the other.
6. Cf. John O'Neill, *The Communicative Body: Studies in Communicative Philosophy, Politics, and Sociology*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1989, 3.
7. John O'Neill, *Five Bodies: The Human Shape of Modern Society*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985, 23.
8. See, for example, *The Life of the Mind*, in the single volume paperback containing both Book I and II, HBJ 1981.
9. Contrast this activity with apocalyptic cults like the 39 in Heaven's Gate who committed suicide in California, the Canadian and Swiss suicides in the Solar Temple cult, the Branch Davidians, or the massive suicide/murders in the Jonestown massacre in Guyana. In those cases, the individuals took their own lives rather than the lives of others. But many of the same features were present leading to the massive violence but not self-dismemberment. The cultists were not genocidal killers but were at war with their own bodies. But like genocidal killers, they envisioned an either/or outcome - either they prevailed and their vision reigned, or evil overtook the rule of the world as they knew it. This made them ignore conventional laws and norms, prepare for utilizing violence by storing weapons in order to deal with what they viewed as persecution of the righteous, demonize their enemies in an eschatology of radical good versus evil, and made them blind to sound judgement in the socially encapsulated world in which they had placed themselves. The severe limitations placed on their communicative bodies made them willing to sacrifice their corporeal bodies. At least, in contrast to the genocidal killers, the bodies were their own. (Cf. Lorne L. Dawson, ed. *Cults in Context*, Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, 1996)
10. For a general discussion of the right to return of refugees, cf. Howard Adelman, "Refugees: The Right of Return" in *Group Rights*, ed. Judith Baker, University of Toronto Press, 1994, 164-185. For a more specific discussion of the right of return of Tutsi refugees from their exile before 1990, cf. Howard Adelman and Astri Suhrke, March 1996, *Early Warning and Conflict Management*, Volume 2 of *The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience*, Steering Committee of the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, Copenhagen, 1996. For a discussion of the resort to violence associated with refugees in exile, cf. my paper, "Refugee Warriors," presented at the International Studies Association Convention, *Coping with Insecurity: Threat more than Enemies*, Toronto, March 19, 1997, for the session "Refugees as Threat to State and Regional Stability in the
11. For an excellent novel which documents this split and the way it is represented in the dialectic between memory and history, cf. W.G. Sebald, tr. From the German by Michael Hulse, *The Emigrants*, New York: New Directions, 1997.
12. Daniel Warner, "Voluntary Repatriation and the Memory of Return to Home: A Critique of Liberal Mathematics," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 7:2-3, 1994, p. 162. To be home is to be with the Reflected Other.
13. Cf. Paul Tabori, *The Anatomy of Exile: A Semantic and Historical Study*, London, 1972, p. 27; see also Michael Seidel, *Exile and the Narrative Imagination*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986, p. 1.
14. Malkki (1995) 90.
15. Seidel (1986) 21.
16. Fergal Meade, *Season of Blood: A Rwandan Journey*, New York, Viking, 1995, p. 1.

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17. Ibid, Keane, 2.

18. G.W. F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, tr. A.V. Miller, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977, p. 441.

19. Malkki (1995) 90.

20. This calculation was based on a variety of techniques - demographic calculations, etc. - but mostly body counts of mass graves and the estimates of how many floating bodies down the river into Lake Victoria had not been recovered. The increase in figures after the fact is rare in humanitarian situations. The reverse is usually the case. In refugee studies we take number inflation as a matter of course. In the count of the homeless in Lebanon after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, OXFAM-GB had published full page advertisements to raise funds stating that 600,000 had been made homeless by the invasion of Lebanon. When we did our audit of twelve different counts, the actual figure was 60,000, and one-third of them had been made homeless after OXFAM-UK published its ad. (Cf. Howard Adelman, "Homeless Refugees and Displaced Persons in Southern Lebanon resulting from the Israeli Invasion of Lebanon - June 1982," a report published by the Refugee Documentation Project, York University, Toronto, August 1982.) The most recent case of inflated numbers displayed to the whole world occurred in Zaire where there were purportedly 1,200,000 Hutu refugees. Part of the problem when approximately 600,000 returned to Rwanda at the end of 1996 and up to 200,000 were reported as having been seen fleeing westward, was where the 400,000 phantom refugees were.

21. Kurt Jonassohn, "What Is Genocide?" in Helen Fein, ed. *Genocide Watch*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992, p. 18. For Kurt (and my other colleague at Concordia, Frank Chalk) "*Genocide* is a form of one-sided mass killing in which a state or other authority intends to destroy a group, as that group and membership in it are defined by the perpetrator." (p. 19) But as I will go on to show, when the tribe of Dan slaughtered every man, woman and child in a town and destroyed them, they felt no need to destroy the memory of them. They were simply all killed to make room for the killers. The killing of them did nothing for the identity of the self. Therefore, there is no need to inflict cruelty upon them or torture them. They are simply people in the way who need to be destroyed as completely and efficiently as possible. They are enemy others. In genocide, the target of violence are proximate others.

22. Cf. Leo Kuper, *Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.

23. Cf. Eric Markusen, "Genocide and Warfare," in Charles B. Strozier and Michael Flynn, *Genocide, War, and Human Survival*, London: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 75-86.

24. Cf. Barbara Harff, "Recognizing Genocides and Politicides," in Helen Fein, ed., *Genocide Watch*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 27-41.

25. Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969, 225.

26. Malkki (1995) 203.

27. The Levite employed by Micah was Jonathan, son of Gershon and grandson of Moses. (*Judges* 18:30)

28. Zartman called them "collapsed states". (William I. Zartman, eds., *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995.) Robert H. Jackson called them quasi-states in *Quasi-states, sovereignty, international relations and the Third World*: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Quasi-states were defined as negative sovereignty regimes resulting from adverse civic and socio-economic conditions. Weak, failed, collapsing, or quasi-states must not be confused with "virtual states" which occupy the very opposite end of the political spectrum. Virtual states are solid states which no longer depend on resources or

*Foreign Affairs* 75:4, July/August 1996, 45-61.) For a more detailed discussion of failed states, cf. Adelman, Howard, "Responding to State Failure," forthcoming in *Canadian Foreign Policy*, Spring, 1997, special issue on *Peace-Building and Democratic Development: Examining Canada's Policy Options*.

29. Dan was Jacob's fifth son, the first child of Bilah, Rachel's maid. Dan means "to judge or vindicate", because at the birth of Rachel's son by a surrogate mother (who is referred to as Jacob's concubine because Jacob slept with her, but she had no property rights), Rachel said "God has vindicated me." (*Genesis* 30:1-6) The Messiah was to be descended from the tribe of Dan on his mother's side. Dan had one son, and his descendants at the time of this tale were all idol worshippers as the story makes clear.

30. The tribe of Dan consisted of 62,700 adult males in one census (*Numbers* 2:26), and 64,400 in another census (*Numbers* 26:43) when the tribes of Israel had been in the wilderness. Although the territorial inheritance had been allocated by lot at Shiloh (*Joshua* 19:40-48) giving the tribe of Dan the territory just south of the tribe of Ephraim, north of the tribe of Judah, west of the Benjamites, with the non-Israelite Philistines to the east, the story is clear that the land is insufficient to support the population in the area between Eshtol and Zorah. The Danites are being squeezed on all sides, particularly the Amorites to the West. (*Judah* 15:11). So they were forced to seek new territory.

31. This recalls Jacob's words to his sons in the long poem at the end of *Genesis*, a poem said to have been written about the time this story takes place, around 1000 B.C.E. before national consolidation. (Cf. Gunther Plaut, in *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*, p. 307) Jacob says, "Dan shall be a serpent by the road, a viper by the path, that bites the horse's heels so that his rider is thrown backward." (*Genesis* 49:17; recall the curse that God gives to the serpent who shall crawl on its belly, eat dirt, and strike from behind at the weakest point, the heel of the unsuspecting - *Genesis* 14-15). In the blessing of Dan at the end of *Deuteronomy*, Moses said, "Dan is a lion's whelp that leaps forth from Bashan." (33:22) Dan is both a warrior tribe and a viper, a sneak who attacks his enemies from the rear, at his weakest point when he is unaware.

32. Dan was the northernmost limit of the promised land. Moses, before his death, was shown "all the land, even *Deuteronomy* 34:1)

33. A concubine (*piligesh* in Hebrew) is a wife without property rights and other rights of inheritance, though there were wide variations in practice.

34. Jerusalem was still occupied by the Jebusites at the time as it had not yet been conquered by David. The Jebusites were still regarded with suspicion, but the story may only mean that the Levite preferred to live among his kin on the mistaken assumption that that is where he could be expected to be treated well.

35. The Gibeonites controlled the access towns to Jerusalem and had successfully convinced Joshua that they were not Canaanites. Joshua signed a treaty of protection allowing them autonomy, and some of the Gibeonites even lived among the Israelites in Israelite towns.

36. After Abram is promised that he will have an heir even in his old age, God said to Abram (*Genesis* 15:7), "I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land as a possession." Adam then asked, (15:8) "O Lord God, how shall I know that I am to possess it?" God answered (15:9), "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old she-goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove and a young bird." Adam (15:10) brought God all these, cut all but the bird in two and placed each half opposite the other. In *Genesis* 15:13-16, Abram had a dream as the sun was about to set and a great dark dread had descended upon him. "And He [God] said to Abram, "Know well that your offspring shall be strangers in a land not theirs, and they shall be enslaved and oppressed for four hundred years; but I will execute judgement on the nation they shall serve, and in the end they shall go free with great wealth.

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As for you, You shall go to your Father in peace; You shall be buried at a ripe old age. And they shall return here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.” The passage continues (17-21), “when the sun set and it was very dark, there appeared a smoking oven, and a flaming torch which passed between those pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram saying, “To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenites, the Kennizites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.” The flaming torch passing through the dismembered body parts was a sign of the covenant of God’s promise that the land would be given to Israel. Thus, in the First Book of Samuel, chapter 11, just before Saul was sworn in at Gilgal as Israel’s first king, when Mabash, the leader of the Ammonites, had besieged Ja’besh-gil’ead and rejected the offer of subjection of the inhabitants and instead offered a treaty only after he had disfigured the inhabitants by gouging out all their right eyes and thereby disgracing Israel, the inhabitants of the town agreed to surrender if no one came to their aid in seven days. They sent messengers of their plight throughout all of Israel. When the messenger came to Gib’e-ah of Saul, and Saul heard the story, his anger was aroused. Saul “took a yoke of oxen, and cut them in pieces and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by the hand of the messengers, saying, ‘Whoever does not come out after Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen.’ Then the dread of the Lord fell upon the people, and they came out as one man. When he mustered them in Bezek, the men of Israel were three hundred thousand and the men of Judah were thirty thousand.” [The previous numbers of all the warriors of the twelve tribes had been 400,000, but about 65,000 had been killed in the civil war with the Benjamites.] It is clear that the dismemberment of body parts and their distribution to all the tribes recalled the covenant with God and the promise of an enlarged Israel which had defeated their enemies by remaining united against them.

37. Cf. Jose Brunner, “Eichmann, Arendt and Freud in Jerusalem,” Special Issue, *History & Theory: Hannah Arendt and Eichmann in Jerusalem*, 8:2, Fall/Winter 1996, p. 70.

38. Martha Nussbaum, *The fragility of goodness: Luck and ethics in Greek tragedy and philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 3.

39. The phrase and concept is borrowed from the American pragmatic philosopher, Richard Rorty.

40. “The elimination of the Muslims has included an attempt to erase any memory of their linkage to the land, not least as a means to help ensure that ethnic cleansing was irreversible.” Norman Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia: The Policy of “Ethnic Cleansing”*, College Station, Texas: Texas A & M University Press, 1995, 60.

41. Cf. Cigar (1995) 6; Rene Lemarchand, *Burundi: Ethnocide as Discourse and Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, 5. Ethnicity is seen by both “as a political resource deliberately manipulated by ethnic entrepreneurs for the specific purpose of facilitating their entry into the political arena.” But for Lemarchand, that is not a sufficient condition. There must also be an essentialist component. “The cultural underpinnings of Hutudom are little more than the essentialist component of a strategy designed to maximize their ideological appeal. What is involved here is the attempt to inflate, objectify, and ultimately distort the cultural ‘givens’ of social identity.” For Lemarchand, genocide utilizes a social identity and constructs it to develop a dialectical interaction between ‘affect’

42. In this section, I attempt to account for the genocide from the perspective of the genocidal killer.

43. Cf. Malkki (1995) ch.2, fn. 12, pp. 62; 306.

44. G.W. F. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, tr. A.V. Miller, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977, para. 677, 411.

45. Hegel (1977) para. 678, p. 412.



*History & Memory: Hannah Arendt and Eichmann in Jerusalem*, 8:2,  
Fall/Winter 1996, p. 103.

47. We are all different when we live; we are all the same when we die.

48. Cf. ch. 12 of S.N. Eisenstadt, *Power Trust and Meaning*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

49. “But what would induce ordinary Serbs to turn on those who until recently they had treated as good neighbours? Key factors seem to have been the sanction of authority and the acceptance by society of such extreme action as legitimate.” (Cigar 64)

50. Cf. Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957.

51. Cf. Allen Feldman, *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993, p. 64.

52. Glen A. Mazis, *Emotions and Embodiment: Fragile Ontology*, New York: Peter Lang, 1993, 67.