To what extent does the genocide in Rwanda, validate Bauman’s thesis that genocide is a distinctly modern phenomenon?

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Abstract

The genocide in Rwanda is a contemporary example of mass murder derived from ethnic hatred. Comparable to the Holocaust, the events that unfolded in Rwanda in 1994 resulted in the systematic slaughter of around 800,000 Tutsi and Moderate Hutu. This dissertation has looked at the genocide in Rwanda using Bauman’s thesis that genocide is a modern phenomenon, concentrating on three themes, Bureaucracy, Rationalisation and Technology. By using other theories from academics such as Weber, the study has reinforced Bauman’s thesis ‘Modernity and the Holocaust’ and concluded that the Rwandan example is one that shows how genocide is a modern phenomenon.

Introduction

Neighbours hacked neighbours to death in their homes, and colleagues hacked colleagues to death in their workplace. Doctors killed their patients, and schoolteachers killed their pupils. Within days, the Tutsi populations of many villages were all but eliminated, and in Kigali prisoners were released in work gangs to collect the corpses that lined the roadsides (Gourevitch 1999:115).

The events that unfolded in the spring of 1994 in Rwanda were set to develop into the most shocking of tragedies in the 20th century. The ruthless extermination of the Tutsi population in Rwanda is one that remains the most efficient and calculated acts of genocide that the world has ever known. Its brutality and its coordination prove equally as shocking as the events of the Holocaust in 1940s Europe. Organised contingents of Hutu militia, Interhamwe, and regular Hutu citizens set about the task of eliminating all Tutsi in Rwanda and accomplished this with chilling speed and efficiency. Armed with mainly machetes, supplied by Hutu elites and entrepreneurs, the wholesale massacre was an unstoppable force. The nature of the killings and their brutality is devastating enough, in addition to this and equally as chilling is the coordination and precision
executed to mobilise such horrific torture and murder. From this abomination of human brutality lessons can be drawn from the Rwandan genocide. The effect of modernity on the human being is appallingly illustrated in the case study of Rwanda and it is this that must be learnt from.

Throughout the study of genocide there have been various groups of discussion from the functionalist to the intentionalist interpretations of the Holocaust. Functionalism looks to explain the Holocaust by means of the way in which the process gradually built up to fully established extermination. Authors like Martin Broszat explain that the Jewish Holocaust did “not derive from ... clear will to exterminate” and that the genocide had an “improvisatory character” (Broszat cited in Wistrich 2001:226). This summarises the functionalist argument. The intentionalist argument, on the other hand focuses on the clear design of senior Nazis and Hitler to set about the extermination of the Jewish and Allied population in Europe in the 1930’s and 1940s. The functionalist argument states that due to the absence of coordination, the Holocaust was born from the uncontrollable force of individual local decisions. The purge of the Jewish and Allied populations in Europe was out of the hands of authorities and therefore developed into full blown genocide. From our perspective genocide and the Holocaust was not born from a clear cut intentionalist or functionalist point of view. Rather it was the effects of modernity on human civilisation that opened the door to the development of mass killing and the purging of certain populations.

It is important at the outset to discuss the meaning of the term ‘modernity’ in this context. Zygmunt Bauman is a prominent author and theorist on the modernity approach to genocide studies and, as Dan Stone summarises, his works emphasises that the Holocaust “reveals more about modernity than any other of its achievements” (Stone 2003:244). Modernity refers to the influx of industrialisation, increased bureaucracy and the presence of the nation state in society. It has brought humanity into a sophisticated era of unchallengeable efficiency and machine-like precision. However, when looking at genocide through the lens of modernity, Bauman and other authors have put forward that it is the product of such advances and that genocide has been transformed into an inherently modern phenomenon. It is suggested that genocide is modernity
encapsulated, using tools that modernity has provided to efficiently and calculatedly attack a social or religious group.

This dissertation will evaluate Bauman’s theory that the Jewish Holocaust was a product of modernity and that the modernity surrounding the Nazi case study has paved the way in terms of mass murder since, and shown us that genocide should now be deemed as a ‘modern’ phenomenon. Through the study into Bauman’s theory and its application in the study of the Holocaust, the dissertation will go on to examine how relevant this theory is when applied to the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. The genocide in Rwanda adds a modern coherence to it. The failed state in Rwanda throughout the early 1990’s provides us with a fitting example of how modernity engenders a heightened sense of nation states. The question arises: was the genocide in Rwanda made possible by a modern restriction of boundaries and the limited scope for external intervention? Has the increased necessity of bureaucracy led to genocide, as when bureaucracy and structure fails then chaos ensues thus creating conditions for genocide? In this dissertation evidence will be explained to show that Bauman’s theory can be interpreted in various ways to prove that genocide has become a condition of modernity, a by-product of a civilisation that has been unable to keep up morally with its advances in technology and institutions, thus leading to catastrophic manipulation of bureaucracy to tyrannical ends, in terms of Rwanda and Nazi Germany.

The body of the dissertation will begin with a preliminary chapter regarding the basic thesis of Bauman. It will look into the various approaches surrounding the study of Modernity and the Holocaust. Here the main ideas will be outlined and assessed in terms of their coherency and the criticisms they have received. Once this theoretical chapter has given us the framework of Bauman’s modernity debate, Chapter two will go on to identify the specific modern characteristics of genocide in Bauman's theory and discuss them with respect to a broader literature. Chapter three will set out the historical context and events of the Genocide in Rwanda. Chapter four will look in detail into Bauman’s theme of the effects of bureaucracy on genocide, and how far Rwanda supports Bauman’s thesis on modernity in terms of the implications of modern bureaucracy in Rwanda and its contribution to the genocide. Chapter five will look to rationalisation and its implications in the Rwandan genocide, it will evaluate how far the
claim that genocide is distinctly modern is reinforced by the contribution of modern rationalisation to the genocide in Rwanda. Chapter six will look to the technological dimension of the Rwandan genocide and how far modern technology in Rwanda supports Bauman’s claim that genocide is distinctly modern.

**Bauman: A Theoretical Framework**

This chapter will provide the framework for Bauman's theory and identify the concepts and main ideas surrounding his controversial text *Modernity and the Holocaust*. Bauman’s argument implies that the events that occurred throughout the 3rd Reich leadership should not be looked upon as a unique moment in history; as an individual case of insanity and tyrannical leadership. Moreover Bauman emphasises that those events were more representative of modern civilisation as a whole, rather than an example of an exceptional diversion of characteristics. Throughout this chapter the arguments within Bauman’s theory will be summarized to give the vital background on the subject of modernity through Bauman's eyes. As a leading sociologist, Bauman concerned himself with the existing studies of the Holocaust and identified missing links and challenges that the subject bore on the structures in which we live today. Bauman challenged the approach that the Holocaust was a piece of Jewish history, a terrible event but one isolated from common society and common structures. Bauman writes;

> The Holocaust was born and executed in our modern rational society, at the high stage of our civilisation and at the peak of human cultural achievement, and for this reason it is a problem of that society, civilisation and culture (2000:x).

*Modernity and the Holocaust* reads much like a text equally of academic value, but also as a document of warning. The lessons provoked by the Holocaust substantiate the claim that the study can no longer be restricted to historical approach but should also extract the potential for edification in both the sociological and political fields.

Primarily the model of modernity must be defined in reference with our topic, genocide. By modernity Bauman, among other authors of genocide studies, refers to an advance
and deviation from traditional epochs. At the period of industrialisation the focus and values of civilisation took a transitional direction toward utopian-like efficiency and notions of progress. When Bauman speaks of modernity he is looking to the influences of modern technology and achievement, but also, and equally important, Bauman looks to “cultural tendencies” (2000:xiii) to further entrench the idea that the conditions for genocide were imbedded in normal, so called modern, society and were not just a deviation from normative social practice. Modernity made possible a motivated efficiency that manifested itself in machine industry and technology but also in terms of machine-like bureaucracy and state structure. This, in conjunction with heightened senses of the modern nation state, meant that governmental hierarchical structures became unchallengeable and rigid. Bauman develops this thesis and links the effects of authority and “social manipulation” (2000:xiv), to how this led to the altered morality of human beings specifically during the Holocaust. In the quest for rapid development and civilisation, institutions morph into mechanisms for success.

The key theme and message within Bauman's writings on modernity and the Holocaust is that the Jewish Genocide must not be considered as at a variance from modern civilisation. Bauman states early in his book that the Jewish Genocide is “more than a cancerous growth on an otherwise healthy body of the civilised society” (Bauman 2000:7). This early hypothesis that the Holocaust was more than a deviation from the evolutionary path of civilisation summarises what Bauman considers to then go on to prove with the use of specific examples within the Holocaust and the conditions surrounding there implementation. As the dissertation progresses it will become evident that Bauman refers to factors within the Holocaust, which if taken out of context, can readily be conceived as extremely normal functions of an industrialised society. It is key at this point that we recognize that Bauman is not claiming that mass murder in a new thing, he explicitly distinguishes that this is not his claim (Bauman 2000:88). Bauman's main hypothesis is that, “the Holocaust left behind and put to shame all its alleged pre-modern equivalents” (2000:89). He recognises that mass murder has been happening throughout history, however to differentiate between these events and the Holocaust is to put emphasis on the possibilities that the modern brought to the fore. Profoundly, Bauman states that “the Holocaust was as much a product as it was a failure, of modern civilisation” (2000:89). This reminds us that the Holocaust brought a new and
somewhat even more frightening efficiency to the task of mass killing. Bauman argues that this was due to both technology and bureaucracy that modernity brought that created the conditions for a second stage in genocide.

One must consider literature from a more specified background when deliberating each theme that Bauman employs to prove his claim that genocide is distinctly modern. In terms of the effects of bureaucracy, to look into these concepts further the study must evaluate the works of Weber and Arendt to fully understand the background of the concept of bureaucracy. A broader literature will come into play in the proceeding chapter. In terms of the logistics of the Holocaust and the modern technology that enabled the efficiency of the killings the studies of Hilberg are vital in understanding the machinery of death and industrialisations influence on the industry of genocide.

To conclude this introduction to Bauman and his thesis, emphasis must be made on the actual hypothesis of *Modernity and the Holocaust*. According to Bauman, without assuming he denies acts of mass murder throughout history, a shift in mass killings arose at the time of Nazi Germany. He claims that the framework for an efficient murderous machine was already in place when the Nazi government came to implement their Anti-Semitic campaign. The message that Bauman seeks to provide is that much more than a historical account. The institutions and social order that were in place to facilitate the mass murder of the Jewish population still remain today, proving Bauman’s thesis that genocide is an effect of modernity, and its factors still exist.

**Bauman: Modern Characteristics of Genocide**

In Bauman’s work themes emerge that can explain the genocide as a product of modernity. As summarised in the previous chapter on Bauman’ theory, the heart of the argument revolves around an insistence that the Holocaust was not a “deviation from otherwise straight path of progress” (Bauman 2000:7), rather it was made possible by a combination of structures put in place by the developments of modern society and technology that was injected relatively rapidly during the industrial revolution. This chapter will identify key themes in Bauman’s thesis and investigate them in reference to wider literature. This, in turn, will provide subsequent chapters with the criteria to test Bauman’s theory in the more recent case of the genocide in Rwanda.
The themes that this study will focus on that emerges from Bauman’s hypothesis are bureaucracy, rationalisation and technology. The first, bureaucracy, Bauman argues, eventually “strips the high decision maker of the reality of the decision” (Bauman 2000:98). This concept, if looked at through the essays of Max Weber and Arendt provides Bauman’s thesis with much credibility. The arguments that Weber makes in his description of bureaucracy can be translated to the connections that Bauman makes on its contribution to the modern characteristics that enable genocide and the Holocaust. The second, rationality, is concerned with explanations for the response to horrific orders received during the application of the Final Solution. The dehumanizing effects that a strictly bureaucratic structure enforces developed into the warped sense of the rationality surrounding mass murder throughout the Holocaust. Bauman emphasises that “morality boils down to the commandment to be a good, efficient and diligent expert and worker” (Bauman 2000:102). This theme can also be explored through the works of Weber. Bureaucracy is rational through the conditions of “rules, means, ends and matter of factness dominate its bearing” (Weber in Gerth and Wright-Mills 1967:244). Bauman proposes that because of the rationalising character of the bureaucratic system, a number of immoral acts could be justified as being rational in terms of the new modern bureaucratic criteria. The final theme that will be extracted from Bauman’s theory is that of the influence of the sudden influx of industry on a large scale. Bauman uses this sudden saturation of new industrial mechanisms to express how the genocide has morphed into something of a modern phenomenon. To look deeper into this notion, the machine-like precision of the Holocaust, I shall discuss accounts from Stone and Hilberg. Bauman’s approach to the technological dimension of the Final Solution suggests that modern civilisation’s “evolution has outpaced our understanding: we can no longer assume that we have full grasp of the workings of our social institutions, bureaucratic structures or technology”(Bauman 2000:83).

Bauman argues that the use of technology characterises modern genocide. This will be reinforced in the final chapter using literature that evaluates the use of machinery in the holocaust. This will enable the study to reinforce the notion that genocide is distinctly modern.

**Bureaucracy: Max Weber**
To further look into the themes that Bauman highlights, one can use the works and theories of the social scientist Max Weber. In the early 1900s Weber reflected upon notions of modernity and theories of rationalism. Simon Whimster summarises that Weber “was able to reach out and grasp the ultimate meanings and goals that drove and possessed humankind.” (Whimster 2004:9). We can use Weber’s essays to gain a preliminary grasp on the ideas that Bauman utilises in his argument that genocide is inherently modern.

In Weber’s theory of bureaucracy, he categorized its characteristics into sub-groups. The first of which is the jurisdictional. Weber argues that the hierarchical structure that has become imbedded in social and professional arrangements transforms an organisation into a “calculative enterprise” (Whimster 2004:1), one in which everyday tasks are assigned to certain posts in the form of “official duties” (Weber cited in Whimster 2004:245). The efficiency of carrying out these orders becomes the priority for the corresponding individual responsible for them. Weber explains that an entirely rational criterion is adopted by the bureaucratic structure to justify the need for such orders. This approach to the rational justification of orders is reinforced by the rigidity of the hierarchical structure. Once “a clearly established system of super and subordination” has been established, autonomy is forgotten and to be rational is to follow the structure and the orders that it presents. Weber summarises the key point that pertains to understanding genocide:

Bureaucracy develops the more perfectly the more ‘dehumanized’, the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred and all privately personal irrational and emotional elements which escape calculation (Weber cited in Whimster 2004:249).

For Weber a bureaucratic system brings with it expansive speed and efficiency, with whatever it is concerning, and brings about the “reduction of friction and of material and personal costs” (Weber cited in Whimster 2004:247), at the costs of what Gerth and Mills call the “most sublime values” (Gerth and Mills 1947 cited in Lowith 1993:62) of society. To relate this back to Bauman and how he uses ideas of bureaucracy in his
work the link is clear and the argument coherent with that of Weber. Bauman explains how the:

Dehumanization starts at the point when, thanks to the distinction, the objects at which the bureaucratic operation is aimed can and are reduced to a set of quantitative measures. (Bauman 2000:102).

Throughout the Jewish Holocaust the Nazi government was able to “efficiently coordinate into a single functioning murder machine” (Wistrich 2001:224), Bauman argues because of this lack of humanity through rigid implication of the bureaucratic model. The hierarchical structure enabled this process to occur freely, distancing decision makers and those giving the order from the act itself, with no regard for the implications on a human life. This is movingly expressed in a number of instances in Primo Levi’s classic 20th century text *If This Is a Man* where he expresses how shell-like the human body became. Levi expresses how “he will be a hollow man, reduced to suffering and needs, forgetful of dignity' and restraint” (Levi 1958:33). This leads us to the next theme that Bauman draws upon, a theme that can also be investigated through the essay of Weber, that of rationality.

**Rationality: Max Weber**
Weber explains how modern structures and the dominance of the bureaucratic system provoke an equivalent approach by the individuals within it. Notably this can be identified in the shift in motivations for actions, and the justifications for orders carried out. Through this idea we look to Weber and identify the linkages between bureaucracy and a modern type of rationalisation. Weber emphasises the uniqueness of the bureaucratic system and goes on to state that:

As a rule, only bureaucracy has established the foundation for administration of a rational law conceptually systematized on the bases of such enactments as the latter Roman imperial period first created with a high degree of technical perfection (Weber cited in Gerth and Mills 1967:216).
This idea that rational law is conceptually systematized, gives us the idea that the reason that bureaucratic systems are so successful in terms of efficiency, is because all previous moral concepts are redundant. The success of the bureaucratic system depends on the establishment of a clean slate within the individual, that enables the system to put in place its own rationality based on rewards and efficiency, to eradicate all variables of previous moral ties therefore creating the efficient machine that is the bureaucrat. Weber underpins this approach and states that the rational grounds that bureaucratic rationality is built on bares no weight in terms of actual “deliberative reason” (Whimster 2004:121). By this Weber implies that the bureaucratic rationalisation completely replaces the individual’s ability to deliberate and find the morally rational answer, morality no longer plays any part. We can now link this approach back to Bauman and his hypothesis on the modernity of the Holocaust. Bauman talks about ‘Kristallnachte’, the night of broken glass, a horrific example of mob violence against the Jewish communities and businesses before the establishment of the Final Solution. He uses this example of the pogrom of the Jews in Germany in November 1938 to explain the transition to modern Holocaust. Bauman states how “comprehensive, exhaustive murder required the replacement of the mob with bureaucracy, the replacement of shared rage with obedience to authority” (Bauman 2000:90). This obedience to authority, it can be argued came via this new sense of rationality and principles of reason associated with bureaucracy. The order itself and to follow such orders is the rational approach in a fully established hierarchical system. In a society with networks of “checks and balances, barriers and hurdles which the civilising process has erected” (Bauman 2000:87), this hierarchical system has brought with it warped rationality and the replacement of moral responsibility with “technical responsibility” (Bauman 2000:101) through which the decision makers can establish distance between themselves and the action on a purely bureaucratically rational basis.

Machinery of the Holocaust: Raul Hilberg

Now to look at the other end of the spectrum in Bauman’s work and the resources that transformed genocide into a modern phenomenon throughout the Jewish Holocaust by means of “Industrialised ‘death camp[s]’ with its gas chambers”(Jones 2006:152). To summarise briefly, Bauman expands on the link between bureaucracy and modernity in
civilisation as discussed above and the industrial resources utilised to come to the Final Solution.

Ideological processes that by their own inner logic may lend to genocidal projects and the technical resources that permit implementation of such projects not only have been proved fully compatible with modern civilisation, but have been conditioned, created and supplied by it (Bauman 2000:87).

By this Bauman argues that not only has the input of technological advances in genocide worked very successfully, but that genocide itself has been characterised by technology and modernity itself. Bauman suggests that without such efficient technology, genocide would never have developed in such a way, therefore inferring that technology breeds modern genocide. The technical implications of Bauman’s theory must be investigated and understood to grasp the importance that he attributes to the machinery of the Holocaust, brought about by the industrial revolution. From alternative literature there is an abundance of sources that document the utilisation of the industrial revolution for the Final Solution going into horrifying detail of the steps involved. Authors such as Raul Hilberg, use the mechanisms of the Holocaust as the centre piece for their study. In Hilberg's series *The Destruction of the European Jews* the final volume looks in detail into the mechanisms that enabled the Holocaust to unfold with such morbid efficiency.

The train and railways are a universal symbol of industrialisation and increased efficiency and to evaluate Bauman’s theory that genocide is distinctly modern, the use of the railways throughout the extermination of the Jewish population adheres to his thesis. Hilberg writes “On April 19th, 1944, the railway station of Auschwitz approved the use of the newly built tracks for locomotives of the Reichsbahn” (Hilberg 2003:951). The running of the trains to Auschwitz was kept under tight regulation, efficiency being the key motivation for such regulation but also to ensure operation were concealed to avert attention to the cargo’s final destination. Hilberg emphasises how this was the reason “speed was so important” (Hilberg 2003:1027), throughout the operations. In a section that Hilberg entitles *The Conveyor Belt*, he writes that “Camp
officials covered every step from the train platform to the gas chambers with a series of precise orders” (Hilberg 2003:1033). Bauman mentions how during “the Final Solution, the individual potential and technological knowhow boosted by our civilisation has scaled new heights in coping successfully with a task of unprecedented magnitude.” (Bauman 2004: 9). Bauman includes Henry Feingold who considers the Holocaust and its structure to be “a mundane extension of the modern factory system [...] the end product was death [using a] brilliantly organised railroad grip of modern Europe” (Feingold cited in Bauman 2004:8).

The next technological advancement representing modernity in the Holocaust is noticeable in the development of the most efficient gas. Zyklon B was a gas used to exterminate pests and rodents, a poignant mirror to the portrayal of the Jewish people by the Nazi government; Hitler referred to the Jewish population as “black parasites of the nation” (Hitler cited in Manheim 1971:562). As Hilberg explains, the use of “both the concentration camp and the gas chamber” (Hilberg 2003:922) in combination with one another, was revolutionary in itself, however for our purposes the development of the gas itself is the most important. Hilberg explains how the “SS did not manufacture Zyklon, so the gas had to be procured from private firms” (Hilberg 2003:951). This means of acquisition of the gas from a profit orientated private firm reinforces the Bauman theory. The constant development of a more efficient gas shows how progress and the quest for efficiency derived from imbedded values of modern bureaucracy. Alternatively, the idea that the deadly gas could be acquired from an outsourced means, much like the utilisation of the railway networks, makes the reader of Bauman more sympathetic to his thesis. Industries outsourced by the Third Reich can only be identified as having a profit orientated, advancement guided motive, which reflect theories of modernity and bureaucracy, not notions of the humanity or basic morality. Therefore not only can the efficiency of the Final Solution be attributed to the use of modern industry, but also the idea that systems outside of those directing the Holocaust itself, are tainted by values of bureaucracy and hardened structures resulting in the sole motivation for advancement without moral values clouding this goal.

This chapter has discussed aspects of Bauman’s theories of modernity. Themes that are identified in Modernity and the Holocaust have been investigated using specific
external theories on Bauman’s core ideas. Through this evaluation of the themes the study will now go on to be able to establish exactly how far Bauman is correct in the claim that genocide is distinctly modern. Weber’s writings on bureaucracy and its possible effects on modern society and its moral frameworks, reinforce the notions that Bauman seeks to convey. Bauman’s core idea is that the social constructs of modern civilisation have given scope for the establishment of industrial tools as medium for destruction, manifested in genocide. These concepts of bureaucracy, rationalisation and modern industry will give a starting point for the study to go on to apply Bauman’s argument to a more recent instance of genocide, the case study of the Rwandan Genocide.

**The Genocide in Rwanda: A History of Ethnic Separation**

Using the themes from the previous chapter, the study can now move on to the evaluation of Bauman’s theory of modernity and genocide. The case study of Rwanda is compelling whilst appropriate for the purpose of applying the themes we have drawn from Bauman’s work, supplying the study with a very different and more recent example of the horror of genocide. This brief section will introduce the Rwandan genocide, and seek to provide the knowledge base on which to build upon to form our argument concerning modernity. Using literature such as Prunier and the publications of African Rights, this chapter will be able to describe the severity of the 1994 genocide, whilst also providing the historical background that explains the outburst of such a large scale extermination of the Tutsi and moderate Hutu in Rwanda.

To introduce the genocide itself the roots of the move towards extermination must first be considered. An article in *Africa Today* introduced the need to look back to the roots of ethnic divides in Rwanda; Newbury (1) in this article introduces this concept and writes:

> These horrors can be traced to intense struggles over power carried out by leaders- struggles involving the politicisation of ethnicity and a perverse dynamic of violence and fear (Newbury (1) 1998:7).
The effects of Belgian colonialism make it virtually impossible for Rwanda to emerge as a united country. The implications of issuing identity cards in 1933 that divided Tutsi, Hutu and Twa was catastrophic and the subsequent effects of this early ethnic separation is manifested in the relentless hatred throughout the genocide much later in 1994. Gourevitch explains how “The identity cards made it virtually impossible for Hutus to become Tutsi, and permitted the Belgians to perfect the administration of an apartheid system rooted in the myth of Tutsi superiority” (Gourevitch 1999:57). The entrance to Catholic schools also entrenched the idea of inequality as Gourevitch expresses;

The Catholic schools, which dominated the colonial education system, practised open discrimination in favour of Tutsis, and Tutsis enjoyed a monopoly on administrative and political jobs, while Hutus watched their already limited opportunities for advancement shrink (Gourevitch 1999:57).

This history of ethnic separation introduces the origins of the genocide in Rwanda and sets the scene of ethnic tension that eventually hit breaking point.

Newbury (1) divides his approaches to the issue in two. The first viewpoint is more reliant on the activities of external actors within the country, explaining how “changes from 1959 to 1962 in Rwanda were engineered by Belgian colonial authorities and the catholic church” (Newbury (1) 1998:9) as described above. This is manifested in the fickle nature of external support, which first allied with the monarchy and the considered superior tribe the Tutsi, but in the 1950s support switched to the Hutu rural majority, on “the eve of independence” (Gourevitch 1999:61). It is considered that the shift in power support in Rwanda orchestrated by external forces and “manipulation by external forces” (Newbury (1) 1998:9), whose priorities did not lie in maintaining peaceful relations within their satellite countries, consequently manifested itself in significant friction between an already segregated populace.

The subsequent view is quite the opposite of the preceding one. This lays importance on the internal logistical factors that face the Rwandan people, as opposed to the influence
of external bodies. Newbury (1), when outlining this position, explains that external forces “supported the change” (Newbury (1) 1998:9) in power structures, but further significance is held in the actions of the Hutu themselves. She writes “it was Hutu leaders and the rural majority in Rwanda who effected [sic] the revolution, by reacting to the double colonialism of rule by Tutsi and Belgian authorities” (Newbury (1) 1998:9). The factors that this opinion ranks highly are internal grievances of the rural poor and “insecurity of land tenure” (Newbury (1) 1998:9), which then manifested itself in further consolidation of the divides between Hutu and Tutsi and Hutu dissatisfaction. This ethical separation and fixed resentment between Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda have been at a delicate balance throughout history, only to explode in the early 1990s. The purpose of the genocide as Verwimp describes directly was three fold:

They used the country’s resources to enrich themselves and their supporters in the Hutu population; they were given the loyalty of that population and thus could remain in power; they could restore food/population equilibrium in favour of the Hutu. The Rwandan genocide was indeed a ‘Final Solution’, a policy to get rid of the Tutsi once and for all, to establish a pure peasant society (Verwimp 1996:33).

The plane crash resulting in the death of the Hutu president at the time, Juvénal Habyarimana, and was utilised as a trigger for the escalation of violence in April 1994. The events that ensued include incomprehensible violence against Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

**An Introductory Account of the Rwandan Genocide**

As explained in the preceding sub paragraph, ethnic separation was deeply embedded in Rwandan politics. This was utilised by the Hutu president, Habyarimana, who at the time was losing popularity, to boost his profile by “exaggerating the RPF [Rwandan Patriotic Front] threat as a way to pull dissident Hutu’s back to his side and they began portraying Tutsi inside Rwanda as RPF collaborators” (Des Forges 1999:3). This strategic use of the ethnic divisions in the country proved successful with a number of communications mechanisms to entrench this mentality throughout Rwanda, or as Des
Forges writes, a “campaign to create hatred and fear of the Tutsi” (Des Forges 1999:3). Preparations for the genocide had already begun. Habyarimana had expanded Interahamwe, the Hutu militia, and “proposed a ‘civilian self defence force’ which was to recruit young men” (Des Forges 1999:4). Machetes were commissioned by businessmen linked with Habyarimana and incentives to cause maximum pain to victims were professed.

Following the death of President Habyarimana in a plane crash of April 6th 1994, mechanisms for impending genocide could be readily identified. Prunier suggests that the death of Habyarimana could be considered as suspicious with a number possible of suspects. However the most interesting is the theory that the culprits were Hutu. This is reinforced, as Prunier points out, by the fact of “the speed with which the situation moved from one to the other. The plane was shot down at around 8.30 p.m., and by 9.15 there were already Interahamwe roadblocks everywhere in town” (Prunier 1995:223). The significance of this fact is the chilling notion of the pre-ordained nature with which the genocide came to pass. Linda Melvern contends that the perpetrators of the genocide “planned [it] with the utmost cunning” (Melvern 2006:3). Similarly Gourevitch claims that “the genocide had been meticulously planned by the Hutu extremists who set it in motion within an hour of the President’s death” (Gourevitch 1999:39). Further reinforcing the idea that this genocide can be related back to that of the Jewish Holocaust, in terms of forward planning before execution similarities can be drawn.

The killings began with the targeting of political opposition leaders to reaffirm the Hutu extremists hold of their centralised imposed government. African Rights publications report how “[w]ithin hours of President Habyarimana’s aeroplane crash, the presidential guard began the selective assassination of opposition politicians” (African Rights 1995:177). Then the “‘bush clearing’, to use the interahamwe euphemism” (Prunier 1995:248) began. The use of propaganda through communications and radio, specifically Radio Television Libra des Milles Collines, will be examined with reference to Bauman later in the study; however it must be included in this chronological introduction to the genocide. Due to the far reaching nature of the propaganda and the frenzied spread of the killing “people were even being attacked by their neighbours” (Prunier 1995:253), escape was near impossible, even local churches offered no
sanctuary, Prunier describes them as “death traps” (Prunier 1995:254), where large numbers could be dispatched of in one assault. As were the homes of Tutsi families and in the run up to full scale massacre a curfew was imposed. African Rights reports how this enabled the “wholesale slaughter of people in their own homes” (African Rights 1995:236). Endless firsthand accounts from survivors can be found which fully illustrate to horror that ensued in April 1994 in Rwanda. Pastor Ntakirutmama is cited in Gourevitch’s book, and speaks of how he travelled to Rwamatamu, he relives his experience: “Because I heard that pastors had also died there, and I wanted to see if I could find even a kid of theirs to save. But I found nothing to save. They were Tutsis” (Ntakirutmama cited in Gourevitch 1999:41). Gourevitch writes;

Take the best estimate: eight hundred thousand killed in a hundred days.
That’s three hundred and thirty-three and a third murders an hour – or four or five and a half lives terminated every minute (Gourevitch 1999:133).

This death count does not even take into consideration the amount of people “maimed” (Gourevitch 1999:133) and raped. The atrocities are infinite and shocking. A BBC news article reports that “[b]etween April and June 1994, an estimated 800,000 Rwandans were killed in the space of 100 days.”(BBC 2008).

This chapter has acted as a brief introduction to the events around April 1994 in Rwanda. The study will now move on to look more deeply into the make-up of the genocide in Rwanda and look to identify how Bauman’s theory coincides with this more recent example of genocide. Bauman’s interpretation of the effects of modernity in relation to acts of genocide are identifiable when looking to the genocide in Rwanda, the subsequent chapters will go on to evaluate how strong the correlation is, and whether there are aspects of the Rwandan genocide that fall outside of Bauman’s categorisation therefore making it vital to perhaps look to other characteristics of genocide that may not align themselves with the notion that genocide is distinctly modern. This overview has introduced the case of Rwanda, however once investigated further it will become apparent that to a very reasonable extent Bauman’s theory can be validated regarding bureaucracy, rationalisation and technology.
Rwanda and Bureaucracy

“BBC London called us in Kigali and asked us what our estimate of the number of people killed was. We said at least 250,000. One week later they called again. We said at least 500,000. And once again the following week. And then we said: “After half a million, sir, we stopped counting”. We were never asked the same question again”. (Speech by Philippe Gaillard, head of ICRC’s delegation in Rwanda)

The numbers surrounding the genocide in Rwanda are shocking and the speed in which these people were eliminated is equally so. Structures and concepts surrounding the killings therefore must be understood when researching the efficiency of the massacre. When addressing the statement, genocide is a distantly modern phenomenon, Bauman’s thesis relies a lot on the notion of bureaucracy surrounding the Jewish genocide. Pottier makes this point profoundly, stating “Rwanda’s bloodbath was not tribal. Rather it was a distinctly modern tragedy” (Pottier 2002:9). This chapter will look closer into the idea of genocide and bureaucracy, in regards to the Rwandan genocide. Using subsequent knowledge and theories taken from Weber’s early 20th century works, this chapter will evaluate the role of bureaucracy and the concepts entwined within it and assesses how far the genocide in Rwanda can be attributed to bureaucracy. Bureaucracy, as we understand using Weber’s accounts, has morphed both state and personal structures into a rigid tool for efficiency, championing conformity to orders. The Rwandan genocide provides an example of the distinctly modern phenomenon of mass murder and illustrates a consequence of the bureaucratic structures that Weber describes. Similarities can also be drawn with Nazi Germany, proving that both cases of genocide are examples of recurring patterns of human behaviour shaped by bureaucracy.

Using bureaucracy as a framework for our evaluations, the subsequent paragraphs will endeavour to reinforce the argument that the Rwandan genocide supports Bauman’s theory that genocide is a distinctly modern phenomenon.

When discussing bureaucracy one must include the state structure, to fully be able to evaluate the organisational structure within it. Especially in terms of discussing genocide in Rwanda, state structure played a major role in the escalation to mass killings. The authoritarian nature of Rwandan politics played a major part in facilitating
the genocide, and enabled networks of extremist power to consolidate their influence and embed themselves in Rwandan power structures. Kakwenzire and Kamukama expand on this notion and state:

Colonial regimes taught Africans bad lessons in government. First, people came to believe that political power is the only source of wealth. The state dictates who prospers (Kakwenzire and Kamukama 2000:74).

The Habyarimana government reinforced this problem, and “bureaucracy became unified and centralised” (African Rights 1995). This enabled bureaucracy to be institutionalised into the Rwandan system therefore creating a “vacuum in which Bagsora [the colonel chiefly responsible for the administration of the genocide] and his supporters could take control” (Des Forges 1999:6) and for all other characteristics of bureaucracy to thrive and support the will for mass murder. Bauman emphasises the importance of the influence of bureaucracy in genocide. With these structures in place, the stage was set for the ethnic hatred in Rwanda to be taken to the next horrifying level.

In terms of Weber’s bureaucracy, hierarchy comes to the forefront of the thesis, as it does in Modernity and the Holocaust. Rwanda and the structure in place surrounding the massacre signify a contemporary example of this. The African Rights report of 1995 expresses how Rwandan society alone presented an “intensely administered society, pyramid of bureaucracy” (African Rights 1995:19). This can be illustrated by the establishment of the Akazu. Scherrer describes the Akazu as the “invisible government of Rwanda” (Scherrer 2002:105), they were the unofficial collection of elites close to President Habyarimana and his wife, consisting of friends, family and wealthy business men that reside at the top of the social hierarchy. This selection of people had the common goal to reside in government without having to share power with the Tutsi. The existence of the Akazu and its position of power alone presents us with an example of the top of the pyramid structure that Bauman explains is vital in describing genocide as distinctly modern.

The idea of political entrepreneurship and the bureaucratic hierarchical structure is exemplified by the involvement of business ties within the power pyramid. Verwimp
describes how “Business friends import weapons” (Verwimp 1996:27). The key example of this involvement of business within the hierarchy is the involvement of Felicien Kabuga. This multimillionaire businessman was described as the “main financier” (The Prosecutor v Felicien Kabuga 2005) for the genocide in Rwanda. Chris McGreal reports that;

“Mr. Kabuga is accused of supplying machetes and other weapons used in the genocide and of transporting the killers in his company’s vehicles. The wealthy businessman is also accused of funding the notorious Radio Mille Collines which incited Hutus to murder.” (McGreal 2006 :?)

The involvement of many others like Kabuga shows how the hierarchical bureaucratic structure in Rwanda has embedded a culture of political entrepreneurship, blurring the lines between a venture of business and mass murder. Bauman expresses how “linear graduation of power and subordination” (Bauman 2000:98), represents how in a modern bureaucratic society hierarchy remains, thus providing efficient social mechanisms for the dispensation of orders towards a genocidal motive.

The dispensation of orders surrounding the genocide in Rwanda and the hierarchical structure facilitating this provide reinforcement for Bauman’s argument on modernity in genocide. Des Forges describes the levels of the hierarchy that an order is passed down through;

Orders from the Prime Minister were handed down to the prefect, who passed them on to burgomasters, who called local meetings throughout the communes where they read the instructions to the population (Des Forges 1999:8).

This description of the passing down of orders throughout the genocide in Rwanda, illustrates the fixation of the hierarchical model. Hatzfeld’s compilation of actual accounts from the perpetrators of the killings in Rwanda illustrates the downward direction of orders. Interviewee, Pio, recalled how they “met up in town […] There they would give us our orders about the killings and our itineraries for the day” (Pio
Mutungirehe cited in Hatzfeld 2005:8). Not only would this provide a fast way of triggering killings throughout the period following 1994, it would also reinforce the subordinate, super ordinate culture in Rwandan politics, manifesting itself in an efficient and clear path to genocide. Bauman points out how “blind is the bureaucratic pursuit of efficiency [which is dependent upon] maintaining a smooth flow of command and information” (Bauman 2000:15). Bauman highlights the effects of modernity in the omnipresent hierarchical structure that he identifies in the Jewish genocide and refers to such structure as more like an office setting rather than a social construct. In this vein Bloxham explains how the structure was a platform on which to initiate the Rwandan genocide, and states how “The genocide was facilitated by the inherent system of close administration in a small country” (Bloxham 2008:224). This notion can be identified within Rwanda’s extremists’ utilisation of the hierarchical top down structure to efficiently deliver orders and coordinate divisions of labour to craft mass murder of around 800,000 people in a very short time frame.

In terms of the division of labour a quote from Hannah Arendt can be used to sum up the running argument within Bauman’s claims. She writes that, “Perhaps the nature of every bureaucracy is to make functionaries and mere cogs in the administrative machinery out of men, and thus dehumanize them” (Arendt 2007:289). This idea will be expanded upon in the preceding paragraphs on the notion of distance; however it must be noted in terms of hierarchy and efficiency that the development of a hierarchical structure works under the premise of division of labour and subordination, therefore establishing the bureaucratic organisation as “a mosaic of miniscule fragments” (Destexhe 1995:25). In Rwanda division of labour and allocation of tasks were commonplace. Kakwenzire and Kamukama use the example of the Interhamwe to illustrate this idea, describing how the militia “were divided into sections, each with a particular ‘assignment; to accomplish” (Kakwenzire and Kamukama 2000:79). Bauman speaks about the “meticulous functional division of labour” (Bauman 2000:98), in this sense the Rwandan genocide shows numerous parallels to Bauman’s evaluation of the Nazi genocide, its outstanding efficiency can be accredited to rigid hierarchy and division of labour forming a nationwide genocidal machine and all levels of such a hierarchy.
The hierarchical structure in Rwanda, as evaluated above, rested upon the division of labour and upon control maintained at regional level to not only inflict the violence but to consolidate historical ethnic divisions. The routinisation of ethnic division was a credit to the local authorities who embedded this sentiment at local level. Des Forges writes how; “the law required that all Rwandans be registered according to ethnic groups” (Des Forges 1999:3). Local administrations were relied upon to take commands from on high to the local people who actually carried out the killings. Prunier accounts how the genocide was a testament to the “quality of Rwandese local administration” (Prunier 1995:244). The hierarchical structure was reinforced by a historical authoritarian culture, and local authorities were another cog in the mass murdering machine. Scherrer explains how;

A crucial role was played by the mayors; they passed on the orders to kill to the heads of sectors and the gendarmes. Many obeyed out of subservience. The heads of sectors in their turn passed the orders to the cell leaders. The cell leaders mobilized the peasants to ‘do the job’ (Scherrer 2002:109).

This links to Bauman’s thesis in the sense that the notion of distance created by a bureaucratic system can have deadly results in terms of mass murder. Bauman expresses how due to this passing down of orders the “Dehumanizing starts at the point when, thanks to the distortion, the objects at which the bureaucratic operation is aimed at can and are reduced to a set of quantitative measures” (Bauman 2000:102). The Rwandan genocide confirms this through the presence of distance involved in the invention of murderous orders and their actual implementation. Viewpoints of Weber and Bauman reinforce the idea that distance consolidates dehumanization within the bureaucratic structure, consequentially increasing efficiency. Bauman writes that the effects of modern bureaucracy manifest themselves in the idea of this distance;

The increase in physical and/or psychic distance between the act and its consequences achieves more than a suspension of moral inhibition; it quashes the moral significance of the act and thereby pre-empts all conflict.
between personal standard of moral decency and immorality of the social consequences of the act (Bauman 2002:25).

Trahan explains how the “act need not directly cause any single victim’s death, but must contribute to a mass killing event” (Trahan 2010:111). The use of a publicised list of names of targets emphasises this point specifically regarding Rwanda. The idea that a list similar to a work quota was drawn out for death squads and the Interhamwe to work from, evokes the sense that the killings were like employment for those further down the hierarchy, and for those at the summit writing the lists, the names were just words on a piece of paper. Those giving out the orders did not witness “the blood dripping off their clubs and machetes” (Josh Hammer cited in Gourevitch 1999:117). Therefore this represents a modern characteristic of the genocide in Rwanda. In Bauman’s terms subjects that would normally be defended from atrocity by moral boundaries, are left vulnerable by the dehumanising effects that modern bureaucracy induces. This blind obedience of local authorities leads us to the investigation of the rationality involved with the establishment of the genocide in Rwanda.

Bureaucracy, as illustrated in this chapter played a major role in Rwandan genocide. Through the study of bureaucracy surrounding the Rwandan genocide, it is clear that the structure and hierarchical models used to orchestrate mass killing in Central Africa were vital in achieving such an efficient and rapid stream of massacres to eliminate political opposition and Tutsi from Rwanda. Reflecting on Bauman’s study whilst looking to the genocide in Rwanda, one identifies numerous correlations with Bauman’s thesis. Rwanda and Bauman’s interpretation of the Holocaust show many of the same structural frameworks that Bauman explains are definitive illustrations of the effects of modernity in genocide. Modern bureaucracy has brought with it the capacity for extensive efficiency and this does not exclude efficient mass killings. Structures that Weber explains in terms of the office and business arenas are being transferred to a more sinister goal, which is reinforced by the case study of the Rwandan genocide. The study will go on to examine why this bureaucracy was so readily accepted in the Rwandan genocide and how modernity has brought about a very different rationality, which Bauman explains teaches us a lesson of the supposed “benefits of reason’s rule over the emotions, the superiority of rationality over irrational action, or the endemic
clash between the demands of efficiency and the moral leanings with which ‘personal relations are so hopelessly infused.’(Bauman 2000:10). The next chapter will evaluate how far the Rwandan genocide supports the Bauman’s idea that modernity, in terms of a new sense of rationality and motivations, has become an inherent characteristic of genocide.

Rwanda and Rationality

“Even if we can never fully understand how this could happen in a moral sense, we can nonetheless struggle to understand how it came about” (Newbury(2) 1998:96).

The statement above summarises the approach to rationality in terms of genocide, and appropriately introduces Bauman’s use of rationality in arguing that genocide is distinctly modern. The rationalisation at play in genocide is devoid of moral foundations and works upon what is rational in the bureaucratic structure and a sense of reason within that structure seeking an entirely rational goal. Bauman explains how this is a distinctly modern characteristic of genocide through the goal of efficiency at all costs, without modern reason holding back progress. This is reinforced by the Rwandan genocide as these kinds of bureaucratic effects are readily identified, and the efficiency of the murders in Rwanda is a further entrenchment of rigid rationalisation at all moral costs.

The first point to expand upon is the idea of rationalisation being a product of bureaucracy, and facilitated by it. The success of the ethnic divisions, brought about by a centrally imposed mentality via various means of communication, discussed later, succeeded in legitimising the violence in a number of ways. Kelman and Hamilton explain how there are a number of steps to achieve this rationalised approach to killing;

Authorization, which absolves the individual of the responsibility to make moral choices; routinisation, when the action becomes so organised that there is no opportunity for raising moral questions and dehumanisation, when the actors attitudes towards the target and towards themselves become so structured that it is neither necessary nor possible for them to
view the relationship in moral terms (Kelman and Hamilton cited in Uvin 1997:111).

This process illustrates how the effect of bureaucracy leads to a unique sense of rationality without moral restraint, which is apparent in both the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide. This is apparent when looking to accounts of the killers involved. Alex Ntibirukee explains to CBS news how, "I got my machete and a nail-studded club and started killing [...] I chopped one with a machete, and killed the other one with the nail-studded club." (Ntibirukee 2007:2). Referring back to Hatzfeld’s collection of accounts from the killers in the Rwandan genocide one particular account stands out in terms of our evaluation or rationalisation in the genocide. Pancrace Hakizamungili recalls his thoughts that “Rule number one was to kill. There was no rule number two. It was an organization without complications” (Hatzfeld 2005:8). This emphasises the rationalisation that the “act itself is the ends, no thought on the consequence, the order is the ends” (Bauman 2000:102) within a rigid bureaucratic structure. Bauman’s theory is that to obey the orders alone inside a bureaucratic system is rational, and not to apply one’s own personal moral inhibitions to the order. The accounts in Hatzfeld book reinforce this as does the scale of the immersion in the killing. Bauman writes how the bureaucratic structure enables actors to, “concentrate fully on the good performance of the job at hand” (Bauman 2000:102). This is reinforced by the ambition and drive that killers in Rwanda illustrated in their “zeal for killing” (Des Forges 1999:9).

The bureaucratic structure demands ambition to complete whatever task you have been assigned to, with complete autonomy towards your task. Bauman explains the rationalisation involved in the motivation to conform to the bureaucratic structure. He explains how it is entirely feasible that “inventiveness and dedication of actors, complete with their personal motives that prompted them to deploy these qualities in full, can be mobilised and put to the service of the overall bureaucratic purpose”(Bauman 2000:101). In this Bauman develops the argument that even if personal motives come into play when an actor looks to complete the bureaucratic task they have been set, the autonomy of the purpose of such an act renders such factors irrelevant, and even without personal motive the ends will justify the means with no mention of “moral standards”(Bauman 2000 :101). Personal motives will not hinder the
completion of the task and in some respects will benefit the overall quality of the ends. Accounts report how “they were offered incentives such as food, drink and cash” (Smeuters and Hoex 2010:8). This demonstrates how modern rationalisation has replaced moral reasoning with the notion of personal gains used as incentives to heighten efficiency. The bureaucratic structure paved the way for a new rationalisation in Rwandan society devoid of moral ‘hindrances’. As Bauman explains the hierarchical system that bureaucracy demands, means that the orders themselves are the ends for the perpetrators of the killings buffered by material incentives. This hypothesis of rationalisation is further reinforced by the Rwandan case study through the infiltration of incentives used to heighten the ambition to kill. Ntibirukee explains how he was promised incentives that overrode his notion of morality, “They told me that I would be rewarded with a piece of land and a banana plantation. They told the same to other people, but you see they didn’t give me any banana plantation” (Ntibirukee 2007 :2) Bauman writes how incentives and personal goals contribute to the efficient completion of a task, and morality plays no part. Whether the actor has personal goals to kill or not, it can only help the cause for completion of the genocide, and even without such factors the premise of workmanship and success entrenched in modern bureaucratic structure rationalise any means to get the job done.

The rationalization of killing in Rwanda can additionally be investigated in terms of the obedience to such hierarchical structure. This section will focus on the actions of the state to facilitate this obedience and the idea that conformity is not a new concept in Rwandan society. Francois Nkurunziza a Rwandan lawyer explains how “Conformity is very deep, very developed here” (Nkurunziza cited in Gourevitch 1999:23) and explains that this is so because of the lack of education leaving people only to “revere power” (Nkurunziza cited in Gourevitch 1999:23) and not to question it. The lack of mass education in Rwanda enabled the modern bureaucratic structure to take hold and for authorities to place a new rationality with no other justification other than their unquestioned authority. The rationality that the state imposed on the Hutu population heightened the sense of ethnic hatred and justified such sentiment, therefore rationalising the need and want for genocide and consolidated the fear of Tutsi. The main actor in developing the rationality that enabled mass killing was the state. Mamdani explains how this explanation “focuses on the dead weight of cultural
traditions that demand conformity to power” (Mamdani 2001:199). This point reinforces Bauman’s thesis that genocide is distinctly modern. Des Forges explains that:

...such statements reflect less a national predisposition to obey orders as is sometimes said, than a recognition that the ‘moral authority’ of the state swayed them to commit crimes that would otherwise have been unthinkable (Des Forges 1999:12).

This reinforces Bauman’s thesis that genocide is distinctly modern due to the idea that the state is indoctrinating this new form of rationalisation which is reinforced by a rigid bureaucratic system. The state replaced individual morality with the notion of the moral authority of the state, therefore it could use this system of super-ordination to establish a false technical responsibility, and impose a centralised sense of morality which justified the killings. As one killer recalls "We were doing a job to order. We were lining up behind everyone's enthusiasm. We gathered into teams on the soccer field and went out hunting as kindred spirits." (Pio Mutungirehe cited in Hatzfeld 2005:16). This harrowing statement expresses how the killers felt empowered and justified in their actions due to the endorsement of genocide from the state. Carried away with enthusiasm the killers had the order from a strongly established authority in a society where obedience was the core. Psychologists Sabini and Silver reinforce this in their 1993 study concluding that “once brutality becomes standard procedure within an organisation, it takes on an added legitimacy” (Sabini and Silver cited in Uvin 1998:66).

In this chapter the theme of rationalisation within Bauman's Modernity and the Holocaust has been evaluated in terms of the genocide in Rwanda. The Rwandan genocide reinforces Bauman’s thesis in terms of the presence of a modern form of rationality. Evidence for this has been expressed in this chapter and includes theories on the justifications for the killing, in a personal sense and at state level. The bureaucratic system in Rwanda leading up to and throughout the genocide provided the perfect structure through which Hutu extremists could manipulate state authority and hierarchical rationality in order to mobilise mass murder. The mass murder was perpetrated by civilians who were not ‘evil’ people, but through the rigid structure of bureaucracy found it rational to commit large scale murder. The state had numerous
means by which to establish this replacement of moral with technical responsibility, the modern bureaucratic structure facilitated the development of social structures or power which forced morality into the abyss. In addition to this however was the use of modern technology to enforce a state as a moral authority and also to carry out an efficient stream of mass murder by embedding a sense of ethnic division and fear of the Tutsi. The use of modern communications enabled the entrenchment of the notion of ethnic hatred to the widest audience and facilitated the state imposed rationalisation that was born of the bureaucratic system. Bauman looks into the contribution of actual ‘machinery’ used for the purposes of genocide and in the following chapter this is the direction in which the study will take genocide.

**Rwanda and the Machinery of genocide**

In Bauman’s theory of modernity, he puts a lot of premise on the implications of modern technology in genocide. Not only does Bauman regard the bureaucratic machinery as a vital cog in the act of genocide, but also he refers to the idea of machinery in the literal sense. The transformation of mass murder into an industrialised process is one of the vital themes that emerge from Bauman’s book and the theories that he extracts from the machine like precision of the Holocaust can readily be applied to the case study of Rwanda. Hilberg’s detailed study of the Holocaust also focused on the mechanisms of efficiency in his third volume. He describes how “never before in history had people been killed on an assembly line basis” (Hilberg 2003:922), this brings home Bauman’s thesis that genocide is distinctly modern in reference to the new role of machinery for efficient mass murder. This notion of speed and efficiency in genocide is considered as distinctly modern due to the role of industry in achieving the level of efficiency that the bureaucratic model demands. The Rwandan genocide reinforces such a theory as the outstanding speed at which the extermination was carried out makes the study of modern technology that facilitated such efficiency vital. Kuperman emphasises this point explaining how “perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the genocide was its speed… perhaps two hundred and fifty thousand in just over two weeks”(Kuperman 2000:98). This chapter will evaluate the role of modern technology in the Rwandan genocide and link its role to Bauman’s wider theories on the effects of such developments in technology.
The Rwandan genocide is a horrifying example of how efficient modern genocide can be. Des Forges writes how the “killers struck with a speed and devastation that suggested an aberrant force of nature” (Des Forges 1999:1), Bauman’s approach to genocide provokes the view that due to modern technology, the nature of civilisation has been warped into an abhorrent uncontrollable force without moral reason. This is reinforced by the presence of communications in Rwanda that played a major role in facilitating the devastating extermination of Tutsi and moderate Hutu in Rwanda. The first and foremost illustration of modern technology and communications being used to assist maximum efficiency, is the role of radio broadcasting in the run up, and throughout the weeks of the genocide. The private station, Radio-Télévision Libre des Milles Collines (RTLM) and even the state controlled station Radio Rwanda had roles to play in the mobilization of the civilian forces that carried out the slaughter. BBC reporter Russell Smith describes how almost immediately after the plane of President Habyarimana was shot down “the radio [RTLM] called for a "final war" to "exterminate the cockroaches" (Smith 2003). RTML was funded by Kabuga, mentioned earlier in the study, and was aided by the state owned Radio Rwanda. Its aim was to mobilize fear and hatred within the Hutu population of Rwanda and it succeeded. Chalk describes how the UN Congress Senate of 1994 estimated that between 400,000 and 500,000 civilians in Rwanda were radio receivers, and how the “messages of hate spread through the airwaves,” (Chalk 2000:95). The genocide in Rwanda was carried out with the use of hate radio, inciting ethnic hatred and subsequently murder on an unthinkable scale. It was so successful due to the large numbers of radio receivers in Rwanda, therefore indoctrinating a significant proportion of the Hutu population in Rwanda with a vicious hatred of Tutsi and moderate Hutu. The RLML and Radio Rwanda were responsible for inciting fear and mobilizing death squads. Alfred Kiruhura recalls how he:

...did not believe the Tutsi were coming to kill us... but when the government radio continued to broadcast that they were coming to take our land, were coming to kill the Hutu – when this was repeated over and over – I began to feel some kind of fear. (Kiruhura cited in Chalk 2000:990).
In some respects the use of the state owned Radio Rwanda was an “even more potent weapon” (African Rights 1995:84) due to its higher legitimacy and its broader outreach of reception, it was a national tool as RTML was somewhat limited to Kigali. It can be argued that were it not for radio broadcast, the genocide would not have been undertaken with such devastating speed. In a county with high numbers of illiterate citizens, radio was the best and most appropriate use of communications technology to inspire violence and to get the bureaucratic task completed efficiently. “Listeners tend to conceive it as literally the government itself speaking” (Hachten cited in Kellow and Steeves 1998:116), this expresses how effective the radio in Rwanda proved to be. “A Tutsi businessman whose family disappeared in the attacks reflected that, “The popular masses in Rwanda are poorly educated. Every time the powers that be say something, it’s an order. They believe someone in political authority. Whatever this person demands, it’s as if God is demanding it” (Kellow and Steeves 1998:116). The power of the radio and to actually hear an authoritative voice proved to be extremely effective in mobilising Hutu with devastating effects. Hilberg talks about the importance of the railway networks throughout the Jewish Holocaust; in Rwanda we can see another use of modern communications to streamline genocide rendering genocide distinctly modern. Bauman goes further to this end in his discussion of modern technology as machinery genocide. As mentioned earlier Bauman applies Hilberg’s thesis that our “evolution has outpaced our understanding” (Hilberg cited in Bauman 2000:83), this can be recognised in the Rwandan genocide. The genocide in Rwanda was facilitated by the extensive use of radio broadcasts; this is an example of humanities manipulation of modern communications. The radio is a source for international and national information sharing, it was not developed as a tool to incite mass murder and broadcast falsification. Here we can identify an example of how technology has outpaced civilisation and the devastating effects this can have and how technology and specifically communications has been manipulated to tyrannical ends, with no sign of moral input. Bauman expresses how “Thanks to rapidly advancing information technology, which more than any technology that preceded it has succeeded in obliterating the humanity of its objects” (Bauman 2000:115).

In terms of the impact of modern technology on genocide, Rwanda can also reinforce Bauman’s position in terms of the cutting of communications to entrap the victims of
the genocide into an efficient and morbid surface area on which to work on. Modern communications and technology in one instance promote freedom and ease of interaction, however adversely as seen in Rwanda, reliance on communications and the networks put in place can also act as a web that victims become caught in. The latter is relevant in the case of the Rwandan genocide. Francoius Nkurunziza describes how “Rwanda has good roads – the best in Africa”(Nkurunziza cited in Gourevitch 1999:32), however these roads turned out to be the death of hundreds of thousands of Rwandan citizens. Modern technology and communications, like road networks in the case of the Jewish genocide rail networks, have been used in Rwanda to entrap the victims of the genocide. Roadblocks were put in place which stopped any chance of organised resistance from the opposition parties and indeed which halted any opportunity of escape. Paul Rusesabagina, the man honoured for saving a large number of refugees during the genocide explains how in a conversation with contacts at UNAMIR on April 6th 1994, asking for an escort they replied “‘No way. There are roadblocks all over Kigali, and people are being killed on the roads’”(Rusesabagina cited in Gourevitch 1999:113). The roads that refugees flocked to, to take them out of Rwanda and out of danger, had been transformed into a network of human fly traps where killers could focus their attack. In addition to this on the 8th of April, telephone communications were cut to stop the chance of any warnings being circulated. Tutsi and moderate Hutu were literally cut off with no communications with the outside world and no idea where the killers would strike next. The 1995 African Right reports describe how there were “several purposes [for the cutting of communications]: it allowed the killers to restrict the movements of their targeted victims, to control the flow of news to the population, and to confuse and mislead the outside world, so that they could carry on the killing undisturbed” (African Rights 1995:237). This example explains how genocide is distinctly modern because of the impact modern technology has had on civilisation; it would be difficult to imagine such a large scale mass murder being enacted without the manipulation of communications and technology to ensure the efficiency of the murders. Bauman includes this notion in his thesis and states how “technical resources that permit implementation of such projects [genocide] not only have been proved fully compatible with modern civilisation, but have been conditioned, created and supplied by it” (Bauman 2000:87). It is the mundane communications that we as a civilisation
take for granted, that have been open to manipulation and turned on their head to facilitate genocide, therefore making genocide distinctly and terrifyingly modern.

To conclude this final chapter, it is clear that the Rwandan genocide reinforces Bauman’s thesis through the implications of modern technology. In some respects the Rwandan genocide is not so dissimilar from the Jewish Holocaust if looked at through Bauman’s criteria. The meticulous planning that went into the Rwandan genocide is a testimony to the perpetrators use of modern technology. As illustrated by this chapter it is clear that the actors in the genocide were able to use modern technology and communications as the machinery for the genocide. The manipulation of communications in the Rwandan genocide can be identified as both two dimensional, the use of hate radio and the shutting down of existing communications i.e. road networks etc to enclose all Tutsi and Moderate Hutu into a manageable space. This shows how modern technology had been used to incite violence and shutdown to entrap victims. Bauman expresses how the most terrifying part of the Jewish Holocaust, is the idea that all aspects of mundane life were utilised in carrying out such a horrific extermination. This is also apparent in the Rwandan genocide, the use of existing communications and modern technology to inspire violence and to maintain a manageable killing field are both examples of how modernity and the technology that it involves can so easily be turned on their head for tyrannical purposes such as genocide. Bauman cites Feingold to reinforce his point: “The overall plan itself was a reflection of the modern scientific spirit gone awry” (Feingold cited in Bauman 2000:8). The argument that genocide is distinctly modern is reinforces by the use of technology in the Rwandan genocide. The impact of the bureaucratic system has inspired the inventive use of modern technology with the ever existing goal of efficiency in mind.

**Conclusion:**
The main body of this dissertation has sought to evaluate Bauman’s thesis that genocide is distinctly modern looking at the case study of Rwanda. Through Bauman’s thesis three themes emerged, around which the evaluation in this study it structured, bureaucracy, rationality and technology. It has reinforced Bauman’s argument by applying these themes to the case of the Rwandan genocide.
Bureaucracy, Bauman writes, provides the structure in civilisation, through which moral compass holds little weight. Modernity has brought with it the heightening importance of efficiency and progress. Using the Holocaust to enforce this view, Bauman creates a very strong case for the study of genocide and modernity. It is clear through the study of the Holocaust how Bauman’s view is strengthened, however through this study of the Rwandan genocide, Bauman’s thesis is also found to be compatible. The Rwandan genocide appears at first glance to be a world apart from the Holocaust but with careful evaluations of Bauman’s themes it becomes clear that the structures and the mentality surrounding both genocides are not so dissimilar. Bureaucracy in the Rwandan genocide ensured that a strict hierarchical system, as in Nazi Germany, maintained the efficiency of the genocide and the dispensation of the tasks of mass murder. As discussed in the chapter one the hierarchical system replaces individual moral contemplation with the desire to be the best in ones field and carry out orders to maximum effect. There is no room or time for individual morality and such is that the state and the bureaucratic system itself replace humane reflection of morals with the professing of efficiency and progress.

Modern rationalisation is the second theme that the dissertation has focused on and a core theme in Bauman’s study. A modern sense of rationality is a consequence of a civilisation living in a rigidly bureaucratic society that manipulates the design of moral humane rationalisation. In the bureaucratic system as discussed above, humanity is provoked to replace its moral norms with a rationality that can justify inhuman means for the greater good. In Rwanda this can be identified by the imposition of the state as the highest moral authority. With such a history of conformity within the country, it is possible for even the most seemingly immoral state policy to seem rational and unquestionable including genocide. Bauman’s argument that genocide is distinctly modern is clarified by the application of his theme of rationality when applied to the case study of Rwanda. Accounts from the killers themselves in Gourevitch’s collection of speeches brings home how rational the genocide was to the killers and how the state imposed this false rationality eradicating any personal moral beliefs of the killers and inciting them to murder.
Bauman looks into the work of Hilberg and other historical works on the Holocaust and draws from them the importance of modern technology. He uses this use of technology in the Holocaust to reinforce his view that genocide is distinctly modern. As described in chapter six, Bauman explains how in his view society is shaped by the technology that has surpassed the progression of civilisation itself and its understanding. Through this chapter we can identify continuation throughout Bauman’s study throughout the three themes that this dissertation is concerned with. Genocide is a modern phenomenon and this is strengthened by the application of the three themes above to the Rwandan genocide. Bureaucracy demands efficiency and replaces rationality with its own manipulation of moral and technical responsibility, therefore justifying murder. This modern ambition and drive motivated by bureaucracy and reinforced by the facade of rationality inspires the use of modern technology to ensure that bureaucratic tasks get completed with the upmost efficiency and speed. All of these characteristics are applicable to the Rwandan genocide, providing further strength to Bauman’s study. The achievements of modernity have brought with it advancements in civilisation and mustn’t be considered as the root of all evil, however it is reinforced by the case study of the genocide in Rwanda that such advancements have some implications for civilisation. Efficiency has overtaken moral worth in bureaucratic societies and without appropriate consideration of these possibilities genocide will continue to happen utilising the mundane features of modern society for tyrannical ends. Bauman states emotively that, “Without modern civilisation and its most central essential achievements there would be no holocaust” (Bauman 2000:87). This sums up the argument that Bauman develops in his work on modernity. As this dissertation has developed using an instance of genocide that seems on the surface unrelated to the Holocaust, in using Bauman’s criteria for his argument that genocide is distinctly modern, the Rwandan genocide fits the measure of a distinctly modern genocide.
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