*Rwandan Post-genocide Memory as the Aegis of Atrocity*

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In any post-colonial environment history is constructed and mobilized in specific ways to vindicate the present regimes or to criminalize and blame past ones. The Rwandan Patriotic Front Rwanda serves as a unique case of this trend. Prior to the 1994 genocide, the RPF had a specific narrative about colonialism as the roots of racial division in Rwanda, however, this narrative was endowed with relative justification and massive extension into “genocidal ideology” in Rwanda’s post-genocide period. Significantly for the region and the Rwandan nationals in eastern Congo, this narrative and constructed memory facilitated and shrouded from prying eyes, countless RPF led interventions into Congolese affairs. History in the making was utilized in justifying further atrocities against Rwandan refugees, Congolese people and streamlining of Rwandan society itself into a post-genocide nation-state.

This paper addresses the genocide of Rwandan refugees in the Congo during 1996 to 1997, and pinpoints the dynamics of post-genocide memorialization and memory in connection with this atrocity and subsequent actions by armed groups and their Rwandan allies in the Great Lakes region. Of particular impact is the power of emergent RPF narratives in eastern Congo prior to and following the 1994 genocide, and how a generation of Congolese Tutsi were mobilized in the service of their own cause and the memory of genocide. The work of Paul Ricoeur, Dirk Moses and David Rieff will be used to identify the processes of memory, narrative and their uses in genocidal actions and post-genocide polities.