Université de Montréal

Politics in the Shadow of the Gun:

Political Legacies of Rebellion and Authoritarianism for Party Politics after Civil War in Burundi and Beyond

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Résumé

Depuis la fin de la guerre froide, la transformation des groupes rebelles en partis politiques est devenue un moyen d'intégrer les anciens rebelles dans des transitions libérales de la guerre à la paix. À l'inverse, avant la chute du rideau de fer, les rebelles étaient militairement marginalisés et politiquement exclus. Du Kosovo au Népal et du Salvador au Burundi, on constate une augmentation du nombre des cas dans lesquels l'intégration des mouvements rebelles dans le système politique 'post-conflit' a été activement promu par les décideurs nationaux, régionaux et internationaux. Cela s'est accompagné par le développement d'une littérature académique sur la transformation des groupes rebelles en partis politiques. La grande majorité des études existantes sont construites autour des distinctions conceptuelles strictes entre guerre et paix ainsi qu'entre groupe rebelle et parti politique. Ces études ne parviennent pas à capturer les ambiguïtés qui accompagnent les processus de transition. Dans les pays touchés par les conflits armés, nous assistons souvent à l'émergence de contextes qui ne peuvent être qualifiés ni d'état de guerre ouverte ni de stade de paix claire. En revanche, nous observons des organisations politico-militaires qui alternent fréquemment entre résistance sociale, rébellion, violence et politique partisane.

Dans cette thèse, je développe une critique de la littérature existante sur la conversion des groupes rebelles en partis politiques. *Primo*, je me fonde sur les paradigmes « ni guerre, ni paix » et « politiques armés » pour déconstruire des catégories conceptuelles ordinaires – tels que guerre et paix, groupes rebelles et partis politiques, ou encore violence et démocratie – afin d'étudier les ambiguïtés entre ces différentes catégories. En me basant sur le concept de « l'hybridité », je propose de conceptualiser les groupes rebelles et les partis politiques comme des « mouvements politico-militaires hybrides » afin d'étudier les liens entre la politique et la violence tout au long de leur trajectoires historiques. J'avance l'importance d'étudier les ordres politiques et armés hybrides afin de comprendre la politique partisane suite à une guerre civile. *Secundo*, je fais recours à l'institutionnalisme historique pour proposer un cadre théorique nouveau permettant de mieux comprendre les trajectoires des partis politiques issus de mouvements rebelles. L'institutionnalisme historique ramène une temporalité dans l'analyse. Cette approche permet, entre autres, de remédier aux études anhistoriques que l'on retrouve souvent dans la littérature existante. Je me base spécifiquement sur « l'analyse systémique des processus historiques » pour tracer les politiques d'idées, de pouvoir et d'institutions des partis politiques rebelles pendant et au-delà de la guerre civile.

Cette thèse analyse ces ambiguïtés par une étude qualitative approfondie du Burundi. En me basant sur une comparaison « pair à pair », j'analyse les trajectoires historiques du PALIPEHUTU-FNL et du CNDD-FDD. Longtemps cité par les politiciens, diplomates et académiques comme une réussite majeure pour la construction de la paix selon le paradigme libéral, le Burundi connait aujourd'hui un tournant autoritaire important. Plusieurs observateurs mettent en garde contre le risque d'une nouvelle guerre civile, en particulier suite à la crise électorale de 2015. En cela, le Burundi constitue un excellent cas pour l'étude des contextes « ni guerre, ni paix », des « politiques armés » ainsi que de leurs implications pour la littérature sur la transformation des groupes rebelles en partis politiques.

Mots-clés : Guerres civiles, groupes rebelles, partis politiques, résolution des conflits, Burundi

Abstract

Since the end of the Cold War, the transformation of rebel groups into political parties has become one way of integrating former armed movements into liberal war-to-peace transitions. In contrast, before the fall of the Iron Curtain, rebel groups were predominately militarily marginalized and politically excluded. From Kosovo to Nepal, and from El Salvador to Burundi, the last two decades have seen a rise in the number of cases, in which the integration of rebel groups into 'post-conflict' party politics has been actively promoted by national, regional and international policy-makers. This has led to an emerging scholarship on rebel-to-party transformations. The large majority of existing studies are constructed around strict conceptual distinctions between war and peace, as well as between rebel group and political party. They fail to capture the ambiguities, which often underpin political transition processes. In conflict-affected countries, we often witness the emergence of settings that can be qualified as neither a state of outright war, nor as a clear stage of peace. Instead, we observe politico-military organizations that frequently alternate between social protest, rebellion, violence, and party politics.

In this dissertation, I develop a conceptual and theoretical critique of the existing literature on 'rebel-to-party transformations'. *Primo*, I draw on the "*no peace, no war*" and "*armed politics*" paradigms to deconstruct and interrogate common categories, such as war and peace, rebel group and political party, violence and democracy, in order to study the ambivalences between these different categories. Drawing on the concept of "*hybridity*", I propose to conceptualize rebel groups and their political party successors as "*hybrid politico-military movements*" in order to study the inter-linkages between politics and violence throughout the historical trajectories of these organizations. I argue that we need to take hybrid political and armed orders seriously if we want to understand party politics in the aftermath of civil war. *Secundo*, I appeal to historical institutionalism to propose a novel theoretical framework for understanding the trajectories of rebel political parties. Historical institutionalism brings time back into the study of rebel-to-party transformations. It is an excellent analytical approach to remedy predominant, ahistorical accounts. I specifically draw on "*systemic historical process analysis*" to map out rebel political parties' ideational, power and institutional politics during and beyond civil war.

This dissertation analyzes the ambiguities of 'rebel-to-party transformation' processes through an in-depth qualitative case study of Burundi. Drawing on a paired comparison, I analyze the historical trajectories of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD in Burundi. Long cited as a major "*success story*" of international liberal peacebuilding among policy-makers, diplomats and academics alike, Burundi has increasingly witnessed a return to authoritarian practices. Burundi watchers have repeatedly warned of the risk of renewed civil war, especially in the aftermath of the 2015 electoral crisis. This makes Burundi an excellent case for the study of "*neither-peace-nor-war*" and "*armed politics*" settings, and their implications for rebel-to-party transformation scholarship.

Keywords: Civil wars, rebel groups, political parties, conflict resolution, Burundi

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List of Acronyms & Abbreviations

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project
ADC-Ikibiri	*Alliance des démocrates pour le changement* or *Alliance of Democrats for Change* (ADC-*Ikibiri*)
ADLF	*Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre* or *Alliance of Democratic Forces of the Liberation of the Congo* (DRC)
AI	Amnesty International
ANC	*African National Congress* (South Africa)
MIAB/AMIB	Mission Africaine au Burundi or African Union Mission in Burundi
APRODH	Association pour la protection des droits humains et des personnes détenues or Association for the Protection of Human Rights and Incarcerated Persons
AU	African Union
BINUB	Bureau intégré des Nations Unis au Burundi or United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi
BLTP	Burundi Leadership Training Program
BNUB	Bureau des Nations Unis au Burundi or United Nations Office in Burundi
CAR	Central African Republic
CEDAC	Centre de Formation pour le Développement des Anciens Combattants or Training Center for the Development of Ex-Combatants (Burundi)
CENI	Commission électorale nationale indépendante or National Independent Electoral Commission (Burundi)

CNDD-FDD	*Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie – Forces pour la défense de la démocratie* or *National Council for the Defense of Democracy – Forces for the Defense of Democracy* (Burundi)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	East African Community
EU	European Union
EPLF-PFDJ	*Eritrean People's Liberation Front – People's Front for Democracy and Justice* (Eritrea)
EPRDF	*Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front* (Ethiopia)
ETA	*Euskadi Ta Askatasuna* or *Basque Country and Freedom* (Spain)
FAB	*Forces armées burundaises* or *Burundian Armed Forces* (Burundi) [typically referring to the Tutsi-dominated national army]
FDLR	*Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda* or *Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda* (Rwanda)
FDN	*Forces nationales de défense* or *National Defense Forces* (Burundi) [typically referring to the new national army following the provisions of the Arusha Peace Accord]
FMLN	*Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional* or *Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front* (El Salvador)
FNLA	*Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola* or *Front for the National Liberation of Angola* (Angola)
FRELIMO	*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* or *Liberation Front of Mozambique* (Mozambique)
FRETILIN	*Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste Independente* or *Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor* (East Timor)

FROLINA	*Front pour la libération nationale* or *National Liberation Front* (Burundi)
FRODEBU	*Front pour la démocratie au Burundi* or *Front for Democracy in Burundi* (Burundi)
FRPI	*Force de résistance patriotique d'Ituri* or *Front for Patriotic Resistance in Ituri* (DRC)
FSLN	*Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional* or *Sandinista National Liberation Front* (Nicaragua)
GAM	*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* or *Free Aceh Movement* (Indonesia)
HDZ	*Hrvatska demokratska zajednica* or *Croatian Democratic Union* (Croatia)
HRW	Human Right Watch
ICG	International Crisis Group
IRA	*Irish Republican Army* (Ireland)
JPH	*Jeunesse patriotique hutu* or *Patriotic Hutu Youth* (Burundi)
LRA	*Lord's Resistance Army* (Uganda)
M-19	*Movimiento 19 de Abril* or *19th of April Movement* (Columbia)
MAPROBU	Mission africaine de prévention et de protection au Burundi or African Protection and Prevention Force in Burundi
MENUB	Mission d'observation électorale des Nations Unies au Burundi or United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi
MEPROBA	*Mouvement des Etudiants Progressistes Barundi* or *Movement of Progressive Burundian Students* (Burundi)

MFPH	*Mouvement des femmes patriotiques hutu* or *Patriotic Hutu Women's Movement* (Burundi)
MPLA-PT	*Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola – Partido do Trabalho* or *People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola –Labour Party* (Angola)
MSD	*Mouvement pour la solidarité et la démocratie* or *Movement for Solidarity and Democracy* (Burundi)
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
NRM-A	*National Resistance Movement – Army* (Uganda)
NSAGs	Non-State Armed Groups
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OLUCOME	Observatoire de lutte contre la corruption et les malversations économiques or Anti-Corruption and Economic Malpractice Observatory (Burundi)
ONATOUR	Office national de la Tourbe or National Peat Office (Burundi)
ONUB	Opération des Nations Unies au Burundi or United Nations Operation in Burundi
OTB	Office du thé du Burundi or National Tea Office (Burundi)
PA	*Partai Aceh* or *Aceh Party* (Indonesia)
PDC	*Parti démocrate chrétien* or *Christian Democratic Party* (Burundi)
PUD	*Partido Unificación Democrática* or *Democratic Unification Party* (Honduras)

PALIPEHUTU-FNL	*Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu – Forces nationales de libération* or *Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People – National Forces of Liberation* (Burundi)
RAMICO-PAX	*Rassemblement des militaires et combattants pour la paix au Burundi* or *Rally of soldiers and combatants for peace in Burundi* (Burundi)
RCD	*Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie* or *Rally for Congolese Democracy* (DRC)
RENAMO	*Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* or *Mozambican National Resistance* (Mozambique)
RPF-A	*Rwandan Patriotic Front – Rwandan Patriotic Army* (Rwanda)
RUF	*Revolutionary United Front* (Sierra Leone)
SAPSD	South Africa Protection Support Detachment (Burundi)
SDS	*Srpska Demokrastka Stranka* or *Serb Democratic Party* (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
SPD	*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* or *German Social Democratic Party* (Germany)
SPLM-A	*Sudan People's Liberation Movement – Sudan People's Liberation Army* (Sudan/South Sudan)
SWAPO	*South West Africa People's Organization* (Namibia)
UÇK-KLA	*Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës* or *Kosovo Liberation Army* (Kosovo)
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
UCPN (M)	*Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)* (Nepal)
UNITA	*União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* or *National Union for the Total Independence of Angola* (Angola)

UN	United Nations
UPD	*Union pour la paix et la démocratie* or *Union for Peace and Democracy* (Burundi).
UPRONA	*Union pour le Progrès National* or *Union for National Progress* (Burundi)
URNG	*Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca* or *Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity* (Guatemala)
UTB	*Union des Travailleurs du Burundi* or *National Labor Union* (Burundi)
ZANU-PF	*Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front* (Zimbabwe)

Note on Kirundi & Kiswahili Language Employment

In this dissertation, I frequently employ original Kirundi and Kiswahili expressions (accompanied by an English translation and explanation) in order to designate singular phenomena or events in Burundian history. For categories of people, groups and places, I use the Kirundi prefixes 'mu-' and 'ba-'. As in all Bantu languages, the prefix 'mu-' indicates the singular, such as Murundi for a person from Burundi, and the prefix 'ba-' designates the plural, such as Barundi for the people of Burundi. For references to ethnic categories, I switch between the Kirundi terms, Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa, and the conventions of the *International Africa Institute* (IAI), which omits the prefixes, referring simply to Tutsi, Hutu and Twa.

Note on Transcriptions & Translations of Interviews

The large majority of interviews for this dissertation were conducted in French, Kirundi or Kiswahili. The interviews in Kirundi and Kiswahili were undertaken with the assistance of a translator. All interviews were subsequently transcribed and translated into English by the author before being included in this dissertation for the fluidity of the reading. In addition to interview translations, historical documents, be they in French, Kirundi or another foreign language, have also been translated into English by the author for the ease of the reader. Direct quotations form primary or secondary sources are marked in "*Italics*" for their easy identification.

« Uburundi bugona buri maso. »[1]

(Burundian proverb)

To all Barundi in dire quest of peace and reconciliation

[1] This Kirundi proverb roughly translates into "*Burundi snores with its eyes wide open*".

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Prologue

Extract from my field journal, 30 April 2015, Bujumbura, Burundi: I am waking up to the sounds of automatic gunfire and grenade explosions. The angst-inducing noise of gunshots has become a constant companion over the last days. They are coming from the neighborhood of Musaga, one of the strongholds of the protests that have erupted in Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi. It is the fifth day of the popular contestation against the controversial third term for incumbent President and former rebel leader Pierre Nkurunziza. Our embassies have advised us to stay home and avoid any unnecessary movements, especially in the vicinity of the *quartiers contestataires*, the strongholds of the anti-third term protests. I receive a phone call from a Burundian friend working for a Western Embassy. He is on his way to Musaga. He asks me if I want to join him to talk to some of the protesters. I am not sure what to do. On the one hand, I am concerned about my safety and, above all, the safety of the people that I might talk to. On the other hand, I want to better understand the ongoing protests and how they relate to Burundi's post-peace accord transition. Reluctantly, I agree to join my friend as we discuss security precautions. When we arrive in Musaga, my friend tracks the protesters. They are gathering and marching in small groups of around 20 to 50 people. At some point, a crowd of demonstrators is running straight towards us. Most of them are young men, Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa, united for a common cause. They wave tree branches and placards. They shout "*Temba temba harageze*" ('Step down, step down, it's time'). While I decide to observe the demonstration from a distance on the side of the road, my friend joins the protesters and walks with them for several minutes. He records their songs and later translates them for me. The demonstrators decry a long list of grievances that they have accumulated over the last decade.

They cite corruption scandal after corruption scandal, extrajudicial execution after extrajudicial execution, in short a summary of the abuses and atrocities committed by the current regime. The third-term debate almost fades away as a secondary matter amidst this long list of grievances. The songs incarnate the decade-long disillusionment with a regime that was supposed to bring change to four decades of authoritarianism, civil war, oppression and injustice. I am impressed by the protesters' act of courage to take to the streets despite risking severe state repression. Since the beginning of the popular protests, the police have used teargas, water cannons and live ammunition to halt the demonstrations. In just five days, state security forces have killed at least seven people. Some protestors have thrown stones at the police and have erected barricades of burning tires to prevent policemen from entering their neighborhoods. Thousands of people have fled their homes out of fear of impending violence. Nevertheless, the civil resistance feels like a liberating moment. I see, above all, pride and determination in the protesters' faces as they live democracy right there on the streets of the capital.

Extract from my field journal, 25 June 2015, Bujumbura, Burundi: We are three days away from communal and legislative elections. The popular protests against the third mandate have almost completely fizzled out. Unlike the massive uprising in Burkina Faso, the protests in Burundi have stayed mostly confined to several neighborhoods in the capital and never managed to reach the city center. The repression against the demonstrators and the purge after the failed coup d'état in mid-May suffocated the resistance spirit of the majority of the demonstrators. So far, at least 75 people have been killed – opposition members, government militants and innocent bystanders. Over 140.000 people have fled Burundi since the beginning of the electoral crisis. After several delays and numerous failed negotiation attempts, the

government is determined to push through with the elections. The African Union and the European Union have withdrawn their electoral observers as a sign of boycott that elections held in such a context won't be able to meet international standards. In line with established Burundian political practices, the rumor mill is spinning out of control. The grapevine foretells imminent attacks and escalating violence over the weekend to stop the elections from going ahead. There is more and more talk of a renewed, nascent rebellion, which is said to include some of the demonstrators, who claim they do not see any other alternative than to take up arms against a regime that has violently been repressing them. It also includes several army generals who were involved in the failed coup. However, the launch of an organized and vigorous rebellion is hard to imagine. Would it indeed be possible to initiate a significant armed movement to challenge the current government in just a few weeks' time? What are the long-term risks of the radicalization of the protest movement with violence begetting violence? How much genuine support does Nkurunziza's government benefit from, especially in the interior of the country, where the protests have been limited to a few locations? I cannot stop thinking about the tremendous resilience that the present regime has shown, persevering despite the popular protests, a failed coup d'état and numerous high-level civilian and several military defections. My contacts in the ruling party claim that the key military establishment trussed by solidarity bonds forged during years of armed struggle remains unscathed. I meet with one of my informants, a history student and member of one of the opposition parties, who was among the demonstrators. He was very active during the first week of the protests before being captured by the police for giving an interview to a foreign journalist. He spent one week in solitary confinement. No official police file was opened against him. He recalls how he began to negotiate with the policemen. After a few days, he was released from prison in

exchange for 50.000 BIF (about 35 USD), which he collected with a heavy heart among impoverished family members and friends. The policemen advised him to leave the capital if he wanted to avoid being captured again. Next time, they assured him, it would be much harder to figure out a way to be let go from prison. He decides to leave the capital for several weeks, contemplating joining the nascent rebellion. When I ask him if the protests had been peaceful, he replies:

> *There are no peaceful demonstrations in African countries.* […] *When you face a repressive regime, you radicalize. And we have faced this regime for the last ten years.* […] *At first, most Barundi were extremely hopeful that this regime would, at last, bring genuine change to our country. The population understood their inclination to take up arms and sympathized with their cause. However, when they took power, all their ideals vanished.* […] *The irony of history has it that they now risk facing such an armed rebellion akin to the one they had launched themselves a little over twenty years ago* (Interview with political opponent, Bujumbura, 25 June 2015).

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On July 21, 2015, incumbent President and former rebel leader Pierre Nkurunziza was reelected Head of State with almost 70 percent of the votes in contested elections boycotted by a majority of opposition parties. Since then, Burundi lives to the rhythm of rumors about imminent violence, grenade attacks, tit-for-tat political killings, mass arrests of people suspected of having taken part in the protests, and attacks by armed opposition elements, sometimes followed by severe state repression in the contestation neighborhoods.

Even though the current crisis started as a fundamentally political crisis (reflected in the diverse make-up of the anti-third term camp rallying Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa around a common cause), the government and opposition have increasingly returned to ethnicized discourse sparking fear of renewed ethnic-based violence, which had haunted Burundi for decades following the country's accession to independence. The government states that the

protests were confined to certain urban neighborhoods in the capital, implicitly referring to Tutsi-dominated neighborhoods. The opposition has warned of risks of impending genocide and has lobbied for international intervention to challenge the current ruling party.

I first traveled to Burundi, a small landlocked country in the heart of the African Great Lakes Region, in May 2013 to conduct interviews for this PhD dissertation. Between 2013 and 2015, I spent a total amount of nine months in the country. In less than two years, I have seen Burundi slide from a land of relative peace, frequently cited as success story for liberal peacebuilding, to a country risking to plunge into renewed civil war, with the international community failing to push for a negotiated political solution to the ongoing crisis. However, the relative peace had always been somewhat deceiving. Latent political violence has always been present. As my research assistant and I walked the hillsides of some of Burundi's provinces to interview ex-combatants and civilians, we frequently heard testimonies of violent clashes between youth members affiliated with political parties. People also recounted continuous intimidation, night patrols and acts of violence committed by members of the *Imbonerakure*, the ruling party's youth movement. This political violence frequently came to a head, especially around election time, as illustrated in the escalating violence during the electoral crises that have accompanied the 2010 and 2015 elections.

This dissertation project is born out of an intimate interest in the study of rebel groups, their origin and evolution as well as their ultimate pathways. During my research in Burundi, I was astonished by the fact that the Hutu-dominated rebellions, namely the *Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie – Forces de défense de la démocratie* (CNDD-FDD), the country's current ruling party, and the *Parti pour la libération du people hutu – Forces nationales de libération* (PALIPEHUTU-FNL), one of the most important opposition forces,

were perceived as legitimate ripostes to decades of prejudice and persecution of the Hutu population by many Burundian people, Bahutu and Batutsi, alike. However, today, the political record of Burundi's current regime remains controversially debated, a fierce quarrel even prior to the 2015 electoral crisis. During my research, I was struck by the different narratives and appraisals, which I would encounter with regard to the governance record of the current ruling party. Many people continue to commend it for having brought relative peace to the country following decades of authoritarianism and civil war. As one former combatant and member of the ruling party told me:

> *Today, we can easily talk about democracy; this shows progress. The achievements of the ruling party in only ten years are not comparable to any of the previous totalitarian regimes. They have brought us free primary education, an enormous gesture in a country, where, after the 1972 genocide, Hutu parents were afraid to send their children to school out of fear that they would never return* (Interview with a CNDD-FDD member, Bubanza, 18 June 2014).

Others harshly criticize the ruling party for having promised change to the authoritarian practices of the past but instead accumulating its own record of repression, human rights abuses and corruption scandals. During one of my early interviews, I asked a former combatant what he thought about peace and democracy in his country.

> *Even though there are no more direct fire exchanges between the army and the armed movements, there is no peace.* […] *After the 2010 elections bodies were found floating in the rivers on a daily basis* (Interview with former FNL member, Bubanza, 11 October 2013).

Members of opposition parties and civil society frequently pointed to what they referred to as a "*réflexe du maquis*", a 'rebel mentality' inherited from the armed struggle, which continues to shape the political strategies of the ruling party. I started studying the origins, narratives and practices of Burundi's diverse rebellions in order to shed light on their historical founding contexts, self-understandings and trajectories. I wanted to investigate how

their rebel past shapes the way in which they partake in politics after officially renouncing the armed struggle. I set out to examine to what extent political parties rooted in rebel movements are 'ordinary' political parties, as we have come to understand them in the Western world, and to what extent their armed resistance against an authoritarian regime prompts legacies, which distinguish them from other political parties.

What emerged in the course of my interviews were grand narratives of liberation and messianic destiny, with the two major Hutu-dominated rebellions claiming the title of the legitimate representative of the armed resistance struggle. In their perspective, their armed opposition, cast by each rebellion as the 'true' liberation struggle, entitled them to rule the country culminating in a continuous political and violent struggle against the then Tutsi-dominated national army as well as each other throughout Burundi's civil war and carrying over into the post-peace accord period. Moreover, what emerged were particular political and violent formal and informal practices, which were not only inherited from the armed resistance but also from decades of authoritarianism shaping Burundian politics to this date.

This dissertation, entitled *Politics in the Shadow of the Gun: Political Legacies of Rebellion and Authoritarianism for Party Politics after Civil War in Burundi and Beyond,* invites scholars, practitioners and policy-makers to reflect upon the short- and long-term implications of integrating former rebel groups into the post-peace accord political system. It is devoted to the people of Burundi as well as other peoples around the world, who have experienced authoritarianism, rebellion and civil war. The dissertation intends to contribute to a growing literature dedicated to better understanding how armed struggle affects the way in which rebel political parties engage in politics and violence before, during and after civil war.

Chapter I: Introduction – Rebels as Democrats?

"*They* [the CNDD-FDD] *took up arms to change things.*
I adhered to their ideology, because I believed that they could change things.
But when they took power, their ideology changed,
they steal, they plunder, they kill.
They have fallen into the same trap as the others
[i.e. the preceding authoritarian regimes]
by telling themselves we will do as the others."

(Interview with a resident of the Kamenge neighborhood, Bujumbura, 6 October 2013)

Since the end of the Cold War, the transformation of rebel groups into political parties has become one way of integrating former armed movements into liberal war-to-peace transitions (Berdal and Ucko 2010). In contrast, before the fall of the Iron Curtain, rebel groups were predominantly militarily marginalized and politically excluded (Kalyvas 2010, 7). From Kosovo to Nepal, and from El Salvador to Burundi, the last two decades have seen a steady rise in the number of cases in which the integration of rebel groups into 'post-conflict'[2] party politics has been actively promoted by national, regional and international policy-makers (Söderberg Kovacs and Hatz 2016). According to the Uppsala Peace Agreement Dataset,[3] between 1990 and 2011, 16.7 percent of all peace accords explicitly stipulated the conversion of rebel groups into political parties (as compared to none before 1990) (Söderberg Kovacs and Hatz 2016). Scholars estimate that there are currently approximately 45 cases of armed movements worldwide that have undergone such a conversion process, with a majority of cases observed in Sub-Saharan Africa (Söderström 2014). This has led to a continuous increase in the study of what the scholarly community has generally come to refer to as "*rebel-to-party transformations*" (Manning 2008; Söderberg Kovacs 2007; De Zeeuw 2008).

In theory, the political integration of rebel groups should be the starting point for the movements' steady transition from armed actors to peaceful political parties. The participation of rebel groups in emerging democratic systems is supposed to provide these actors with peaceful channels to articulate their political grievances and to socialize them to the 'new rules

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[2] The terms 'post-war' or 'post-conflict' are highly ambiguous. If employed in this dissertation, they refer to the integration of former rebel groups into the society following the end of formal hostilities stipulated in the signing of a peace agreement. However, peace accords do not necessarily coincide with the end of armed conflict or political violence. In light of these challenges, I prefer to employ the terms 'post-peace accord' or 'post-accord', which reflect a more factual representation (Zahar 2006).
[3] The Uppsala Peace Agreement Dataset is collected by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) based at Uppsala University in Sweden.

of the game', rendering recourse to violence obsolete in the process (Zartman 1995a, 337f; Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens 2002, 3; Lyons 2005, 6). Proponents of this argument claim that political parties rooted in armed resistance can transform into "*agents of democracy*" (Van Cranenburgh 1999, 104). In addition, they assume that the respective resort to political and violent struggles are mutually exclusive (Berti 2013). However, empirically, democratization and violence have become intrinsically intertwined in many internationally brokered democratization processes in countries emerging from conflict (Höglund 2008).

In recent years, the long-term challenges of converting armed movements into peaceful political parties have become evident in several countries around the globe. In Mozambique, the *Mozambican National Resistance* (RENAMO), generally considered a successful example of rebel-to-party transformation, has intermittently retreated to the bush, rejected election results, and requested additional political concessions in return for its participation in parliament (Pearce 2015). In Nepal, former Maoist insurgents, who became the ruling party in 2008, threatened to return to the armed struggle when they lost the 2013 elections. Even though the *Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist* (UCPN-M) eventually accepted the election results, radical splinter groups have turned to political violence to challenge the existing political order (Subedi 2014). In Burundi, the *Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie – Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie* (CNDD-FDD) has repeatedly been accused of arming and training parts of its youth movement to intimidate critical voices (HRW 2010a). For many Barundi, the instrumentalization of the ruling party's youth movement, coupled with persistent political violence and corruption scandals, embodies the continuation of the practices of previous authoritarian regimes that the rebellion sought to challenge during its armed resistance.

1.1. Research Puzzle & Core Research Questions

The examples from Mozambique, Nepal and Burundi illustrate that the envisioned, gradual transformation from violent, hierarchical rebel groups to peaceful, democratic political parties has not necessarily taken place. Instead, the formal transformation of rebel groups into political parties constitutes an extremely complex, non-linear and multidimensional endeavor. Despite the official end of civil war, political violence continues to haunt many countries in the aftermath of outright armed conflict, particularly during times of political and electoral crises in a war-like manner and on an almost daily basis. Even though the conflict resolution process, coupled with extensive Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programs (DDR) and the organization of regular elections, might have an accommodating influence on the behavior of rebel political parties (Lindberg 2006), this does not necessarily replace the political rationale that underpins the resort to violence as a political tool during the post-accord period. Considering these challenges, several key research questions emerge:

(1) What affects *how* rebel political parties engage in politics after officially renouncing the armed rebellion?

(2) How can we conceptualize the historical trajectories of rebel political parties?

(3) What are the long-term implications of promoting the formal transformation of rebel groups into political parties?

These questions are at the heart of this dissertation project. They are of great importance for academics and policy-makers alike to better understand current conflict resolution and political transition processes and their challenges for long-term peace and democratization prospects. Given that the rebel group-*cum*-political party has become a recurring figure in

many countries emerging from armed conflict, the understanding of its internal and external dynamics is crucial for our assessment of peace processes.

1.2. Key Argument & Contribution

The large majority of existing studies on civil war, political transition, and rebel-to-party conversions are constructed around strict conceptual distinctions between war and peace, and rebel group and political party. They fail to capture the complexities, ambiguities and fluidities, which often underpin political transition processes. In conflict-affected countries, we often witness the emergence of settings that can be qualified as neither a state of outright war, nor as a clear stage of peace. Instead, we observe politico-military organizations that frequently alternate between social protest, rebellion, violence, and party politics.

In this dissertation, I develop a conceptual and theoretical critique of the existing literature on 'rebel-to-party transformation'. First, I draw on the "*no peace, no war*" (Marchal 2002; Richards 2005; Debos 2013) and "*armed politics*" (Staniland 2015a) paradigms. Following Berti, I conceptualize rebel groups and their political party successors as "*hybrid politico-military movements*" (Berti 2013) to study the inter-linkages between politics and violence throughout their historical trajectories. I argue that we need to take hybridity seriously. The concept of hybridisation allows us to deconstruct and interrogate common categories, such as war and peace, rebel group and political party, violence and democracy, in order to study the ambiguities and ambivalences between them (Mac Ginty 2011).

Second, I appeal to historical institutionalism (Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth 1992; Thelen 1999) to propose a novel theoretical framework for understanding the trajectories of rebel political parties. Historical institutionalism brings time and process back into our analyses. It is an excellent approach to remedy predominant, ahistorical accounts. I

specifically draw on "*systemic historical process analysis*" (Hall 2006) to map out rebel political parties' ideational, power and institutional politics during and beyond civil war.

The research answers recent scholarly calls to complement the analyses of armed conflicts at the macro- (country) level with studies at the micro- (individual) and meso-level (organization) (Wood 2008). The project opens the black box of rebel political parties to analyze the historical trajectories of these groups before, during and after civil war with the objective of better understanding the long-term impact of the historical legacies of armed resistance for liberal war-to-peace transition projects. As several scholars have noted, even though the post-Cold War era has seen a substantial increase in the promotion of democracy in war-torn societies and the integration of former rebel groups into post-accord party politics (Söderberg Kovacs 2008), peacebuilders have helped to organize (often rushed) elections without actually knowing whether the political parties are in any real position to compete peacefully in these electoral processes (Paris 2004, 188ff). As Carothers reminds us, political parties are often the "*weakest link*" in new emerging democracies (Carothers 2006). However, "*despite this, parties have typically been ignored as units of study in their own right*" (Cheeseman and Hinfelaar 2009, 52).

Consequently, scholars and practitioners have largely neglected the role of agents in societies emerging from conflict who are supposed to carry out the process of statebuilding and democratization after the formal end of hostilities, including specifically former rebel groups that formally convert into political parties. The novel conceptual and theoretical framework that I develop in this dissertation seeks to capture the very nature of political parties rooted in armed resistance through an in-depth analysis of their hybrid politico-military nature and their historical trajectories beyond war and peace.

1.3. Burundi as a Case Study

This dissertation analyzes the complexities, ambiguities and fluidities of 'rebel-to-party transformation' processes through an in-depth case study of Burundi (see Appendix I for a country map). Burundi constitutes an interesting case in point. The country's post-independence history has been characterized by recurrent cycles of democratization, authoritarianism, political repression, and rebellions, culminating in a civil war that lasted more than a decade. In the process, Burundi has seen the emergence of two major Hutu-dominated armed opposition movements, namely the *Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu – Forces nationales de libération* (PALIPEHUTU-FNL)[4] and the *Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie – Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie* (CNDD-FDD).

Drawing on a paired comparison (Tarrow 2010) based on the most-similar cases design (Przeworski and Teune 1970), I compare the historical trajectories of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD. The two rebellions represent excellent cases for comparison because they share several theoretically relevant characteristics. Both movements launched a political and ultimately violent struggle to fight against decades of injustice by the then Tutsi-dominated authoritarian regimes. In each case, the rebel groups challenged the authority of the state and built armed resistance movements with the ultimate objective of capturing state power (PALIPEHUTU-FNL, 1980 to 2008; CNDD-FDD, 1994 to 2003). In both cases, the movements signed peace accords stipulating their transformation into political parties and the

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[4] During the post-accord transition, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL had to drop its ethnicist name to comply with the multi-ethnic power-sharing agreement stipulated in the Arusha Peace Agreement and Burundi's Constitution. In this dissertation, I use the term PALIPEHUTU when referring to the movement's founding years as a clandestine political party between 1980-1983. I employ the term PALIPEHUTU-FNL when referring to the movement's history as an armed insurgency between 1983 and 2009. I use the term FNL when referring to the movement's history as a legally recognized rebel group-*cum*-political party post-2009.

integration of their armed forces into the state's security forces. Both formally transformed into political parties after officially renouncing hostilities; the CNDD-FDD in 2003 and the FNL in 2006 respectively. However, while the CNDD-FDD has become Burundi's current ruling party, the FNL constitutes the country's major opposition force. This key difference permits a comparison of the circumstances, which explain why some rebel groups become ruling parties while others become opposition parties and how these different pathways shape their engagement in politics and violence.

Long cited as a major "*success story*" for international liberal peacebuilding among policy-makers, diplomats and academics alike, Burundi has increasingly witnessed a return to authoritarian practices (Curtis 2013; Boutellis 2015, 737; Vandeginste 2015, 625; Jobbins and Ahitungiye 2016). Burundi watchers have repeatedly warned of the risk of renewed civil war, especially in the aftermath of the 2015 electoral crisis (ICG 2016). Factions of both the CNDD-FDD and the FNL have continued to resort to political violence and have at times reconsidered the armed option. This makes Burundi an excellent case for the study of neither-peace-nor-war and armed politics settings, and their implications for rebel-to-party transformation scholarship.

Taking the political and violent trajectories of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD as an "*illustrative*" (Levy 2008, 6) and "*crucial*" case study (Gerring 2007, 231f), I aim to refine the existing conceptual and theoretical approaches of the emerging research program on rebel-to-party transformations. I show that these rebel political parties have engaged in a combination of political and violent struggle throughout their histories. I highlight that we need to take the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's and the CNDD-FDD's hybrid political and armed orders seriously if we want to understand party politics in the aftermath of civil war.

The comparison also allows the exploration of the manner in which divisions within and competition between former rebel groups fundamentally shape post-accord modes of governance and continued political violence, a subject which the literature has so far neglected (Dorman 2007, 1087; Bekoe 2012). Protracted conflict zones, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), South Sudan or Burundi, have underscored the importance of studying the complexity of inter-rebel relationships and interactions. Yet, inter-rebel dynamics have traditionally been overlooked in civil war and conflict resolution studies. Scholars have thus started to study how factors, such as the emergence of multiple insurgent groups, their fragmentation and competition, shape political dynamics during civil war (Fjelde and Nilsson 2012; Cunningham 2013; Seymour 2014). By extension, this prompts an examination of their post-accord destinies. Finally, the detailed case study of two African political parties rooted in armed resistance contributes to the literature on African political parties, which generally lacks an in-depth understanding of the nature of political parties in Africa and of the extent to which they are comparable to their Western counterparts (Hydén 2011; Elischer 2013).

For the empirical analysis, I build on primary and secondary research. Between 2013 and 2015, I undertook extensive field research in Burundi. Over a total period of nine months, I interviewed political elites (from both government and opposition parties), rank-and-file ex-combatants (from the various rebel factions), representatives of civil society and international organizations, local and international academics working on the Great Lakes as well as ordinary citizens in Burundi and exiled Burundian politicians in European and North American cities. I aimed to get as many different perspectives as possible to understand Burundi's complex past and present. We discussed the country's history and their life histories, how they experienced the authoritarian regimes, the lead-up to the civil war, daily

life during the armed conflict, as well as the long way to the country's post-accord transition. In addition, I consulted the academic literature on rebel-to-party transformations in general and on Burundi in particular. I complemented my primary sources through the use of official documents, such as rebel group or political party manifestos, and reports from international governmental and non-governmental organizations.

1.4. Outline of Dissertation

The dissertation is structured as follows: In Chapter II, I provide a synopsis of how the formal transformation of rebel groups into political parties emerged as a key peacebuilding tool in the post-Cold War era as well as an overview over the emerging literature on rebel-to-party transformations. I identify several waves of scholarship and deconstruct some of their fundamental assumptions. In Chapter III, I develop my own conceptual and theoretical framework rooted in the "*no peace, no war*" and "*armed politics*" paradigms as well as historical institutionalism. In Chapter IV, I present my research design and methodology by explicating my case selection, summarizing the data collected and discussing major ethical challenges encountered in the field. Chapters V, VI, VI and VIII are devoted to the empirical analysis of Burundi. In Chapter V, I introduce Burundi's history, its legacies and the historical context in which the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD have been founded. In Chapter VI, I retrace the common political roots of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD as well as their intricate hybrid politico-military structures during the civil war. Chapters VII and VIII investigate their trajectories at critical junctures: Chapter VII during peace talks and Chapter VIII during post-accord elections. Chapter IX concludes the dissertation by summarizing my main findings and outlining futures research avenues in the field.

Chapter II: The State of the Art Untangled – Reviewing Existing Scholarship

"[…] *efforts to promote both peace and democratization in war-shattered societies through the transformation of armed groups to peaceful parties might undermine precisely those values that it sought to encourage*".

(Söderberg Kovacs 2008, 135)

In the fall of 2014, I interviewed an exiled Burundian statesman. The former high-ranking politician, an ethnic Tutsi, had joined Burundi's current ruling party, the CNDD-FDD, just before the first post-peace accord elections in 2005, hoping to shape the transformation of the former Hutu-dominated rebel group into a democratic political party. The statesman told me that his wife felt that his joining the party was collaborating with the "*enemy*," a betrayal of his family and friends. She could not understand how her own husband could work with the "*génocidaires*", the very people responsible for the massacres of many Tutsi populations during Burundi's civil war. However, the statesman believed that it was important to join the political process to help shape change from the inside. Above all, the CNDD-FDD, which had emerged out of indisputable political grievances, had the chance to become a legitimate democratic political actor and to relinquish the authoritarian practices of previous regimes. The statesman soon rose through the ranks of the ruling party. His hopes for change, however, were quickly replaced by disillusionment. When the statesman spoke out against the CNDD-FDD's continued resort to political violence, human rights abuses and corruption, he was suspended. Fearing for his life, he fled Burundi and sought political asylum in North America. During a refugee determination hearing, he was asked why he had joined a "*criminal organization*," accused of numerous human rights violations during Burundi's civil war, including genocidal massacres. He told me he responded by asking if the refugee board was referring to the very organization that had been brought to power by such historic figures as Nelson Mandela and Bill Clinton, who allowed its transformation into a political party and pressured it to accept the inter-ethnic power-sharing agreement negotiated during the Arusha peace process (Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Montréal, 12 September 2014).

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The example of Burundi is by no means unique. It represents just one example of regional and international actors advocating for the political integration of former rebel groups into post-accord party politics. This post-Cold War peacebuilding tool has been promoted in the hope that it would help bring the country's protracted decade-long plus civil war to a definite end. The promotion of the CNDD-FDD's rebel-to-party transformation was supposed to give the movement the possibility to peacefully articulate its political grievances, avoiding any recourse to political violence in the process. However, the promotion of this peacebuilding tool also contains many risks and pitfalls.

In this chapter, I introduce and review the emerging literature on rebel-to-party transformations and how it has grappled with the above challenges. I proceed in several steps. First, I illustrate how political integration provisions, including rebel-to-party conversions, have emerged as a recurrent peacebuilding tool of choice during the post-Cold war era. Second, I discuss the risks and benefits of integrating rebel groups into the post-accord political order invoked in the specialized literature. Third, I present the different waves of scholarship in this emerging research field and how they have approached the subject matter of rebel-to-party transformations. I conclude by summarizing the major strengths and weaknesses of the emerging scholarship.

2.1. Rebel Integration: New Peacebuilding Tool Post-1990

Conventional wisdom has it that a significant drop in inter-state conflicts and a rise in intra-state conflicts accompanied the end of the Cold War. However, despite this perceived upsurge in civil wars after 1990, quantitative research has shown that the number of intra-state conflicts has in fact been steadily growing since the 1950s and 1960s. This trend was often

hidden from scholars' closer attention due to the dominant superpower conflict between the US and the USSR (Fearon and Laitin 2003).

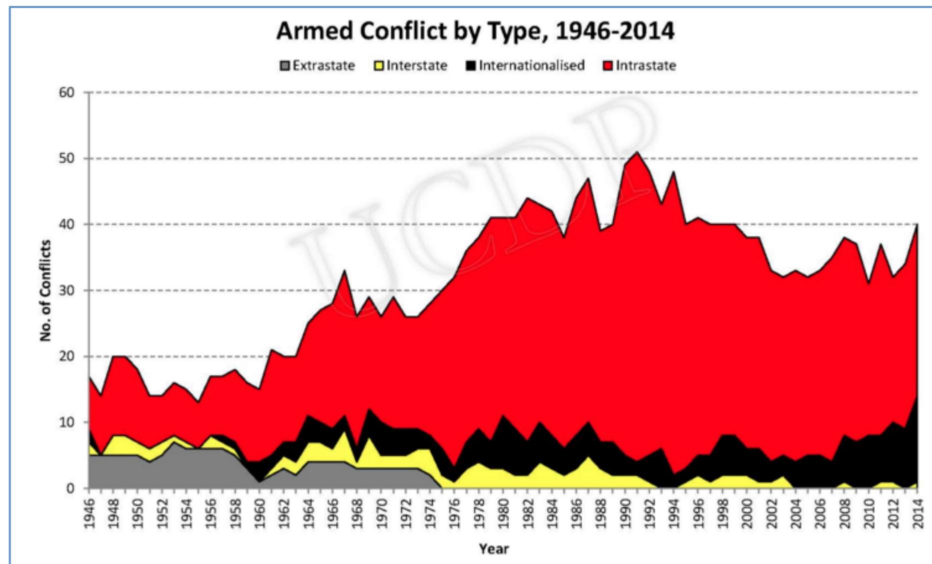

Figure 1: Evolution of Armed Conflicts by Conflict Type (1946-2014)
Source: Graph © UCDP 2015

That said, the end of the bipolar superpower rivalry following the fall of the Iron Curtain, coupled with the international community's failures to adequately prevent and subsequently respond to the crises in Somalia, Rwanda and Bosnia, led to its increased engagement in conflict resolution, with a view to help bring protracted civil wars to an end.[5] The United Nations witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of peacekeeping operations. While, during the Cold War, there was an average of four missions per year, this

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[5] This shift is also reflected in the changes in how intra-state armed conflicts are terminated. A look at the Uppsala Conflict Termination Dataset (1945-2005) illustrates that during the Cold War era, intra-state conflicts were most often terminated by a military victory (58.2 percent), followed by peace agreements (8.5 percent) and ceasefires (1.4 percent). The post-Cold War era, on the other hand, saw an important increase in peace agreements (18.4 percent) and ceasefires (19.7 percent) as well as a substantial drop in military victories (13.6 percent) (Kreutz 2010). However, some recent quantitative studies have pointed to the decline of negotiated settlements in recent years (Dixon 2009).

number augmented to almost 17 per year for the period between 1989 until 2013 (Hoeffler 2014, 84). In the process, the integration of former rebel groups into post-accord party politics has become a prominent feature of internationally mediated liberal war-to-peace transitions (Söderberg Kovacs 2008). This trend emerged together with the promotion of elections and democracy in conflict-torn societies.

The post-Cold War liberal peacebuilding approach is anchored in the 'end of history' and the 'democratic peace' paradigms. The end of history paradigm suggests that the end of the Cold War and the triumph of Western liberal democracy signals the endpoint of mankind's ideological evolution with Western liberal democracy emerging as the final form of government (Fukuyama 1989). The democratic peace theory holds that democracies rarely go to war with each other (Russett 1993) and have been shown to be less prone to internal conflict and civil war (Krain and Myers 1997). The democratic peace proposition builds on the assumption that democratic norms and institutions permit peaceful conflict resolution and restrain political leaders' resort to political violence out of fear of potential electoral ramifications (Gurses and Mason 2010).

Various studies have effectively confirmed the 'liberal peace'[6] proposition for established democracies. However, there is a caveat for young, emerging democracies, which are believed to be more vulnerable to internal conflict and civil war (Mansfield and Snyder 2004; Cederman, Hug, and Krebs 2010). Indeed, transition periods are highly volatile. During

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[6] The term "*liberal peace*" was coined by Professor Michael Doyle in the 1980s (Doyle 1983). Building on Emmanuel Kant's work, Doyle was one of the first researchers to systematically test the democratic peace paradigm by analyzing all inter-state wars since 1816. The inter-state war analyses were later complemented by intra-state studies.

these fragile periods, relapse into conflict and authoritarianism constitute frequent challenges.[7] Nevertheless, since the fall of the Iron Curtain, the promotion of democracy has come to be perceived as the most appropriate remedy to manage conflict-prone societies (Jarstad and Sisk 2008).

In contrast to the political integration of rebel groups post-1990, during the Cold War, rebel groups were often militarily marginalized and politically excluded from peace negotiations. If armed opposition movements were to access state power, they had to win the armed conflict militarily (Walter 1997; Kalyvas 2010). Several anti-colonial liberation movements in Sub-Saharan Africa formally transformed into political parties and became the ruling parties after defeating the former colonial powers, such as the *People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola – Party of Labour* (MPLA-PT), the *Liberation Front of Mozambique* (FRELIMO), the *South West Africa People's Organization* (SWAPO) or the *Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front* (ZANU-PF) (Salih 2003, 13-18). There were also various guerilla movements that managed to overthrow oppressive regimes in Latin America and Africa, such as the *Sandinistas* in Nicaragua (Deonandan, Close, and Prevost 2007) or the *National Resistance Army* (NRA) in Uganda (Weinstein 2006).

According to the Uppsala Peace Agreement Dataset,[8] 87 out of 188 peace accords signed between 1989 and 2011 (or 46 percent) include at least one political integration provision for armed movements (as compared to only 18 percent of 28 accords signed between 1975 and 1989). These diverse political integration provisions include rebel-to-party

[7] Out of the 103 countries that experienced intra-state conflict between 1945 and 2009, only 44 were able to avoid a subsequent relapse into civil war (Walter 2010).

[8] The Uppsala Peace Agreement Dataset covering the period between 1975 and 2011 is the latest available dataset. The data has so far not been extended to 1945 or updated to include more recent years due to funding constraints (Exchange with UCDP staff members, by email, 2 November 2015).

transformations, the integration of rebels into an interim and/or government, the integration of rebels into the civil service, the holding of national dialogue between different conflict stakeholders to resolve major incompatibility issues as well as power-sharing arrangements. A peace agreement can contain several or all of these political integration provisions. The rise in the inclusion of these arrangements was also accompanied by an increase in the inclusion of an elections requirement (as an integral part of the liberal peacebuilding paradigm), which permits the inclusion of rebel groups-turned-political parties in party politics after civil war. Figure 2 illustrates the evolution and changes in the political integration provisions included in peace accords between the Cold War and the post-Cold War era.

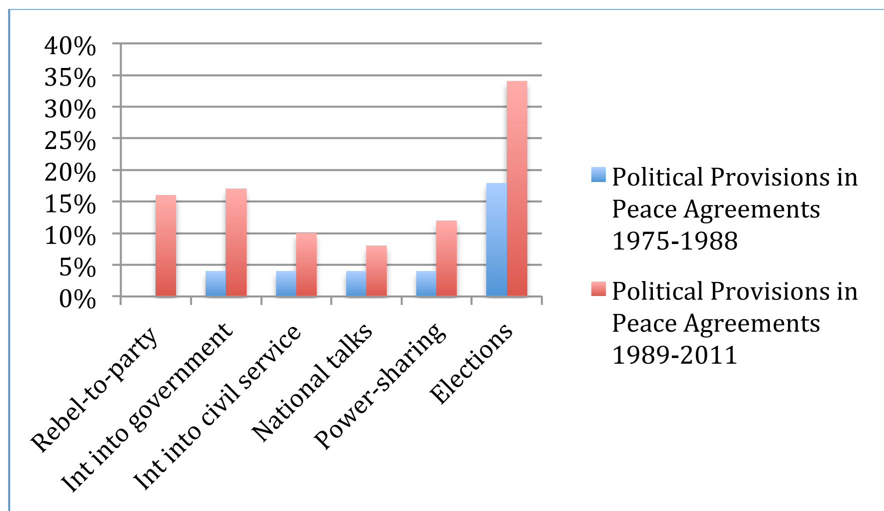

Figure 2: Political Integration Provisions in Peace Agreements (1975-2011)
Source: Author's own graph based on UCDP data

The Uppsala Peace Agreement Dataset lists 30 peace accords (or 16.7 percent) that explicitly[9] stipulate the formal transformation of rebel groups into political parties (as opposed to none before 1989). There are currently approximately 45 cases of armed movements that have attempted such as conversion process (Söderström 2014),[10] the majority of which can be found in Sub-Saharan Africa.[11] Nonetheless, overall, the conversion phenomenon can be observed in a variety of different contexts around the globe, including cases in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. Söderberg and Hatz take a first step in creating a quantitative dataset on rebel-to-party transformation provisions. Their findings confirm several of the theoretical expectations found in the existing literature. Most notably, rebel-to-party transformation arrangements are exclusive to the Cold War era. They are commonly included in peace agreements with a third-party presence and twice as likely to occur in peace agreements negotiated in Africa (Söderberg Kovacs and Hatz 2016).

The international community has not only advocated for inclusion of transformation provisions in peace accords; it has sometimes financially supported the conversion process. For example, in the case of Mozambique, the international community went as far as to set up a trust fund (administered by the United Nations) with a contribution of $USD 17 million from

[9] It is important to note that there are also several peace agreements, which do not explicitly stipulate the transformation process. However, the conversion process was subsequently implemented during the transition period. Afghanistan and Bosnia-Herzegovina are two examples. While these cases are not included in the quantitative Uppsala Peace Agreement Dataset, they often feature in qualitative case studies.

[10] According to the Post-Accord Elections (PAE) data, there are 40 cases of post-accord election countries in the post-Cold War era (1989-2004) (Jarstad 2009). Building on this dataset and additional cases from the following years, this number increases to about 45 cases, in which rebel-to-party transformations have occurred. Rebel political parties had to participate in at least one election to be included in the universe of case.

[11] The rebel-turned-politician has especially become a prominent figure in African politics. There are currently approximately 15 out of 54 heads of state that have been involved as rebel fighters or civilians in armed movements before accessing the Presidency (author's own calculations). The Great Lakes Region alone counts four Presidents, who were former guerrilla combatants before taking over the highest political position in their respective countries.

different donors to assist the former rebel group RENAMO to transform into a political party (Manning and Malbrough 2010). By and large, however, international assistance has predominately remained *ad hoc* and has often been limited to technical workshops on democratization and political party development provided by national and international governmental and non-governmental organizations through donor funds.

In Burundi, for example, the Woodrow Wilson International Center, a US-based non-partisan think tank, supported the Burundi Leadership Training Program (BLTP) funded by the World Bank and USAID. Under the stewardship of Howard Wolpe, the UN's former Special Envoy to the Great Lakes, the BLTP set up workshops between 2002 and 2008[12] for political actors to build trust between former antagonists. In addition, the United Nations set up an international trust fund with the assistance of Belgium, Japan and Norway to assist the FNL to transform into a political party. Belgium, for instance, contributed 40.000 Euro for the organization of a six-month multi-disciplinary training course for 50 FNL leaders in public affairs, which covered diverse themes ranging from the rule of law, human rights, communication and conflict resolution techniques to administrative and financial management. Other donor contributions assisted the FNL to build and equip its party headquarters as well as arrange accommodation for several party cadres (Interview with Cheick Lamine Conde, former BNUB staff member, Bujumbura, 7 October 2013 and Interview with Arthur Boutellis, former BINUB staff member, by phone, 7 October 2014).

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[12] The BLTP terminated in 2008 due to lack of funding. According to Steve McDonald, a close colleague of Howard Wolpe, this was extremely unfortunate given that the BLTP might have been able to a play a key negotiation role during the subsequent political and electoral crises. The end of the program underscores that the international community is often rhetorically talking about conflict prevention without being willing to invest the necessary funds in this endeavor. Another core problem is the multiplicity of actors involved in the organization of democratization workshops, who do not necessarily cooperate with each other (Interview with Steve McDonald, Wilson Center Fellow, Washington DC, 10 May 2016).

Some scholars and practitioners have suggested that the trend of integrating rebel groups into the post-accord political system has started to shift since the tragic events of 9/11 and the subsequent 'war on terror'. As Dudouet, Giessmann and Planta, who work on meditation processes with non-state armed groups, argue:

> *In particular, the dominance of hard security approaches to inter- and intra-state conflict had led to a generalized interpretation of all forms of armed insurgencies that challenge the established socio-political order being seen through the lens of 'terrorism', regardless of the nature of such actors, their degree of social legitimacy or their political roles and aspirations* (Dudouet, Giessmann, and Planta 2012, 1).

Inspired by the US narrative towards transnational terrorist networks, states have increasingly framed armed opposition groups as terrorists, with whom the state cannot negotiate given that this would grant these groups political legitimacy. As a result, rebel groups have become increasingly perceived as spoiler groups that threaten the peace process and should not play an active role in peacebuilding. This trend could have profound implications for the practice of diplomacy and conflict resolution. Indeed, some scholars have argued that the policy of banning and isolating armed movements might have contributed to promote the groups' radicalization and to prevent them from developing and expanding their political activities (Dudouet, Giessmann, and Planta 2016). However, only time will tell to what extent this trend will continue to unfold and whether it will prevail in policy approaches to conflict resolution and the management of rebel groups in peace negotiations.

The upsurge in political integration arrangements was accompanied by an increase in civilian (as reflected in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programs (DDR)[13])

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[13] In 1990, the UN Security Council (UNSC) included for the very first time the assistance in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programs in the mandate of a UN peacekeeping mission. UNSC Resolution 650 (1990) stipulates that the UN Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) should "*play a part in the voluntary demobilization of the members of the Nicaraguan resistance*". Since then, the United Nations has

and military integration programs (as reflected in the incorporation of former combatants into the national army under the umbrella of Security Sector Reform (SSR)[14]). These triple features constitute complementary peacebuilding approaches, which can be found in the large majority of today's peace agreements. While some peace accords include civilian, military and political integration provisions, others only include one or two of these categories. The particular combination of the civilian, military and political arrangements depends on a variety of factors, including the balance of power between the negotiating parties, the preferences of third party mediators and context-specific historical factors. In light of this development, Söderström has argued that the integration of rebel groups in the aftermath of war can be divided into three key areas: (1) Studies, which focus on the transformation of the military elite; (2) Studies, which focus on the transformation of armed groups into political parties; and (3) Studies, which focus on individual rank and file combatants becoming citizens. This opens up an interesting new research agenda, with studies focusing on one of these levels and/or their possible interactions (Söderström 2015, 7f).

2.2. Rebel Groups in Post-Accord Politics: Risks & Benefits

The paradigm shift in the management of rebel groups in internationally brokered peace negotiations since the end of the Cold War was followed by a heated discussion on the merits

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assisted governments around the world in implementing DDR programs. The UN and the World Bank are among the key international organizations that assist countries in the implementation of their national DDR programs, which heavily depend on financial support from international donors. However, there also exist several countries that have launched their own DDR programs (since 2003) without relying on external support from the UN out of fear of external interference, such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, Russia, Philippines and Colombia (Muggah 2009, 5).

[14] Security Sector Reform (SSR) has its modern roots during the decades following the Second World War. At first, SSR predominately featured training programs and equipment supplies to security institutions. With the end of the Cold War, SSR has taken a much more holistic approach inspired by the paradigm of the security-development nexus. For a more detailed discussion of the development of SSR, please see (Sedra 2010). The UN engagement in this matter dates back to the 1990s. The UN has increasingly assisted countries emerging from conflict in the reform of their security institutions, including police and national armed forces.

and risks of integrating rebel groups into post-peace accord party politics. While many policy-makers have highlighted the importance of political integration provisions for the successful conclusion of peace negotiations, researchers have increasingly pinpointed the possible adverse effects of political integration of rebel groups for peace and democratizations processes. In the following section, I discuss the advantages and disadvantages in turn.

The literature on peace processes puts forward a wide variety of arguments that underline the importance of integrating former rebel groups into peace negotiations and transforming them into viable political actors, who are able to participate in the post-accord political order. First, it is important to integrate armed movements into the political system to prevent their return to violence and enhance the prospects of building lasting peace. This envisioned commitment to peace is thought to be best ensured by offering these groups attractive political (but also military, economic and social) perspectives in the post-accord political order (Walter 2002). Second, it is important to build a post-accord society on inclusion and avoid previous patterns of exclusion, which are often a key root cause of civil wars. This argument highlights that rebel groups emerge out of legitimate grievances of local populations, which should be effectively addressed in the peace settlement and the transition period to make peace a lasting reality (Söderberg Kovacs 2008; Zahar 2012). Third, in theory, the possibility of rebel groups to integrate 'post-conflict' party politics is supposed to initiate their gradual transformation into democratic political parties. Political participation of rebel groups should allow them to channel their political grievances through non-violent means and ultimately render the use of violence obsolete (Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens 2002, 3).

Nonetheless, despite these potential benefits, the integration of rebel groups into the post-peace accord political process also poses a variety of risks and raises important political

and ethical dilemmas. First, policy-makers have cautioned against the risk that rebel groups-*cum*-political parties continue to strive for political agendas linked to the armed conflict without attempting to transcend war cleavages and mobilize new supporters (Manning 2008). Second, while the inclusion of rebel groups into the political process might be necessary to end a civil war, the promotion of their transformation process might restrict the possibility of other actors, such as new or traditional political parties or civil society organizations, to emerge and shape the transitional order. In this regard, scholars have referred to a so-called "*moral hazard*" problem, in that, by promoting the inclusion of armed groups, the international community might send the "*wrong message*" that violent strategies pay off in the pursuit of access to political power (Tull and Mehler 2005). This may ultimately lead to the marginalization of traditional, non-violent political parties that are often sidelined during peace negotiations (Mehler 2011).[15] Third, from an organizational point of view, it is challenging to transform former military organizations with strict command structures into peaceful and more democratic organizations (De Zeeuw 2008). Finally, recent studies on demilitarizing politics and reintegrating ex-combatants into the post-accord society have suggested that not every rebel movement seems equally suited for the transformation into a

[15] In contrast, scholars studying transitions from authoritarian rule in Arab countries have underlined that international actors' support of non-governmental organizations at the expense of political parties, has, to some extent, led to an "*almost complete marginalization of opposition parties*" (Langohr 2004, 181), the traditional vehicles of liberalization and democratization. The same dilemma has been observed in conflict-prone countries, where the support of non-governmental advocacy groups is often considered to be less politically controversial by international donors thereby leading them to neglect supporting agents of political partisanship (Carothers 2006). There are only a few international organizations that have established training programs for political parties in countries emerging from conflict. Overall, international assistance to political parties only represents approximately 5 to 7 percent of international democracy assistance (Burnell and Gerrits 2010, 1068). While some proponents of these training programs have argued that they are beneficial in socializing political parties, especially those rooted in armed struggle, to the 'new rules of the game' (Reilly and Nordlund 2008), others have argued that these programs wrongly assume that political parties in societies emerging from conflict "*are actually 'agents of democracy' or can be made to function as such*" (Van Cranenburgh 1999, 104).

political party. In this regard, the *Revolutionary United Front* (RUF) in Sierra Leone, for example, is presented as too bifurcated and politically disengaged, which partly explains its failure to survive as a political party and its subsequent dissolution (Berdal and Ucko 2010). Or as Mitton puts it:

> […] *the unsuitability of the RUF for political transformation remained a major obstacle and, in many ways, the dismantling of the group, rather than its political consolidation, would (have been) of greater benefit to the peacebuilding project* (Mitton 2010, 180).

In addition to these political dilemmas, scholars and policy-makers have stressed that the integration of rebel groups also raises a variety of ethical challenges, including, most importantly, the possible negative implications of amnesty provisions for lasting impunity. Since 1990, many peace accords have contained total or limited amnesty provisions, with the view to ensure the commitment of armed groups to peaceful conflict resolution.[16] This practice explicitly puts peace before justice. It illustrates the controversial debate about sequencing in peace processes or whether stability or justice should come first in transition processes (Vinjamuri and Snyder 2004; Leebaw 2008). While some scholars and policy-makers argue that stability and peace need to be established before turning to justice issues,[17] others, most notably human rights advocates, stress the importance of the immediate punishment of perpetrators, which they see as crucial for ending impunity and ensuring the rule of law, in turn enabling democratization (Vandeginste and Sriram 2011).

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[16] The Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies has developed the Peace Accord Matrix, which allows users to compare the provisions of comprehensive peace agreements that have been signed since 1989. The data shows that almost 40 percent of peace accords contain total or limited amnesty provisions.

[17] In this regard, some scholars have argued that the threat of prosecution by the International Criminal Court (ICC) can have adverse effects on ongoing peace processes. With reference to Uganda, critics argue that the ICC's international arrest warrants against commanders of the *Lord's Resistance Army* (LRA) have constituted a major impediment for the successful conclusion of a final peace agreement (Waddell and Clark 2008, 7).

In summary, the risks and benefits of integrating former rebel groups into the post-accord political order highlight the complexity of this peacebuilding tool. Consequently, some scholars have asked whether the dissolution of armed groups, rather than their formal transformation into political parties, might be better for peace and democratization prospects (Berdal and Ucko 2010). Peacebuilders are confronted with the dilemma that the formal conversion of rebel groups into political parties risks subverting exactly those principles that it aimed to promote, including, most importantly, inclusive politics and violence as a means of accessing power (Söderberg Kovacs 2008, 135). Overall, the political integration of armed groups constitutes one peacebuilding instrument among many that only contribute to lasting peace in tandem. By focusing on the transformation of rebel groups into political parties, I aim to study and assess just one tool in the peacebuilding toolbox.

2.3. Study of Rebel-to-Party Conversions: Waves of Scholarship

The emerging specialized literature on rebel-to party conversions is a fairly young, but steadily growing research field[18] (Söderberg Kovacs and Hatz 2016). It has particularly evolved in the aftermath of the Cold War in response to the paradigm shift in the management of rebel movements during peace negotiations. The scholarship grew out of a certain frustration with the literature on managing peace processes and engineering political party competition in societies emerging from conflict (Reilly and Nordlund 2008). The existing literature was criticized for overemphasizing institutional design, which focuses on the organization of elections and political party competition through institutional regulatory frameworks, at the

[18] In 2016, the academic journals *Democratization* and *Civil Wars* each featured a special issue on the subject underlining the increased scholar interest in rebel-to-party transformations.

expense of analyzing the role played by the political actors themselves (Manning 2008, 17). Scholars have thus advocated for a scholarly turn towards an actor-centered analysis paving the way for opening up the black box of rebel political parties. The next section summarizes this emerging literature by identifying several waves of scholarship.[19]

2.3.1. First Wave: Identifying Prerequisites of Rebel-to-Party Conversions

The first wave of scholarship studied the specific factors that determine why some rebel groups successfully transform into political parties while others do not. The pioneer studies largely took a snapshot approach by focusing on the particular conditions present during the transition process. Scholars aimed to explain why rebel groups decide to integrate or exit the 'post-conflict' political order and what explains their subsequent electoral success or failure (Shugart 1992; Allison 2006; Söderberg Kovacs 2007; Deonandan, Close, and Prevost 2007).

The first wave was characterized by a large amount of optimism. In theory, the transformation of rebel groups was cast as an important initial step in institutionalizing peaceful channels for the articulation of political aspirations underpinning former armed movements. Consequently, the first wave had the tendency to conceptualize the transformation process in a linear and teleological manner, in which the formal renouncement of hostilities marked the beginning of an irreversible process from a violent, military organization to a peaceful, political party. The participation of rebel movements in the emerging democratic system was believed to progressively socialize these actors to the 'new rules of the game' of liberal peace accords with a blueprint for democratization (Zartman 1995a; Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens 2002).

[19] This is a schematic summary. I do not posit that the different waves are mutually exclusive or that they do not overlap. Instead, I use the wave analogy as a heuristic tool to summarize the evolution of the scholarship.

This linear conceptualization of the transformation process is rooted in the conventional approach that distinguishes between rebel groups and political parties on the basis of the political means employed by these social organizations. While rebel groups resort to violent means to pursue their goals, political parties are defined as using exclusively non-violent, political means to accomplish their objectives (Huntington 1968; Shugart 1992; Neumann 2005; Söderberg Kovacs 2007; Zukerman Daly 2011). Scholars assumed that inclusive peace accords, which address the fundamental grievances of armed groups, could render the recourse to political violence obsolete.

Overall, scholars studied complementary factors on three different levels, including the internal (focusing on factors *within* the rebel movements, such as effective leadership or group cohesion), the domestic (highlighting external local factors from *below*, such as popular support structures) and the international level (emphasizing external factors from *above*, such as international support and legitimacy). While some authors have combined a levels-of-analysis approach building on all three levels (Söderberg Kovacs 2007; Burihabwa 2014), others have privileged one or two of these levels (Allison 2006).

Today, most scholars agree that rebel groups ‘succeed’ in transforming into political parties when conditions on all three levels are met (Söderberg Kovacs 2007). Internally, armed groups must display a high degree of effective leadership and group cohesion. Scholars have measured cohesion through the relationship between moderate and radical members, as well as the movements’ degree of centralization (Shugart 1992). Domestically, they depend on the type and degree of popular support structures developed during the civil war. Armed movements with strong popular support are more likely to transcend internal divisions and initiate rebel-to-party conversions than groups that do not have strong popular backing. The

popular support depends on the specific political and violent strategies adopted during the armed struggle, which are directly related to the type of governance and relationship with the civilian population (Klapdor 2009). Internationally, rebel groups depend upon the support of the international community, itself a function of the perceptions of the armed struggle as stemming from legitimate political grievances. In addition, the conflict ending (e.g. military versus negotiated settlement), the peace settlement provisions (e.g. inclusiveness and responsiveness to the political aims of rebel groups), and the institutional design (e.g. majority versus proportional electoral systems) of the post-accord political system constitute important intervening factors (De Zeeuw 2008; Manning 2008).

Through a systematic comparison of these three levels, Söderberg Kovacs demonstrates how the *Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front* (FMLN) in El Salvador and RENAMO in Mozambique were able to transform into viable political parties, while the RUF in Sierra Leone and the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia were not able to successfully undergo such a transformation process (Söderberg Kovacs 2007).

In his comparative analysis of four former revolutionary movements in Latin America, Allison privileges the internal and domestic dimension by arguing that the guerrilla movements-turned-political parties' electoral performance depends on the groups' size and their popular backing maintained at the end of the civil war. His in-depth analysis of the electoral performance of the *Sandinistas* in Nicaragua, the FMLN in El Salvador, the *National Revolutionary Unit* (URNG) in Guatemala and the *Democratic Unification Party* (PUD) in Honduras shows how the organizational factors of group size and popular support shaped electoral results of these political parties during the subsequent 'post-conflict' elections (Allison 2006).

From the outset, it has been extremely challenging for the literature to define the notion of 'success'. During the first wave of scholarship, success was generally defined as the group's formal transformation into a political party, illustrated in its official renouncement of hostilities enshrined in a peace agreement (Söderberg Kovacs 2007), coupled with the proxy of its subsequent electoral success, its ability to achieve legislative or executive power or to become an institutional veto player (Allison 2006; Zukerman Daly 2011; Shugart 1992). Scholars adopted a dichotomous definition by distinguishing between successful (reflected in the renouncement of violence, the peaceful pursuit of political power and participation in elections) and unsuccessful transformation (reflected in the continuation of pursuit of violence) (Söderberg Kovacs 2007). This approach fermented the ideal-typical distinction between rebel groups and political parties. However, as many of these scholars acknowledge, this dichotomous distinction and the analysis of electoral performance constitutes a very simplified way of approaching the definition of success. The challenge with these limited minimum standards is that they tell us little about the possible evaluation of the status of the solicited internal democratic reform process and the role that violence continues to play in the political repertoire of rebel political parties. In addition, there is a lack of understanding of the internal politics and power struggles within rebel political parties as well as the long-term consequences of violent conflict for the development of these parties (Ishiyama and Batta 2011; Ishiyama 2014).

2.3.2. Second Wave: Analyzing Long-Term Consequences

The second wave of scholarship tried to remedy some of these shortcomings. The research agenda shifted from determining the prerequisites for rebel-to-party transformations to analyzing their enduring consequences. Scholars have started to tackle the long-term

implications for peace and democratization prospective *once* rebel groups have converted into political parties (Ishiyama and Batta 2011). Scholars and policy-makers have increasingly pointed to the inherent difficulties of the ambitious project of turning former armed rebel movements into peaceful democratic political parties. The optimism of the first wave was replaced by a much more cautious analysis. Scholars increasingly criticized the linear, teleological model implicit in the first wave of scholarship (De Zeeuw 2008).

Even though rebel groups might formally become political parties, whose party machineries stand in elections, they do not necessarily adopt democratic practices (Söderström 2014). Armed resistance movements generally organize along strict hierarchical and authoritarian lines, making it extremely difficult to turn these actors of war into institutions of peace (Lyons 2005, 123). Höglund underlines that political parties rooted in armed struggle are more likely to take an authoritarian shift and impose *de facto* one-party states (Höglund 2008). Lyons argues that this is especially the case for rebel groups able to overthrow a regime militarily such as the *National Resistance Army* (NRM-A) in Uganda or the *Rwandan Patriotic Front* (RPF) in Rwanda (Lyons 2013). However, recent examples, such as the CNDD-FDD in Burundi, illustrate authoritarian shifts among former rebel groups settling for a peace accord, albeit often through a slower process.

Manning analyzes how internal organizational dynamics of rebel political parties are shaped by the institutional framework in which these parties operate. She identifies two major organizational challenges for rebel groups-turned-political parties, which she broadly defines as "*adjustments in intra-elite relations*" (related to new sources of party funding, recruitment of new loyal personnel, reform of internal authority structures) and "*adjustments to attract mass support*" (especially reforming and broadening appeal to supporters and voters)

(Manning 2004, 254). These two challenges can be conceptualized as a "*two-level game*" (Manning 2008), in which party leaders are confronted with maintaining power within their own party and competing effectively with other parties. The intensity and interaction of these two levels determine the strategies that rebel groups adopt to strengthen or to subvert democratic politics within their party and the political system (Manning 2008, 8).

In his edited volume on rebel-to-party transformations around the globe, De Zeeuw and his collaborators start by highlighting that the conversion process is an extremely complex process, which "*is neither linear nor one-dimensional*" (De Zeeuw 2008, 3). They conceptualize rebel-to-party transformations on a "*dynamic continuum*" by distinguishing between different kinds of outcomes in rebel-to-party transformations, ranging from "*full*" (as reflected in the complete disarmament and demobilization of fighters, the renouncement of violence, a commitment to the peace accord and elections as the only legitimate means to political power) to "*failed*" (no transformation). They include several intermediate categories, such as partial transformations and façade transformations. The proposed evaluation of the transformation process is very comprehensive, but also extremely demanding and extensive. Even though, De Zeeuw et al. underscore that the bar for political parties rooted in armed struggle should not be set too high given the extreme challenges for countries emerging from conflict, they propose indicators for successful transformation that are very broad and far-reaching, including an explicit normative Western bias based on an image of political parties as we have come to understand them in the Western world. In his case study contribution of the CNDD-FDD, Nindorera argues that the CNDD-FDD's transformation has been deficient and partial, advocating for further support for the transformation from the international

community (Nindorera 2008). Rufyikiri would amend this verdict eight years later and assess the CNDD-FDD's transformation as a failure (Rufyikiri 2016a).

Ishiyama and Batta put the emphasis on the study of the internal power struggles, which shape the long-term evolution of rebel groups-turned-political parties (Ishiyama and Batta 2011). In their analysis of the CPN-M in Nepal, the authors marry the emerging literature on rebel-to-party transformations with political party theory in new democracies, especially with regards to the former Communist parties. They stress the importance of analyzing the internal power struggles between what they label "*standpatters*" (hard-liners, who resistant democratic change and reforms), "*liberals*" (who promote a certain degree of limited reforms) and "*reformists*" (soft-liners, who embrace social democracy). The outcome of these internal power struggles ultimately shapes the organizational structures of the political party in the making. The authors pinpoint two key struggle areas: over identity and over the centralization of power. Today, the CPN-M remains characterized by several fissions incarnating the divisions between members aiming to continue to have access to political power and members wishing to stay faithful to the revolutionary founding ideology (Ishiyama and Batta 2011, 378).

Jones studies the ruling parties in the African Great Lakes Region rooted in armed struggle. She argues that rebel groups succeed in gaining and maintaining majority political power due to the specific types of organizational (infrastructural vs. cellular) and social (inclusive vs. exclusive) power perfected during the civil war (Jones 2013). The combination of infrastructural organizational power and inclusive social power constitutes the steadiest way to achieve majority political power (perfected by the NRA-M in Uganda). However, infrastructural power (as illustrated by the RPF in Rwanda) or inclusive social power (refined

by the CNDD-FDD in Burundi) can also help to bring these groups to power (be it via military victory, as in the case of the NRM-A and the RPF, or a negotiated settlement, as in the case of the CNDD-FDD).

Sindre focuses on leadership selection as one indicator to trace the organizational dynamics and internal debates once a rebel group has initiated its formal transformation. In her comparison of the *Aceh Party* (PA) in Indonesia and the *Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor* (FRETILIN) in East Timor, she finds that the type of decentralized wartime command structures and the continued dependence on such networks to manage the party organization works against the development of intraparty democracy (Sindre 2014, 8).

The notion of 'success' was significantly extended to include the evaluation of the general reforms inside rebel groups-*cum*-political parties and their ability to adapt to the new rules of the game (De Zeeuw 2008). Despite a refocus on the long-term challenges of rebel-to-party transformations, the categorical distinction between rebel groups and political parties remained a key reference. Scholars continued to try to explain 'success' or 'failure' of rebel-to-party transformations based on a Western conception and definition of political parties as peaceful agents of democracy. This has impeded an in-depth analysis of the political rationale and daily practices of these organizations, and when they resort to peaceful versus violent means, and how these strategies fluctuate over time.

2.3.3. Third Wave: Re-conceptualizing Rebel-to-Party Conversions

The most recent, third wave has fundamentally challenged the previous waves and their conceptualization of rebel-to-party transformations. This has occurred on two main levels. First, scholars have criticized the focus on the mere formal transformation of rebel groups into political parties, which neglects other dynamics essential for understanding the reintegration

process of former combatants (Berdal and Ucko 2010). Second, scholars have profoundly contested the linear and teleological transformation model by proposing a cyclical model and recasting rebel group-*cum*-political parties as "*hybrid politico-military organizations*" (Berti 2013).

A growing number of recent studies have highlighted the dangers of pushing for the speedy organization of elections during political transitions processes, including by registering former rebel groups as political parties, without knowing whether the political actors are in any position to compete peacefully in elections (Paris 2004; Carothers 2006). Building on these insights, scholars and practitioners have called for a stronger focus on the concept of political reintegration, which looks beyond the electoral arena to include other forms of political engagement. Berdal and Ucko argue in their edited volume that scholars have tended to overemphasize the formalization of political parties, thereby neglecting the "*need for a broader conception of political integration*" of former combatants (Berdal and Ucko 2010, 7). Dudouet adds that "*there is an acute need for more systematic research on the factors that influence the different postwar trajectories of NSAG members*" and how they engage in and with politics (Dudouet 2011, 11). Several scholars have shown that ex-combatants can play a variety of different roles in 'post-conflict' societies, ranging from spoilers to active citizens (Utas, Themnér, and Lindberg 2014; Söderström 2015). With regards to Burundi, Van Acker provides a micro-level perspective on the afterlife of rebellion in Bujumbura Rural, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's traditional fiefdom, by analyzing local narratives about the armed rebellion and how it shapes the FNL's presence in a wide variety of spaces until today (Van Acker 2016).

In addition to this broad conceptualization of political reintegration, scholars have started to frame rebel political parties as "*hybrid politico-military organizations*" (Berti 2013; Alfieri 2014). Berti's study of the Irish Republican Army, Hamas and Hezbollah is exemplary for trying to explain when armed groups decide to form a political wing, and how the political and military branches interact (Berti 2013). Berti criticizes the prominent linear model in the rebel-to-party transformation literature and develops a cyclical model, in which the armed groups under study shift between cycles of recourse to political violence followed by cycles of predominantly political activity. Her research draws our attention to the importance of studying the evolving internal power dynamics if we want to understand the interplay between political and violent struggle. Echoing themes advanced by previous scholarship (De Zeeuw 2008; Ishiyama 2001), Berti shows how politico-military organizations are often characterized by deep divisions that exist between and inside the political and military branches, which often do not agree on the course of action. These divisions are key to understanding the pathways of these organizations and shape their political and violent trajectories during and beyond civil war.

Alfieri asserts that the distinction between rebel groups and political parties has been overstated. She conceptualizes the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's historical trajectory as a prolonged politico-military struggle for legal recognition. Her study illustrates how the FNL adapted to the political game upon its legal recognition by setting up political party structures in record time by building on its war-time political party structures, while, simultaneously, resorted to violence, which has become one of the attributes of the electoral game in Burundi (Alfieri 2014).

The latest wave has fundamentally contested our conceptualization of rebel-to-party transformation, a term, which is in and of itself extremely problematic given that it implicitly posits a linear transformation from violent political group to peaceful political party. The latest wave provides important insights into rebel political parties' complex politico-military nature. It challenges the very notion of 'success' and the teleological vision of the pioneer studies. It should be complemented by an in-depth investigation into the historical context from which these organizations emerge. Indeed rebel groups are not only shaped by the political and military dynamics of the civil war, but also by the pre-war authoritarian regimes against which they launched the armed resistance in the first place.

Even though, the scholarship has moved away from the original linear conceptualization, we continue to struggle to find the best way to frame the analysis of the trajectories of political parties rooted in armed struggle. The diverse definitions for political transformation processes, ranging from narrow, formal definitions (focused on the official renouncement of hostilities and electoral participation) to broader definitions (including the internal reforms and political integration more broadly), illustrate the fact that the conversion process is a non-linear, highly complicated and multi-dimensional process.

	First wave	Second Wave	Third wave
Main research subject	- Identification of the prerequisites for 'successful' rebel-to-party transformation	- Distinction between different outcomes of rebel-to-party transformation - Conditions for internal democracy and decentralization	- Definition of integration of former combatants beyond formal rebel-to-party transformation - Hybridity of politico-military movements
Main period studied	- Snapshot of transition period	- Rebel-to-party transformations *once* conversion has begun	- Historical trajectories of politico-military organizations
Main factors	- Levels-of-analysis of approach - Focus on internal (cohesion and leadership), domestic (popular support) and international factors (international legitimacy and support)	- Rebel legacies	- Lasting networks of ex-combatants - Internal power struggles
Key studies	(Shugart 1992) (Allison 2006) (Söderberg Kovacs 2007)	(De Zeeuw 2008) (Manning 2008) (Ishiyama and Batta 2011) (Sindre 2014)	(Berdal and Ucko 2010) (Utas, Themnér, and Lindberg 2014) (Söderström 2015) (Berti 2013)
Burundi-specific studies		(Nindorera 2008) [analyzing CNDD-FDD] (Jones 2013) [analyzing CNDD-FDD] (Burihabwa 2014) [analyzing CNDD-FDD] (Rufyikiri 2016a) [analyzing CNDD-FDD]	(Alfieri 2014) [analyzing FNL] (Van Acker 2016) [analyzing FNL] (Wittig 2016) [analyzing CNDD-FDD and FNL]

Table 1: Three Waves of Scholarship on Rebel-to-Party Transformation

2.4. State of the Art Recap: Strengths & Weaknesses

The literature review illustrates that the rebel-to-party transformation scholarship constitutes an important, emerging research field, which offers important policy implications for local, regional and international actors. This new branch of literature has particularly evolved since the end of the Cold War, in direct response to a paradigm shift in the management of rebel groups during internationally brokered peace negotiations, stipulating a blueprint for democratization (Söderberg Kovacs 2008).

Political integration provisions for rebel groups have come to be perceived by many scholars and policy-makers as a crucial ingredient to end civil wars, build peace and promote democracy. This policy approach is built on several underlying assumptions: (1) The Western model of democracy, based on the premise of political parties as crucial, non-violent agents for democratization can be exported to other countries; (2) The promotion of multi-party politics can help conflict-torn societies to end their cycles of violence; and (3) The institutionalization of peaceful channels for the articulation of political grievances of former rebel groups initiates their gradual transformation into peaceful, democratic political parties.

There are currently around 45 rebel groups that have attempted to transform into political parties around the globe (Söderström 2014). Rebel group-*cum*-political parties have taken different political paths. Some of them have become ruling parties (such as the CNDD-FDD in Burundi or the *Sudan People's Liberation Movement* in South Sudan). Others have become opposition parties (such as the FNL in Burundi or RENAMO in Mozambique). Some have switched between their roles as ruling and opposition parties (such as the FMLN in El Salvador or the UCPN-M in Nepal). Others have shortly participated in politics before being ultimately dissolved (such the RUF in Sierra Leone). Rebel-to-party transformation provisions

have been most commonly included in peace agreements with third-party presence and occurred predominantly in Sub-Saharan Africa (Söderberg Kovacs and Hatz 2016).

Initially, scholars and practitioners were extremely hopeful that the formal transformation of rebel groups into political parties would socialize these actors to the new rules of the game, rendering the recourse to violence unnecessary (Zartman 1995a, 337f; Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens 2002, 3; Lyons 2005, 6). Despite the importance of integrating former rebel groups into post-accord party politics to try to redress past injustices, political integration provisions also contain a number of political and ethical pitfalls. Most importantly, they risk sending the wrong political message by indirectly promoting the use of violence as a legitimate tool to conquer political power (Tull and Mehler 2005). In addition, the provision of amnesty for former members of rebel groups threatens justice processes by promoting lasting impunity (Vandeginste and Sriram 2011). Policy-makers are thus confronted with the fundamental dilemma of advocating for rebel groups' political inclusion to be able to negotiate peace accords, while knowing that this could have adverse effects on the subsequent peace process.

The above literature review distinguished between three different waves of rebel-to-party transformation scholarship to summarize the main findings of this emerging research field. The first wave studied the prerequisites for rebel-to-party transformations by taking a snapshot of the transition process to determine why some rebel groups succeed in integrating post-accord party politics while others do not. Scholars identified factors at three key levels: internally (effective leadership and group cohesion), domestically (strong popular support structures) and internationally (strong international support). The second wave examined the long-term implications of rebel-to-party transformations by studying rebel political parties

destinies *once* the conversion process has been set in motion. In the process, the initial optimism for rebel-to-party transformations as a peacebuilding tool in the post-Cold war era was replaced by a much more cautious analysis highlighting the continued hierarchical nature of rebel political parties. The third and latest wave fundamentally challenged previous conceptualizations of rebel-to-party transformations by criticizing the linear, teleological model inherent in the first two waves of studies and by replacing it with a non-linear, cyclical model. Instead of analyzing the 'success' or 'failure' of rebel-to-party transformations, the latest wave calls for studying rebel political parties as analytical categories in their own right based on liberating our examinations from fixed analytical categories. It also underlines the importance of integrating the study of legacies of rebellion into a broader examination of the legacies of authoritarianism, from which these organizations stem.

In a direct extension of the third wave of studies, the next chapter sketches out a conceptual and theoretical critique of the emerging literature on rebel-to-party conversion. It brings together key insights from the civil war literature, the rebel-to-party transformation literature as well as from my own fieldwork in order to combine them into a common conceptual and theoretical framework. The aim is not to develop an all-encompassing theory, an impossible endeavor given the complexity of the subject matter. Instead, I propose an analytical lens through which to study the historical pathways of rebel political parties.

Chapter III: Political Rebels & Rebel Politicians – Conceptual & Theoretical Framework

"[…] *'wartime' is not so different from 'political time,'*
to the point where Clausewitz himself
declared that war was politics continued by other means.
Reversing that proposition, and formulating the thesis according to which
it is politics that is war continued by other means,
Foucault was able to show how, in large part, the role of political power was
'perpetually to use a sort of silent war to reinscribe that relationship of force,
and to reinscribe it in institutions, economic inequalities, language […]'".

(Mbembe 2006, 300)

In the fall of 2015, I interviewed a former high-ranking member of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. During the civil war, he was a civilian supporter of the rebel movement, who, as a *mobilisateur politique*, helped raise awareness for the movement's cause. He assisted in mobilizing the Bahutu population in the interior of the country, but also in the refugee camps of neighboring Tanzania. He joined the movement because he was a close relative of Rémy Gahutu, the original founder of the PALIPEHUTU. During our interview, he recounted the protracted political and violent struggle of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL:

> *Our movement was, first and foremost, founded as a political movement in the 1980s in the aftermath of the 1972 genocide* […] *How can you believe that you can develop a country by dismissing and harassing 85 percent of its population?* […] *But when our calls for a national dialogue fell on deaf ears in Bujumbura, we pushed for the creation of a military branch to make our political demands heard.* […] *It took several years for us to be able to launch a significant military force to challenge the Burundian regime* (Interview with former FNL member, Courtrai, 13 October 2015).

Upon its inception, the PALIPEHUTU clandestinely created local political party structures to sensitize the population, first in the Tanzanian refugee camps and subsequently inside Burundi. His face filled with pride as he described how the PALIPEHUTU-FNL spearheaded the liberation cause:

> *Our work was extremely perilous* […] *We were the only ones that were trying to challenge UPPRONA!* […] *We were the first ones to raise our fingers against the Tutsi-dominated one-party state!* […] *All the others who came after us, they drew on our struggle, our goals, our symbols, our identity* (Interview with former FNL member, Courtrai, 13 October 2015).

After decades of political and military struggle, the FNL finally integrated the political mainstream and was legally recognized as a political party in 2009. My informant was tasked with assisting the formal transformation of the rebel movement into a political party. This included a conversion of the clandestine rebel movement cells into formal political party structures. Today my informant lives in exile in Belgium after fleeing Burundi in the aftermath

of the 2010 electoral crisis when the CNDD-FDD regime started a veritable manhunt against FNL militants.

> *Peace and democracy have been in a constant precarious state in my country.* […] *Even in my party, I have a lot of problems* […] *I am not a traditionalist. I was there* […] *wanting to help bring the rebel movement into the ranks of political parties, but it is not really a political party* […] *The leader decides and everyone has to follow […] But I don't want to say 'yes' to every decision* (Interview with former FNL member, Courtrai, 13 October 2015).

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This short excerpt from my field notes and interview transcriptions provides a brief glance into the importance of historical legacies of political and armed struggle for post-accord party politics. The example elucidates several key aspects: First, it illustrates the blurred boundaries between war and peace. While it may take years or decades of protracted political and military struggle before an armed insurgency can be successfully launched, the continuation of political violence after the official end of military hostilities exemplifies that many post-accord countries neither continue in a state of outright war nor attain a clear stage of peace. This underscores the importance of perceiving of war and peace in processual terms. Second, it demonstrates the blurred boundaries between rebel group and political party. Many rebel groups are born out of political movements, such as political parties, student associations or trade unions, before they become engaged in armed resistance to make their political grievances heard. Numerous rebel groups set up governance structures during their armed struggle. These wartime organizational features leave an enduring imprint and feed into the organization of rebel political parties. There are diverse interlinked political and military orders that emerge in civil war and endure in post-accord settings. Third, it is extremely challenging to export the Western model of peaceful, democratic political parties to other countries, especially within the extremely short temporal window, in which conflict resolution

practitioners generally operate. Finally, it reveals the need for adopting a systematic process-based analysis if we want to understand the continuities and changes of rebel political parties and their engagement in politics and violence before, during and after civil war.

In this chapter, I outline a conceptual and theoretical critique of the existing literature on rebel-to-party transformations. I proceed in several steps. In the first section, I introduce the "*no peace, no war*" (Marchal 2002; Richards 2005; Debos 2013) and the "*armed politics*" (Staniland 2015a) paradigms to propose a conceptual lens adept to examine the nexus between war and peace as well as rebel group and political party. Building on Berti, I argue that it is beneficial for our understanding of rebel political parties to conceptualize them as "*hybrid politico-military movements*" (Berti 2013) because it permits us to study the interlinkages between political and violent *modi operandi*. In the second section, I draw on historical institutionalism (Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth 1992; Thelen 1999) to propose a novel theoretical lens for the comprehension of rebel political parties' historical trajectories. I introduce three key features, including ideational, power and institutional politics, to study rebel political parties' pathways at critical junctures through systematic historical process tracing. In the concluding section, I summarize my conceptual and theoretical framework.

3.1. Refining the Conceptual Lens: Taking Hybridity Seriously

In many conflict-torn countries, from Burundi to Iraq, from DRC to Afghanistan, standard media and academic distinctions between war and peace as well as rebel groups and political parties have permanently broken down (Staniland 2015d). A large majority of existing studies on political violence, civil war, transition processes and rebel-to-party transformations does not capture these important fluidities and ambiguities. Many of our conventional approaches are constructed around strict conceptual distinctions between war and peace, rebel groups and

political parties as well as violence and democracy. However, in many conflict-affected societies, we often witness the emergence of settings that are neither peace nor war, as well as of politico-military organizations that repeatedly alternate between social protest, rebellion, violence and party politics. Our understanding of these complex contexts depends on taking these hybrid (political and armed) orders seriously.

The following section critically discusses the traditional distinctions between war and peace as well as rebel group and political party. I argue that these rigorous conceptual divisions have led us to over-simplify and mislabel the phenomena of war and peace as well as to misidentify the characteristics of the political actors involved, notably rebel groups and political parties. If we want to better understand "*no peace, no war*" (Marchal 2002; Richards 2005; Debos 2013) and "*armed politics*" (Staniland 2015a) settings, we have to take hybridity seriously. Or as Mac Ginty eloquently puts it:

> *The lenses of hybridity and hybridisation promise more nuanced understandings of conflict and peace interventions. In particular, they encourage us to critically question the contents and fixity of categories, and to be aware of the fluidity of conflicts and their actors* (Mac Ginty 2011).

3.1.1. War-time & Peace-time Reconsidered: Studying 'Armed Politics'

Since the end of the Cold War, civil wars have become the dominant, most violent and destructive form of modern warfare (Newman and DeRouen 2014, 1). This has led to an upsurge in the study of civil wars, their nature, causes, dynamics and consequences. In the following lines, I briefly outline the main theoretical approaches to civil wars since the fall of the Iron Curtain.

3.1.1.1. Opening the Black Box of Civil Wars: Bringing Politics Back In

Popular media narratives and dominant theories, which emerged to explain the importance of intra-state conflicts in our contemporary world, often simplistically portray civil wars as spaces of failed states characterized by lawlessness, disorder, chaos and anarchy. Civil wars are frequently understood as the "*breakdown of the state*" and "*normal politics*" as well as the necessary consequence of states' inability to maintain their monopoly over the use of force (Kaplan 1994; Zartman 1995b). In this perspective, civil wars are seen as the direct result of states' structural "*weakness*" (Jackson and Rosberg 1982), their "*collapse*" (Zartman 1995a) or degradation into "*shadow states*" (Reno 2000). Accordingly, rebel groups are often depicted as roving bandits, thugs and thieves, whose only interest consists in looting and exploiting the spoils of the state.

In light of the violent tragedies of Somalia, the Balkans, Rwanda, Liberia and Sierra Leone, several scholars and practitioners argued that modern warfare had fundamentally changed in the wake of the end of the Cold War (Van Creveld 1991; Holsti 1996; Hables Gray 1997; Ignatieff 1998; Kaldor 1999). Borrowing heavily from Van Creveld's analysis on the transformation of war (Van Creveld 1991), Holsti writes:

> […] *there are no fronts, no campaigns, no bases, no uniforms, no publicly displayed honours, no* points d'appui*, and no respect for the territorial limits of the state. There are no set strategies and tactics.* […] *The weak must rely on guile, and often crime, to raise funds for bombings, assassinations and massacres* (Holsti 1996, 36).

This depiction of modern warfare fundamentally de-politicized, de-institutionalized and de-historicized war, or, as Van Creveld put it, called for a radical reinterpretation of armed conflict since Clausewitz, who had framed war as the "*continuation of politics by other means*" (Clausewitz 2003 [1832]).

Kaldor became the most prominent pioneer of this approach, coining the need for a distinction between "*old wars*" versus "*new wars*" (Kaldor 1999). "*New wars*" were frequently portrayed as Hobbesian, criminal, depoliticized, private and predatory, whereas "*old wars*" were described as Clausewitzian, ideological, political, collective and sometimes even noble (Kalyvas 2001, 100)[20]. Even though several scholars highlighted the interconnectedness between economic and political agendas in civil wars (Berdal and Keen 1997; Zahar 2001), it was the image of economically driven armed conflicts that emerged as the most prevalent conceptual lens and came to dominate the academic field of civil war studies throughout the 2000s (Grossman 1999; Collier 2000; Collier et al. 2003).

This economic approach was reinforced by large-scale statistical analyses commissioned by the World Bank. These econometric studies introduced a simplistic binary distinction by arguing that it was greed (i.e. rebels primarily motivated by the capture of natural resources and other economic assets), not grievance (i.e. rebels primarily motivated by political aspirations), which best explains civil war dynamics and the motivation for rebellion[21] (Collier and Hoeffler 2000, 1998).

This economic approach was subsequently refined by the study of opportunities for rebellion, such as the availability of finance and recruits for rebel groups or the importance of mountainous terrain offering important hiding places for armed insurgents (Collier and

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[20] This stereotypical depiction of the new vs. old wars debate has been adopted from Kalyvas, who provides an important historical critique of this simplistic distinction highlighting continuities and changes in warfare over the last centuries (Kalyvas 2001).

[21] There is an important debate about the appropriate statistical proxies for greed versus grievance approaches in quantitative studies. For example, Collier and Hoeffler take the lack of access to education as a proxy for greed, but it could well be interpreted as a proxy for grievance. In addition, they measure vertical inequalities as a proxy for grievance without considering the possible importance of horizontal inequalities. For further details on this debate, please see (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Keen 2012).

Hoeffler 2004). This econometric lens sidelined earlier analyses, which had highlighted the political underpinnings of armed rebellions and the importance of studying their organizational and institutional dynamics to better understand civil war and conflict resolution dynamics (Stedman 1997; Zahar 1999).

In contrast to the persisting popular media conceptions and erstwhile dominant academic narratives, civil wars do not result in lawlessness, disorder and chaos (Kalyvas 2006). As Tilly reminds us: "*Even in zones of civil war and widespread brawling, most people most of the time are interacting in nonviolent ways*" (Tilly 2003, 12). Civil wars seldom constitute the archetype of the Hobbesian state of anarchy (Menkhaus 2013, 396). Rebel groups rarely represent the stereotype of purely economically interested actors (Keen 2012). Instead, a growing number of scholars have opened the black box of civil wars and rebel groups to look beyond such simplistic accounts (Kalyvas 2006; Wood 2008). Adding a micro-level lens to the macro-level approaches, these studies investigate the ordinary day-to-day politics of armed conflicts, arguing that these fundamentally shape conflict and 'post-conflict' dynamics (Kalyvas 2008).

This new wave of scholarship has shown that there are a wide variety of different forms of order, governance and institutions that emerge in war. These can vary tremendously within and across civil wars. Kalyvas and Wood analyze the rational calculations and variations in violence versus non-violent strategies of rebel groups (Kalyvas 2006; Wood 2006b). Weinstein looks into the manner in which initial resource endowment of rebel groups shapes their subsequent engagement with civilians (Weinstein 2006). Mampilly studies how rebel groups build different levels of rebel governance structures, providing a wide range of welfare services to civilians under their control (Mampilly 2011). Staniland identifies various

wartime political and armed orders, which structure the relationship between incumbents and insurgents ranging from shared sovereignty to clashing monopolies (Staniland 2012). Arjona describes different wartime social orders and local institutions characterized by different scopes of armed groups' intervention in civilian affairs and social contracts between armed groups and local populations (Arjona 2014).

This new upsurge of studies on the emerging concept of rebel governance introduces key questions about the creation and transformation of political, military and social orders during violent conflict. Rebel governance is broadly defined as "*the set of actions insurgents engage in to regulate social, political and economic life of non-combatants during war*" (Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015, 3). These studies illustrate that civil wars do not involve the "*breakdown of normal politics*" (Kaplan 1994; Zartman 1995b) that they are often associated with. Instead, they bring politics, and thereby the Clausewitzian conception of war, back into the study of civil wars.

> […] *civil war is political because it involves parties that disagree over some fundamentally* political *aspect of the state. While rebels, by definition, break the laws of the state, they differ from criminal bandits who violate rules solely for profit or revenge* (Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015, 2).

Civil wars do not only destroy political order; they also contribute to producing and shaping new, alternative political orders. Building on Tilly's groundbreaking analysis of the emergence of the modern state (Tilly 1992), several scholars frame civil wars as a form of competitive state-building (Staniland 2012). In this perspective, studies should not only look at the military strength of warring parties, but also at the construction and transformation of political power (Wood 2008). These analyses fundamentally challenge our common conceptions, which separate war and peace into distinct categories, a dichotomy that is deeply embedded in Western-inspired thinking about war. Hobbes introduced this dichotomy into

Western philosophy in his famous book on the "*Leviathan*", in which the British philosopher rigidly opposes peace (as the site of politics) to war (as the site of violence) (Hobbes 1651). However, transitions from war to peace are no linear endeavor:

> […] *transitions from war to peace* […] *are more usefully seen as involving a realignment of political interests and a readjustment of economic strategies rather than a clean break from violence to consent, from theft to production, or from repression to democracy* (Azimi and Li Lin 2000, 59).

3.1.1.2. Unpacking 'No peace, No War' Settings: An 'Armed Politics' Approach

Given the complexity, ambiguity and inter-linkage between wartime and peacetime orders, a growing number of researchers have problematized the continuum between war and peace (Marchal 2002; Richards 2005; Debos 2013). Richards and his colleagues study the emergence of "*no peace, no war*" settings (Richards 2005). They advocate for not analyzing war as a "*thing in itself*", but for embedding its study in the particular historical and social context from which it stems. They criticize the prominent academic scholarship for portraying war as "*inherently bad*" and peace as an "*ideal good*".[22] This approach contains the risk of taking war and its political rationale out of its social context (Richards 2005, 3). Instead, echoing Clausewitz, war is framed as a "[…] *long-term struggle organized for political ends, commonly but not always using violence. Neither the means nor the ends can be understood without reference to a specific social context*" (Richards 2005, 4).[23]

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[22] This approach contains a certain risk of 'banalizing' war, which should not be underestimated. For a great discussion, please see (Duclos 2010, 27ff).

[23] The study of neither-war-nor-peace settings has also inspired and contributed to a growing literature on the exercise of public authority and the formation of legitimacy claims to political power in contexts, in which sovereignty is fought over by a wide variety of state and non-state (armed) actors (Lund 2006; Hoffmann and Vlassenroot 2014). As Lund writes about the state of institutions in many African countries: "[…] *many institutions have a twilight character; they are not the state but they exercise public authority. They defy clear-cut distinction. In fact, as we venture to study the political contours of public authority and the political field in which it is exercised, we are saddled with a paradox. On the one hand, actors and institutions in this field are*

The importance of the war-peace continuum, highlighted in anthropological research on armed conflict, has led several scholars in political science to question the very concept of civil war (Mundy 2011; Staniland 2015a). Quantitative research, which has dominated the study of civil wars in the field of international relations,[24] takes the total number of casualties as the primary criterion to distinguish civil wars from other types of political violence. This approach makes a fundamental ontological claim by studying civil wars as a distinct analytical category of political violence. Civil wars are usually defined as armed conflicts concerning a contested incompatibility over government or territory, which involves agents of (or claimants to) a state and at least one organized non-state armed group.[25] While some scholars adopt the Correlates of War threshold of 1,000 casualties per year, others opt for the UCDP threshold of 25 battle-related deaths per year.

It is however extremely challenging to identify onset, offset, and discrete episodes of civil war. As Staniland reminds us, many countries experience several interludes of civil war, often with the same rebel group or set of rebel groups over time. Many of these long-lasting, low-level interval armed conflicts are omitted by the strict coding criteria of quantitative

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intensely preoccupied with the state and with the distinction between state and society, but on the other hand, their practices constantly befuddle these distinctions" (Lund 2006, 673). In this vein, public authority is exercised by, both, the state and competing rebel groups, who provide order and services to the local populations under their control with the ultimate objective of conquering their hearts and minds.

[24] The formal academic definition of civil wars has its roots in the Correlates of War (COW) project, which was founded at the University of Michigan in 1963 by political scientists David Singer and Melvin Small. Adopting a behavioralistic approach to the study of war, COW defined inter-state war as sustained combat, involving organized armed forces of at least two states, resulting in a minimum of 1,000 battle-related fatalities within a twelve months period in order to distinguish wars from other types of violence. This definition of inter-state war was subsequently applied to civil wars. The UCDP project has criticized this high fatality threshold. With the objective of analyzing the finer levels of civil war dynamics, UCDP opted for a threshold of at least 25 battle-related deaths per year. In its datasets, UCDP distinguishes between minor (25 to 999 causalities per year) and major armed conflict (at least 1,000 causalities per year).

[25] This definition is based on a regrouping of several definitions of civil war found in the literature (Thies 2010; UCDP 2015). However, there are important discrepancies among these definitions, which have led to an upsurge of various definitions of civil wars, with one study identifying a total of eleven different civil war criteria (Sambanis 2004).

analyses of civil wars, often relying on yearly based country-level datasets (Staniland 2015a). This makes it difficult to scrutinize the temporal and spatial dynamics of violence[26] (Restrepo, Spagat, and Vargas 2006; Buhaug 2010). Mundy highlights the hidden politics in qualifying or disqualifying processes of political violence as civil wars through a critical analysis of the literature's approach to the paradigmatic case of Algeria in the 1990s (Mundy 2011). For their part, scholars of electoral violence in countries emerging from armed conflict highlight that electoral violence patterns often reflect conflict cleavages inherited from the civil war period (Höglund 2009; Bekoe 2012). These examples illustrate the inherent ambiguities around the adequate delineation of the phenomenon of civil war. Or to paraphrase Alexander Wendt's famous statement about the social construction of international anarchy: "*the world of war and violence is what researchers make of it*" (Eberwein and Chojnacki 2001, 29).

In light of these challenges, Staniland advocates for replacing civil war studies with the study of "*armed politics*" more broadly (Staniland 2015a). In this view, civil war should not constitute a distinct analytical category (delineated by the number of battle-related casualties). Instead, civil war should be situated and analyzed within a broader category of processes that combine peaceful and violent politics (Richards 2005; Staniland 2012, 244). The importance of integrating the study of civil wars into the analysis of broader political and violent dynamics is also reflected in the fact that scholars of social movements have advocated for building a unified field of "*contentious politics*" (Tarrow 2015) on the investigation of the

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[26] This has led to the emergence of new data projects on the temporal and spatial variations of violence within war-torn countries, such as the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) or the Event Data Project on Conflict and Security (EDACS). There is considerable debate about the appropriate units of analysis in civil war studies, be it with regards to the actors (dyads vs. fragmentation), temporal (year vs. month vs. other temporal demarcations) or spatial (country-level vs. regional vs. local levels) dimensions involved (Buhaug, Gates, and Lujala 2009; Cunningham, Bakke, and Seymour 2013; Greig 2015).

origins of social mobilization and the escalation of violence. Goodwin et al. argue "*that researchers should analyze political violence not as a sui generis phenomenon but as one form (or set of forms) among others that contentious politics sometimes takes*" (Goodwin 2012, 3).

I situate my own research on rebel political parties and their trajectories within the "*no peace, no war*" (Marchal 2002; Richards 2005; Debos 2013) and the "*armed politics*" (Staniland 2015a) paradigms. These conceptual lenses have several advantages: First, they are able to capture continuities and changes between 'pre-war', 'war' and 'post-war' episodes of collective violence and political claims to power by studying the intricate interlinkages between war- and peace-time through a processual analysis. Second, it permits a systematic comparison across periods of high- and low-level violence. Third, it advocates for studying diverse types of armed groups, including insurgents, militias or armed political parties, under one, common theoretical framework. Given that many of these groups tend to blend and overlap, it is important to analyze them in an integrated manner.

3.1.2. Rebels & Parties Reassessed: Studying 'Hybridity"

As outlined in Chapter I reviewing the emerging literature on rebel-to-party transformations, the pioneer studies tended to frame rebel groups and political parties as polar opposites: political organizations distinguished by their use or rejection of political violence (Shugart 1992; Allison 2006; Söderberg Kovacs 2007). Even though this binary distinction was subsequently replaced by a continuum (De Zeeuw 2008), the initial dualistic distinction remained a main reference point and introduced an over-simplified, stark division between rebel group and political party, which continues to dominate much of the literature. Before fleshing out the blurred boundaries between rebel groups and political parties, it is imperative to provide a short overview over the dominant definitions of rebel groups and political parties

in the existing literature, which are reflective of this binary distinction. This can help us in untangling common categories and misconceptions.

3.1.2.1. Rigid Classifications: Rebels & Parties Defined

With regard to the definition of rebel groups, there exists a large variety of terms[27] and definitions[28] of (non-state) armed groups in the academic and policy literature. Most definitions highlight the violent means adopted by rebel groups to pursue their goals, be they political, economic or military. In this vein, rebel groups are generally defined as political organizations that (1) are "*willing and capable to use violence for pursuing their objectives*", (2) are "*not integrated into formalized state institutions*", and (3) "*possess a certain degree of autonomy with regard to politics, military operations, resources and infrastructure*"

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[27] The terms employed range from more neutral terms, such as non-state armed groups, rebel groups, armed opposition movements or insurgents, to more value-laden notions, such as militant groups, guerrillas, revolutionary movements, armed resistance movements, freedom fighters or even terrorists (Dudouet 2009, 5). In the literature, there is an important debate about the risks and benefits of these labels and their impact on how we study and ultimately approach these groups in the political arena (Policzer 2005; Ricigliano 2005; Zahar 2006). Most authors (including myself) use the terms (non-state) armed groups or rebel groups because they seem to be the more impartial notions (Reno 2001; De Zeeuw 2008). Others advocate for the use of resistance or liberation movements, guerrilla or revolutionary movements, as a reference to the self-label that these organizations adopt in their own communications (Deonandan, Close, and Prevost 2007; Dudouet 2009). However, the famous cliché "*One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter*" (Seymour 1975, 62) powerfully illustrates the politicization of such labels. While it is important to study how armed groups present themselves and how they want to be perceived, it seems problematic to adopt their own labels since there can exist a stark divergence between the self-representation and actual behavior of these groups. Equally important, the moniker "*terrorist organization*" has become politically manipulated, especially since the tragic events of 9/11, posing important risks for how analysts and policy-makers approach these groups. The terrorist label usually refers to organizations that resort to the deliberate, discriminate targeting of unarmed civilians. However, the difficulty of distinguishing between civilian and military targets in most intra-state conflicts complicates the objective of arriving at a clear-cut definition. Most rebel groups (and governments for that matter) employ terrorist tactics at one point or another rendering the terrorist label subjective and highly misleading (Moghadam, Berger, and Beliakova 2014). The difficulty of defining terrorism is also reflected in the fact that there exists, so far, no internationally accepted definition of terrorism despite numerous United Nations brokered-negotiations and resolutions on the subject.

[28] Overall, we can distinguish between broad and narrow definitions of non-state armed groups in the literature. While broad definitions favor parsimony and try to keep characteristics to a minimum, narrow definitions help to flesh out specific attributes of rebel groups. Rebel groups diverge in their motivations, goals, strategies and functions as well as their organizational and governance structures, which are likely to be important factors leading to different trajectories before, during and after the end of the armed opposition (Zahar 2000; Curtis and De Zeeuw 2010).

(Schneckener 2009, 8). The greed-grievance debate has underscored the interlinkages between the political and economic agendas of rebel groups (Vinci 2006). Nevertheless, most current research on rebel groups stresses that these groups originate from a fundamental political disagreement about the governance of the polity (as opposed to pure criminal bandits) (Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015). This fundamental political struggle can then be transformed and prolonged by economic agendas. Over the course of an armed conflict, rebel groups frequently become complicit in criminal activities, which are often the only way that they can finance their armed opposition (Reno 2001).

Definitions[29] of political parties often reflect an explicit Western bias. Political parties are generally defined as "*any political group* […] *that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections* […] *candidates for public office*" (Sartori 2005 [1976], 64). Many authors add that this power struggle necessarily includes the resort to peaceful means (Schnattschneider 1942, 37; Lasswell and Kaplan 1950, 169-171). In this vein, political parties have come to be celebrated as the social organizations par excellence "*that afford the means by which economic and social differences in society may be resolved peacefully*" (Weinberg 2012, 115). Even though scholars have highlighted the extremely challenging context of post-accord transition processes (Kumar and De Zeeuw 2008; Reilly and Nordlund 2008), the Western-inspired definition of political parties has become the main reference point in much of the literature on war-to-peace transitions (Castillejo 2016).

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[29] The political party literature puts forward a large variety of definitions, ranging from formalist and minimalist to substantive and maximalist definitions. Political parties develop specific programmatic commitments, organizational structures, functions as well as norms and strategies. For a more detailed overview, please see (Gunther and Diamond 2003; Katz and Crotty 2006).

In light of these definitions, rebel groups are associated with bullets, violence and war. Political parties are linked to ballots, democracy and peace. Rebel groups destroy political order. Political parties make political order. Rebel groups resort to violent means and coercion to pursue their goals. Political parties use peaceful means and persuasion to achieve their objectives. This Western-inspired conceptualization has contributed to the fact that the study of rebel groups has traditionally been monopolized by the analysis of their resort to violence while the study of political parties has been dominated by the analysis of their engagement in politics, especially elections. This has led to a lack of studies featuring rebel groups' political participation as well as political parties' violent engagement. In addition, this had set up a false dichotomy between rebel groups and political parties, which is empirically and historically extremely ambiguous. Empirically, notably in countries emerging from armed conflict, there are a wide variety of politico-military movements that do not easily fit in one or the other category. Historically, it took over three centuries for political parties to emerge as the non-violent political actors that we have come to know today in the Western world. The next two sections elaborate these empirical and historical ambiguities in more detail.

3.1.2.2. Empirical Ambiguities: Rebels & Parties Intertwined

Empirically, rebel groups and political parties have much more in common than is generally assumed. There are various ambiguities and fluidities between these organizations that have not been adequately explored in the rebel-to-party transformation literature. I outline three such key ambiguities, including the potential political origin of rebel groups, their various political and military organizational structures, as well as the combination of political and violent means during and beyond civil war. These will be discussed in turn.

Firstly, many rebel groups often exclusively engage in political struggle before adding armed resistance to their political repertoire. Several such groups have their roots in social movements, political parties, workers' unions or student associations[30] (Nissen and Schlichte 2006). The armed option is often described as the last resort when political organizations reckon that they have no other option than to take up arms in order to make their political aspirations heard, especially when confronting authoritarian regimes. The *African National Congress* (ANC), founded in 1912 as the *South African Native National Congress* (SANNC) that formed its military wing, the *Umkhonto we Sizwe* ('Spear of the Nation') in 1961, might be one of the most famous examples of a political organization subsequently adopting armed struggle. Scholars have therefore hypothesized that armed movements with a distinct political history might be more easily converted into political parties (Nissen and Schlichte 2006; De Zeeuw 2008). In a pioneer quantitative study on party formation out of armed opposition movements, Manning and Smith find substantial evidence that pre-war political history and electoral experience make it more likely for rebel groups to (re-) form political parties after civil war (Manning and Smith 2016).

Secondly, rebel movements may develop political organizational structures that (1) are similar to political party structures; and (2) may be used to deliver social services to the local populations under the insurgents' control. (1) Rebel groups vary tremendously in their political and military organizational make-up. Some organizations, such as the FMLN in El

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[30] Other possible parent organizations include elements of the state's former or current military forces, religious organizations and foreign fighters. Braithwhaite and Cunningham are currently gathering data on the origins of rebel groups around the world. Preliminary research on Africa shows that around 20 percent of rebel groups have as their parent organization political parties. An additional 10 percent originate from student associations or labor unions. These are rough numbers taken from a preliminary presentation of the research (Braithwaite and Cunningham 2015).

Salvador, address political and military issues through one overarching organization. Other organizations, such as the NRM/A in Uganda or the SPLM/A in South Sudan, maintain – at least formally – separate political and military branches. The exact interplay and hierarchy between the political and military wing can change greatly from one organization to another and within one organization over time. On one side of the spectrum, Hezbollah's political wing is believed to have preserved a strong influence over its military wing. On the other side of the spectrum, the *Kosovo Liberation Army*'s (KLA) political wing in Kosovo was subordinated to its military wing. Other organizations, like the CNDD-FDD in Burundi, start out with separate political and military wings before integrating these distinct branches into one overarching structure (or vice versa). There are also rebel groups that have an autonomous political party structure, such as the Sinn Féin and the *Irish Republican Army* (IRA) in Northern Ireland. Among 250 rebel groups operating between 1989 and 2009, Jo identified that 83 groups (33.2 percent) had a separate political wing at one point during their armed struggle. Amid these 83 rebel groups, 43 organizations (51.8 percent) were legally allowed to have a political wing by the opposing government (Jo 2015, 95).[31] An explicit (legally recognized or unrecognized) political component is generally believed to facilitate the outreach to local and domestic constituencies as well as international diplomatic actors. The organizational structures of rebel groups, including the relationship between political and military wings, is important for understanding and tracing the movements' engagement in politics and violence over time. Stanton shows that rebel groups with political wings are more

[31] Cunningham, Gleditsch and Saleyhan have collected a dataset of non-state armed groups in civil wars covering the period from 1946 until 2010. The overall picture is roughly comparable to Jo's data. Around 40 percent of the armed groups had some kind of political wing. And among these rebel groups, approximately 44 percent had a legally recognized political wing by the opposing government (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2013).

likely to show restraint in their use of violence against civilians than rebel groups that do not have a distinctive political branch (Stanton 2013, 2015). Lyons has thus advocated for conceptualizing rebel groups as proto-type political parties (Lyons 2013). This is particularly assumed to be the case for rebel groups, which have a distinct political and military structure. Alfieri frames the pathways of politico-military organizations, such as the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, as a historical struggle for legal recognition (Alfieri 2014). However, this perspective only applies to organizations that are legally unrecognized by the opposing government, which is not always the case. Indeed, rebel groups constitute multiple organizations, which combine a variety of different activities, be they political, military, business-related or criminal, to achieve their objectives. (2) In addition to the political structures of rebel groups, an increasing literature on non-state armed groups' organizational structures has highlighted that rebel movements often develop governance structures and deliver social services, which are very similar to the structures and functions generally associated with the state (Mampilly 2011; Arjona 2014; Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015). The Maoist guerilla movement in Nepal (CPN-M), for example, established extensive parallel government structures in most of the areas, in which it was operating during Nepal's civil war (1996-2006). Its 'People's Government' extended from the highest to the lowest administrative units of the country. When the CPN-M formally transformed into a political party at the end of the civil war, the movement could build on these parallel administrative structures during the subsequent elections as in-built electoral constituencies (Joshi 2014).

Finally, although rebel groups might officially renounce the armed struggle and play the electoral game, several groups simultaneously or consecutively engage and participate in multi-party politics, elections, armed struggle and political violence. Former rebel groups that

participate in the political system might instrumentalize proxies, such as private militias (frequently recruited among ex-combatants), who use political violence to intimidate critical voices and influence election results. The CNDD-FDD in Burundi and its instrumentalization of parts of its youth movement constitute one example. Even though the civil war might officially end, political violence often remains an important mode of operation in party politics that risks crystallizing around election time (Christensen and Utas 2008). Recent research on electoral violence has hypothesized that countries emerging from armed conflict are more prone to electoral violence. Patterns of electoral violence might be reflective of violence patterns during the civil war (Höglund 2009; Bekoe 2012). Other groups explicitly combine armed struggle with electoral participation, such as Hamas in Palestine and Hezbollah in Lebanon (Berti 2013).

In sum, these empirical ambiguities between rebel groups and political parties in societies emerging from armed conflict fundamentally challenge our common conceptions. Both types of organizations have as their ultimate objective the access to power, be it via violent struggle, the ballot box or through a combination of both. Consequently, rebel groups and political parties cannot be conceptualized as two polar opposites on a spectrum of organizations distinguished by their use or rejection of violence. Instead, following Berti, I argue that rebel political parties should be conceptualized as "*hybrid politico-military organizations*" (Berti 2013).

3.1.2.3. Historical Ambiguities: A Shared History of Political Parties & Violence

As discussed above, conventional wisdom does not link political parties in the Western world with political violence. Political parties and political violence are almost exclusively associated with countries outside of the West. This is also reflected in the fact that academics

employ the term "*armed political parties*" (Staniland 2014). According to our common Western understanding, political parties are intrinsically linked to peace and democracy. They use non-violent means and persuasion to achieve their political objectives. They are formal political organizations that seek to participate in the government apparatus by placing their candidates into public office (Schlesinger 1991). They bring together individual members, who are generally believed to share a mutual understanding of what a government is supposed to look like (Sidey 1984). Accordingly, political violence is not supposed to feature in the political repertoire of political parties.

This Western conceptualization of political parties as peaceful, democratic organizations is rooted in their particular historical founding and a normative definition characterized by a distinct liberal bias. In the process, political parties have come to be perceived as indispensable agents for political liberalization and democracy. They have come to be celebrated as the *sine qua non* 'social' organizations, which mediate between the governors and the governed in a peaceful manner (Huntington 1968, 89). However, this conceptualization of political parties is the end-result of a long historical process. Western political parties have not always exclusively pursued political power through non-violent means.

A short look into the historical background of political parties in the Western world illustrates that the eventual emergence of political parties as peaceful and democratic institutions was frequently mired in violence, revolutions and totalitarianism. It shows that political parties and political violence have not always been mere contradictions but that political parties in the West frequently turned to political violence during their foundational years and beyond. Indeed, it took over three centuries of heated philosophical debates as well

as peaceful and violent historical dynamics until political parties emerged as the non-violent, democratic actors that we have come to know today.[32]

Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, political parties in Europe and North America were frequently connected to political violence, in the form of violent youth movements, gangs or even militias. These violent groups were instrumentalized with the ultimate objective of influencing politics, intimidating voters or even overthrowing the emerging democratic order altogether. Most famously, we can think of (1) the communist and socialist parties in Western Europe, which featured political violence as an acceptable tool in their political repertoire during the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century;[33] (2) political parties on the whole political spectrum during the German Weimar Republic, which all possessed their own armed uniformed militias that frequently clashed throughout the 1920s, making political violence a normal part of political life;[34] (3) the Native American Party in the United States, commonly known as the Know Nothing Movement, which used violence with the objective of preventing Catholic immigrants from participating in the polls during the 1850s, since they

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[32] However, there are also examples of violence used by political parties in Western democracy. Most recently, the outbreaks of political violence surrounding the political rallies of Donald Trump in the run-up to his nomination as the presidential candidate of the Republican Party and the 2016 US-American elections can be cited as one possible example (Newkirk 2016).

[33] Even though communist and socialist parties in Western Europe included an explicit commitment to revolutionary change in their party manifests, their party members became extremely divided over the question of the necessity or inevitability of revolutionary change to replace the emerging capitalist order. As political party leaders increasingly acquired bourgeois interests, they embarked their parties on a pathway toward reform and adaptation to the capitalist order (Michels 1962 [1911]). In the process, these parties eventually abandoned their revolutionary goals. The *German Social Democratic Party* (SPD), for example, officially renounced its rhetorical commitment to replacing the capitalist order with the adoption of the *Godesberger Programm* in 1959 (Abendroth 1964).

[34] The political parties of the Weimar Republic developed so-called *Wehrverbände* ('combat leagues'). For a great overview of these paramilitary groups and their origins, please see (Storer 2013).

were believed to vote for the liberal Democratic Party;[35] (4) the secessionist parties in Spain, Corsica or Northern Ireland.[36]

Despite these historical examples, political violence has been completely evacuated from most current definitions of political parties in established democracies. Western party scholars and practitioners have generally come to converge around Sartori's classical, minimal definition, which defines political parties as "*any political group that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections, candidates for public office*" (Sartori 2005 [1976], 57). They have added that this necessarily includes the pursuit of political power through peaceful, legal and democratic political means (Lasswell and Kaplan 1950, 169f; Crotty 1970, 294; Downs 1957, 24f). It is also this understanding that informs the work of many democracy-promoting institutions, which work with political parties in conflict-affected societies (NDI 2016). However, as many researchers and practitioners have increasingly highlighted: "[…] *in practice political parties* [in conflict-torn societies] *frequently do not play such a positive role*" (Castillejo 2016, 1), but, instead, actively undercut peacebuilding and democratization efforts.

An in-depth investigation into the historical linkages between political parties and political violence is generally absent from the majority of Western party scholarship. Indeed, influential works on the definition and evolution of political parties and party systems in the Western world, including Leon D. Epstein's *Political Parties in Western Democracies* (Epstein 1967), Giovanni Sartori's *Parties and Party Systems* (Sartori 2005 [1976]) or Richard

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[35] For an excellent discussion of the origins, rise and demise of the Know Nothing Movement, which evolved into one of the most important third parties in American history during the 1850s, please see (Anbinder 1992).
[36] For an excellent overview and discussion of these terrorist-labeled political parties, please see (Weinberg, Pedahzur, and Perliger 2009).

S. Katz and William Crotty's *Handbook of Party Politics* (Katz and Crotty 2006), include neither a substantive discussion of political violence, nor entries for political violence in their indices. A notable exception can be found in Duverger's classical work entitled *Les partis politiques* (Duverger 1951). The French jurist, sociologist and political scientist set out to develop a general theory of political parties by analyzing and summarizing what was known about the development of political parties at his time. He distinguished between *comité* ('caucus'), *section* ('branch'), *cellule* ('cell') and *milice* ('militia') as the basic organizing elements of political parties. Duverger tried to account for democratic and anti-democratic political parties in his analysis and the fluidities between them. The basic organizing element of the militia highlights that various Western political parties, notably the communist and fascist political parties, institutionalized the armed struggle in their political repertoires.

In sum, the historical nexus between rebel groups and political violence in the Western world briefly illustrates the long historical process behind the emergence of political parties as peaceful political actors in the West. By adopting this perspective, I aim to show the limits of the ambitious project of quickly exporting the Western model of peaceful, democratic political parties to other countries. In this vein, I join scholars, who have critically discussed the shortcomings of the liberal peacebuilding paradigm and the difficulties of quickly rushing the organization of elections after the signing of peace accords (Paris 2004; Carothers 2006; Mac Ginty 2011).

3.1.3. Ambiguities Scrutinized: Rebel Groups, Predecessors & Successors

Drawing on the "*no peace, no war*" (Marchal 2002; Richards 2005; Debos 2013) and "*armed politics*" (Staniland 2015a) paradigms, the previous two sections explored the blurred boundaries between war and peace as well as rebel political parties. Consequently, I argued

that rebel political parties should be conceptualized as "*hybrid politico-military organizations*" (Berti 2013).[37] Exploring grey-zones and taking hybridity seriously is imperative if we want to understand political contexts, which frequently blend politics and violence.

Even though political parties eventually emerged as the non-violent political actors in the Western world, we should not frame our analysis of political parties in conflict-affected societies in this linear, teleological way.[38] Instead, we should approach the analysis of rebel political parties as a discrete analytical category in order to carefully study the process of how these actors evolve and change over time. Following Hodgkin's call: "*We have to seek to understand them as they are, avoiding any rigid application of categories and schemata derived from a study of Western political history and institutions*" (Hodgkin 1961, 16). Consequently, I do not want to suggest that rebel political parties (or other political parties recurring to political violence) will eventually emerge as the non-violent, democratic political actors as we have come to know them in the Western world. Instead, I highlight the unique political and historical features that determine the kind of political parties that transpire.

Beyond the Western model, political parties have today emerged in virtually all countries around the world as the key institutions linking the society to the state. "*Whether they* [i.e. political parties] *are the great tools of democracy or sources of tyranny and repression*" (Heywood 2002, 73), political parties have become the primary vehicle for

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[37] I use the concept of "*hybrid politico-military movements*" (Berti 2013) primarily as a key analytical category and as a heuristic device. Consequently, I still continue to refer to rebel political parties, rebel groups-*cum*-political parties or political parties rooted in armed struggle in the following sections since these are the most employed terms in the academic literature to designate my research subject. However, I always have the conceptual framework of hybridity in mind throughout my analysis.

[38] I owe this perspective to Mampilly, who criticizes the tendency of analyzing civil wars as an elementary form of statebuilding. "*Thus, rather than assume a teleology toward state formation, I am interested in how structures and practices developed by the modern state can be reconfigured and put to productive purposes by competing notes of power – in this case rebel organizations*" (Mampilly 2011, 34).

political participation. If we want to understand the specific nature of political parties rooted in armed struggle, we have to pay very close attention to these historical processes.

Consequently, I opt for a process-based instead of a results-based analysis of so-called rebel-to-party conversion processes. This process-based analysis is inspired by historical institutionalism (a theoretical approach outlined in more detail in the next section). It is rooted in a fundamental path-dependent approach, which opens the black box of rebel political parties, i.e. through a process tracing analysis of rebel groups' potential political predecessors (or parent organizations), rebel groups and their political party successors, to depict their political and violent behavior before, during and after civil war.

It is important to note that I do not claim that there are no distinctions between war and peace as well as rebel groups and political parties. The signing of liberal peace accords, coupled with extensive DDR programs and the organization of elections, generally leads to a significant reduction of violence. Instead, I highlight the importance of studying fluid and blurred boundaries. In contrast to dominant conceptions, I do not distinguish between rebel groups and political parties by looking at the means that these social organizations employ, i.e. violent versus peaceful means. Instead, I underscore that both types of organizations can resort to violence in order to achieve their political objectives, taking into account the empirical and historical ambiguities discussed above.

Despite the various similarities, which can be identified between rebel groups' political predecessors, rebel groups and their political party successors, there are also important nuances between these organizations. These can, but do not have to, include: 1) their legal status; 2) the type of constraints when they engage in politics; 3) their intention of violence; and 4) the scale of violence employed.

	Pre-War Period	War Period	Post-War Period
Type of Actor	**Rebel groups' potential political predecessors**	**Rebel groups**	**Rebel groups' political party successors**
Conceptual definition[39]	Rebel groups' parent organizations are coordinated political organizations, whose members engage in clandestine or legal activities to express political grievances. If they experience difficulties in expressing these grievances, they may envision engaging in violence.	Rebel groups are coordinated, hybrid politico-military organizations, whose members engage in politics and violence with the intention of gaining political control over all or a portion of a pre-existing state's territory.	Rebel political party successors are coordinated, hybrid politico-military organizations, whose members engage in politics and violence to gain or maintain executive or legislative state power through elections.
Legal status[40]	Legally recognized or unrecognized	Typically legally unrecognized	Typically legally recognized
Engagement in politics[41]	Dependent on legal status	Outside the state's formal laws	Formal constitutional constraints
Intention of violence[42]	N/A	Typically anti-systemic	Intra- or anti-systemic
Scale of violence[43]	N/A	Typically High-intensity violence	Typically Low-intensity violence

Table 2: Conceptualization of Rebel Parties Before, During & After War

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[39] The definitions used are inspired by Kasfir's work on rebel governance. Kasfir defines rebel organizations as "*consciously coordinated groups whose members engage in protracted violence with the intention of gaining undisputed control over all or a portion of a pre-existing state's territory*" (Kasfir 2015, 24).

[40] Rebel groups' political predecessors can be legally recognized or unrecognized. Rebel groups (and their potential separate political wings) are typically legally unrecognized. However, there are important exceptions. Jo identifies that 17.2 percent of the 250 rebel groups operating between 1989 and 2009 were allowed to maintain a legally recognized political wing by the opposing government (Jo 2015, 95). Cunningham, Gleditsch and Salehyan identify that 17.5 percent of the rebel groups operating between 1946 and 2010 were able to have a political wing sanctioned by law (Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2013).

[41] Rebel groups' political predecessors engage in public politics depending on their legal status. Rebel groups typically operate outside the formal scope of states' laws. Rebel groups can, however, be subject to certain international laws and internal informal rules. Internationally, certain rebel groups subscribe to international humanitarian law, reflected, for example, in the Geneva Call Initiative. Internally, certain rebel groups create codes of conduct, including rebel courts to ensure compliance with these rules. However, it is controversial to what extent these mechanisms are enforced (Clapham 2006; Jo 2015, 86ff). Rebel political party successors are officially constrained to formal, constitutional rules of the state. However, they vary in their compliance

[42] Rebel groups generally use violence with the objective of overthrowing an existing political system. Their rebel group successors use violence to influence or challenge the existing political system. I draw on Staniland's work on election violence for the distinction between anti- and intra-systemic violence (Staniland 2014).

[43] Outright civil war is generally marked by high-intensity violence. However, the scale of violence varies during civil wars. Post-accord settings are often characterized by low-intensity violence with potential peaks, typically around elections.

3.2. Refining the Theoretical Lens: Studying Historical Process

In the following section, I sketch out a novel theoretical framework to analyze the historical trajectories of rebel political parties, conceptualized as "*hybrid politico-military movements*" (Berti 2013), operating in a "*no peace, no war*" (Marchal 2002; Richards 2005; Debos 2013) and "*armed politics*" (Staniland 2015a) setting. I propose to study the historical pathways of rebel groups' potential political predecessors, rebel groups and their political party successors through a "*systematic historical process analysis*" (Hall 2006) rooted in historical institutionalism.

The section proceeds as follows: First, I introduce historical institutionalism as an important theoretical approach to complement existing studies on rebel-to-party transformations. Second, I identify three key factors of rebel political parties, including their ideational, power and institutional politics. I argue that these elements are crucial in understanding the lifecycle of rebel political parties and their engagement in politics and violence over time. Third, I introduce systematic historical process tracing at critical junctures to map out rebel political parties' historical trajectories during and beyond civil war.

3.2.1. Historical Institutionalism: Continuities & Changes of Rebel Parties

My research adopts a fundamentally path-dependent approach to study the continuities and changes of rebel political parties' historical trajectories. Thus, historical institutionalism constitutes an excellent analytical lens. Historical institutionalism is a theoretical approach (as opposed to a particular theory or a specific method) to the study of politics (North 1990; Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth 1992; Hall and Taylor 1996; Thelen 1999; Skocpol and Pierson 2002). It analyzes institutional choice, inertia and change over time. Historical

institutionalists examine the emergence, modification and preservation of institutions through an in-depth analysis based on temporal sequences as they unfold (Thelen 1999, 390).

In Comparative Politics, historical institutionalism has traditionally been associated with three key features. First, historical institutionalists ask big questions. Second, they take time seriously. Third, they study macro contexts (Skocpol and Pierson 2002). This conventional definition is rooted in historical institutionalism's origin in classical works of political science, which, according to Tilly, were interested in studying "*big structures, large processes, huge comparisons*" (Tilly 1984). Traditional studies adopted a *longue durée* approach, frequently spanning centuries with themes ranging from the social origins of the state, dictatorships and democracies to the long-term implications of revolutions and capitalism.[44]

Since these pioneer studies, historical institutionalism has been applied to more delimited questions, shorter time-spans as well as the study of micro and meso phenomena. The research tradition's empirical purview has been significantly extended "[…] *as scholars have studied virtually all types of institutions, big and small, at the local, national and international levels*" (Fioretos, Falleti, and Sheingate 2016, 4). For example, the various research themes have included the study of the limitations and potential harmful effects of internationally advocated community policing programs in local communities in Guatemala (Argueta 2015), the examination of the power asymmetries among key local actors during

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[44] The term "*historical institutionalism*" was not employed until the early 1990s (Steinmo 2008). It was coined during a small workshop held in Boulder, Colorado, in January 1989, which culminated in an edited volume on historical institutionalism (Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth 1992). Numerous classical works in political science have retrospectively been classified as inspired by historical institutionalism. These include, most notably, Barrington Moore's *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (1966), Samuel Huntington's *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968) or Theda Skocpol's *States and Revolutions* (1979).

Lebanon's Cedar Revolution (Clark and Zahar 2015) or the analysis of the role of international bureaucrats in informing policy choices of international organizations (Barnett and Finnemore 2004). As a result, scholars have come to define historical institutionalism much more broadly:

> *This approach is distinguished from other social science approaches by its attention to real-world empirical questions, its historical orientation and its attention to the ways in which institutions structure and shape political behavior* (Steinmo 2008, 118).

Over the last two decades, historical institutionalists have developed an elaborate toolbox, comprised of key analytical concepts, such as path-dependency, process tracing and critical junctures, to render their studies more structured and rigorous (Fioretos, Falleti, and Sheingate 2016, 10).

Historical institutionalism is an eclectic, multi-faceted and pluralistic approach.[45] This is reflected in its attempt to marry two main approaches to the analysis of the behavior and choice of political actors: a strategic action approach, based on rational cost-benefit analysis, and a cultural approach, based on the importance of ideas, norms and values (Hall and Taylor 1996). In this perspective, rational political decisions are not exogenously given, but informed and shaped by ideas. In addition, historical institutionalists frame institutions as carriers of ideas, which can inform political actions by shaping how individuals and organizations interpret the world. Ideas can link macro- or meso-level institutional structures to micro-level cognitive factors. This approach has, for example, led to interesting insights to account for the divergent trajectories of social democratic political parties during the inter-war period in

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[45] Political scientists generally distinguish between three different currents of institutionalism, namely rational choice, sociological and historical institutionalism. Historical institutionalism combines many key insights from rational choice and sociological institutionalism. For an excellent overview of the three institutionalisms and their respective contributions to the political science literature, please see (Hall and Taylor 1996).

Western Europe. Whereas the Swedish Social Democrats were able to establish political hegemony in their own country, the German Social Democrats were not able to prevent the collapse of the Weimar Republic (Berman 1998). Other scholars have traced the emergence and persistence of international organizations despite states' sovereignty concerns (Ikenberry 1992).

Historical institutionalism adopts a broad definition of institutions ranging from formal to informal rules and procedures. In this dissertation, I follow North's definition of institutions, characterized as:

> […] *humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interaction. They consist of both informal constraints (sanctions, taboos, customs, traditions, and codes of conduct), and formal rules (constitutions, laws, property rights)* (North 1991, 97).

Human history is institutional history as people, in war and peace, have always created institutions to establish order and decrease uncertainty. Formal institutions are usually defined as "*rules and procedures that are created, communicated and enforced through channels which are widely accepted as official*". Informal institutions are "*socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated and enforced outside officially sanctioned channels*" (Helmke and Levitsky 2006, 5). Consequently, formal institutions are created in formal ways, typically through a legal act. They require an official apparatus that can impose compliance and possibly sanctions for actions that are in breach of their rules. In contrast, informal institutions come into existence through implementation over time. They are not characterized by a formal act of creation. Nevertheless, informal institutions can create as stable expectations and outcomes as their formal counterparts. Even though informal rules do not have a formal, institutionalized sanction apparatus, the community abiding to these unofficial rules can impose informal punishments. Despite the fact that historical

institutionalism proposes a broad definition of institutions, the systematic study of informal institutions and how they shape the political rules of the game has traditionally been neglected in mainstream comparative political science research (Helmke and Levitsky 2004).

Since its 'official' birth in the early 1990s, historical institutionalism has developed into a rich, diverse and vibrant research tradition, which is now well established in Comparative Politics, especially in the Area Studies of American and European Politics, as well as International Relations (Fioretos, Falleti, and Sheingate 2016, 21). Scholars have only started to apply it to the study of African Politics. Given the importance of informal institutions in African Politics, historical institutionalism's negligence of informal institutions has led to the late and only recent introduction of historical institutionalism into the analysis of African polities[46] (Erdmann, Elischer, and Stroh 2011). However, as long as one's analysis is deeply embedded in a combination of studying the dynamics of formal and informal institutions, it is warranted to adopt a theoretical approach rooted in historical institutionalism for a comparative analysis of Burundi's rebel political parties.

In summary, I embed my empirical analysis of the historical trajectories of rebel political parties in historical institutionalism. Three key premises of historical institutionalism inform this dissertation. First, there is the importance of time, history and process. This is a fruitful approach to advocate for a stronger historical analysis of rebel-to-party transformations by moving from taking a snapshot or outcome-based analysis of the transition

[46] This is surprising given that the study of African politics is filled with historical institutionalist arguments, such as the 'colonial legacy' (Crawford 1994; Mamdani 1996; Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2001) or the 'movement legacy' paradigms (Suttner 2004; Hydén 2011). The 'colonial legacy' paradigm studies the various political, social and economic legacies of different colonial systems. The 'movement legacy' paradigm posits that political parties in Africa, especially those emerging from anti-colonial liberation movements, have often more in common with social movements than with Western political parties.

process to integrating a historically embedded perspective. This helps unpack the far-reaching consequences of wartime institutions and their transformation of political power. Second, there is the importance of combining rational and constructivist approaches to understand the behavior and choices of political actors. This is important for the study of rebel political parties' pathways as their rational decisions are shaped by their underlying identities, worldviews and self-images. Third, there is the importance of studying formal and informal institutions. This permits an analysis of rebel political parties' formal and informal organizational arrangements and practices.

3.2.2. Ideas, Power & Institutions: Assessing the Pathways of Rebel Parties

My theoretical framework is organized around three key features, including the analysis of ideational, power and institutional politics of rebel political parties. These factors are inspired by the grand theories of International Relations (IR), with constructivism highlighting the importance of ideas, realism the importance of power and liberalism the importance of institutions (Reus-Smit and Snidal 2010; Carlsnaes, Risse, and Simmons 2012). Even though, the grand theories diverge in their basic assumptions (highlighting the importance of ideas, power and institutions respectively), they must be read as research paradigms, which are neither antagonistic nor incompatible. Instead, taken together, they provide important theoretical lenses to comprehend the world of International Relations.

The combination of constructivist, realist and liberal lenses reflects the eclectic premise of historical institutionalism. It constitutes a commitment to theoretical pluralism and its

possibilities to advance our knowledge on civil wars[47] in general and of rebel political parties in particular. The debate between realists, liberalists and constructivists began as a dispute between these three approaches, traditionally treated as alternative explanations. However, since the mid-1990, International Relations scholars have increasingly integrated these three approaches and largely agree that all of them provide important insights. This was in part due to the end of the Cold War, which none of the International Relations' meta-theoretical paradigms had been able to predict promoting an integration of these approaches (Baldwin 1995). Or as Fearon and Wendt put it:

> […] *that the rationalism-constructivism issue be seen not as a debate but a conversation* […] *Rather than a dialogue of the deaf in which each side tries to marginalize or subsume the other in the name of methodological fundamentalism, the challenge now should be to combine insights, cross boundaries and, if possible, synthesize specific arguments in hope of gaining more compelling answers and a better picture of reality* (Fearon and Wendt 2002, 68).

Ideational, power and institutional politics are constantly negotiated and fundamentally influence rebel political parties' behavior. They can and do overlap and interact. However, in the following sub-sections, I present these three factors separately for heuristic reasons. The interaction of these factors will be fleshed out during the empirical analysis. The development of rebel political parties is the product of these three inter-related elements, which provide us with in-depth insights into the origin and nature of rebel groups, their historical evolution and what kind of political parties they develop into. The particular permutation of these three factors at critical junctures feeds into subsequent developments and leaves lasting legacies. In

[47] In his review of the key literature on civil wars, Checkel finds that theoretical pluralism and systematic bridge building has been rather absent in this subfield of International Relations. Instead of integrating rationalistic and constructivist approaches, civil war scholars have often treated them as alternative approaches (Checkel 2012, 230ff).

the empirical analysis, I retrace these three factors throughout the historical trajectories of rebel political parties around key critical junctures.

Ideational, power and institutional politics have two key dimensions: an internal and an external dimension. The internal dimension describes rebel political parties' internal politics, as reflected in the vertical and horizontal relationships within rebel political parties (i.e. relationships among leaders as well as among leadership and rank-and-file members). The external dimension designates rebel political parties' external politics, as reflected in the interactions with domestic (i.e. relationships with competing groups, be it the incumbent government or other rebel political parties), and international actors (i.e. most notably through the involvement of diverse members of the international community in the conflict resolution and transition process).

3.2.2.1. Ideational Politics: Self-Understanding of Rebel Parties

Ideational-based approaches rooted in constructivist scholarship take the role of ideas seriously (Wendt 1992). Jacobs defines ideational theories as explanations, "*in which the content of a cognitive structure influences actors' responses to a choice situation and in which that cognitive structure is not wholly endogenous to objective, material features of the choice situation being explained*" (Jacobs 2015, 43). Ideational-based approaches draw our attention to the importance of ideational features, ranging from identity to ideological projects, as objects of investigation in their own right. Identity and ideology can be conceptualized as two different facets of ideational politics, with both invoking a resort to ideas to justify specific political actions. Civil war scholars have mobilized ideational approaches to better understand the onset, dynamics and termination of armed conflict, including the recruitment strategies of

rebel groups, power struggles within and among rebel groups as well as their political and violent practices during civil war (Wood 2008; Staniland 2015b; Kaufman 2006).

The premise of identity and ideology as political projects refers to the continuous creation of narratives around the 'self' and the 'other', rooted in rebel political parties' interpretations of the past and present and their visions for the future (Barker 2004, 96). Ideational politics shape rebel political parties from within (i.e. their ideational projects and visions) and from outside (i.e. their relationship with competing groups and international actors). As constructivist scholars remind us, the role of identity and ideology features is fluid and can change over time and space depending on diverse social and economic processes, strategic actions of elites or the masses (Kaufman 2006). In the following lines, I outline how the civil war and the rebel-to-party transformation literatures have tackled rebel political parties' identity and ideological projects and how ideational approaches can help us in better understanding the trajectories of rebel political parties.

Most civil war research has focused on a narrow definition of identity, most notably in terms of ethnic identity[48] (Collier and Hoeffler 2000; Sambanis 2001). However, ethnic identities are often overlapping with other identity features. In this vein, it is important to resort to intersectional theory, i.e the study of intersecting social and cultural categories and concurrent systems of oppression (Crenshaw 1989). Consequently, I follow Fearon and Laitin, who have put forward a broad definition of identity conceptualized as:

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[48] The term ethnic identity generally refers to a collectivity or a human aggregate of people, who share several characteristics or practices (such as physical appearance, kinship, language, customs, traditions, etc.). Definitions of ethnic identity can generally be distinguished into definitions based on objective or subjective criteria of belonging. For an overview on different types of definitions of ethnicity, please see (Fishman and García 2010, 33).

> […] *a social category* […] *that an individual member either takes a special pride in or views as more-or-less unchangeable and socially consequential attribute. Social categories are sets of people given a label (or labels) and distinguished by two main features: (1) rules of membership that decide who is and is not a member of the category; and (2) content, that is, sets of characteristics (such as beliefs, desires, moral commitments, and physical attributes) thought to be typical of members of that category, or behaviors expected or obliged of members in certain situations (roles)* (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 848).

Such a broad definition allows for the integration of a large number of identity attributes, including such social categories as ethnicity, kinship, caste, clan, tribe, region, religion, language or social class, as well as their various possible intersections.

In addition to identity politics, recent research has highlighted that the role of ideological politics has generally been neglected when trying to understand rebel groups (Wood 2003). A recent wave of scholarship has started to integrate the role of ideologies into the study of rebel groups' political and violent behavior (Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood 2014; Staniland 2015b). Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood circumscribe ideology as:

> […] *a more or less systematic set of ideas that includes the identification of a referent group (a class, ethnic or other social group), an enunciation of the grievances or challenges that the group confronts. The identification of objectives on behalf of that group (political change or defense against its threat) and a (perhaps vaguely defined) program of action* (Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood 2014, 215).

Staniland takes up the latter part of this definition to analyze diverse state-militia relationships and how they are shaped by ideological projects. He states that ideology refers to the "*boundaries of the polity and its relationship to the state*" (Staniland 2015b, 776). Ideological projects adopted by the state and its challengers constitute different programs of actions. The state and its challengers compete for the definition of the boundaries of the polity that these respective actors aim to construct or defend. Rebel groups' identity and ideological projects feed into their political culture, defined as "*the values, norms, practices, beliefs, and collective identity of insurgents*" (Wood 2003, 19).

Ideational-based approaches highlight the importance of shared collective ideas to explain how rebel groups overcome the collective action problem[49] (Olson 1965). Scholars have examined how recruits can effectively be mobilized to join high-risk collective action, such as armed insurgency, given that the costs can be extremely dangerous and benefits of participation are neither immediate nor obvious (Wood 2003; Weinstein 2006). Identity and ideological projects, resulting in shared norms and intra-group networks, provide a strong social basis for rebel recruitment to help explain how the free-rider syndrome can be effectively overcome. Denny and Walter argue that rebel movements are more likely to organize along ethnic lines because ethnic groups are more apt to be aggrieved (given the historical division of political power based on ethnicity in many countries), better able to mobilize (given the intimate social ties and networks among co-ethnics), and more likely to face difficult bargaining situations (given the indivisible nature of many political stakes treasured by ethnic groups) as compared to other groups (Denny and Walter 2014). Gubler and Selway illustrate how the power of ethnicity in mobilizing recruits can be reinforced by other salient social cleavages, such as a common territory, a different religious practice or social status, than other ethnic groups lacking such additional salient characteristics (Gubler and Selway 2012). Wood shows how deep-rooted feelings of oppression by large landowners reinforced the grievances among the *campesinos*, who experienced what they referred to as a "*pleasure in agency*", when they joined the FMLN in El Salvador, perceived by many of them

[49] In his book *The Logic of Collective Action*, Olson questions the common assumption, which could be found in most of the previous literature, that individuals with shared interests automatically join forces to accomplish these common interests. Instead, he argued that it is not rational for individuals to collaborate given that common interests constitute public goods. Consequently, everybody could benefit from the distribution of these public goods regardless of whether that individual helped to achieve these goods in the first place. This engenders a situation, in which it is more rational to 'free ride' in order to avoid the private costs inherent in the participation (Olson 1965).

as the "*right thing to do*" (Wood 2003, 237). Ideational scholars highlight that social incentives are preferable to economic incentives given that they attract "*investors*", who are deeply and long-term committed to the rebellion's cause, rather than "*consumers*", who are solely interested in private and short-term gains (Lichbach 1998). The recruitment strategies of rebel groups feed into the development of rebel political parties and their ability to access and maintain political power, especially if their recruitment strategies were able to primarily attract consumers through strong intra-group networks.

Shared identities and ideologies do not only afford the ideational resources to mobilize combatants for the armed struggle, they also provide blueprints for rebel groups' political and violent projects and practices. Identity and ideological projects are crucial for our understanding of how rebel groups' organize everyday life in their zones of influence. Many rebel groups develop an identity or ideological project, forged from the solidarity bonds established during years of political and armed struggle. Rebel groups can fight for the creation of a linguistic, religious or ethnically homogenized polity or a communist-inspired regime (or a possible combination of these projects depending on their compatibility). Identity and ideological projects proscribe norms and rules, which feed into rebel groups' institutional politics. For example, the NRM/A's leadership in Uganda was inspired by Marxist ideology and its ideological training by FRELIMO in Mozambique, based on a revolutionary liberation ideology and guerrilla mobilization of rural villagers (Kasfir 2005), including the establishment of elected popular committees at various levels (Tidemand 1994). Rebel groups in Latin America established different institutions reflective of their Maoist, Guevarist or Leninist underpinnings (Wood 2015, 456). The CNDD-FDD, with strong roots in Marxist student organizations, officially developed a more moderate ideology based on the

interpretation of class divisions than the FNL characterized by a more essentialist, ethnicist reading of the Burundian conflict. Goodwin argues that the ANC in South Africa did not engage in substantial violence against white civilians despite propitious conditions, a choice illustrative of its non-racial ideology (Goodwin 2007).

Rebel groups also develop a particular liberation ethos. The liberation ethos is a specific type of ideology (Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood 2014, 220). Many rebel movements portray and perceive themselves as the liberators of the population (or, at least, a part of the population), who had no choice than to take up arms during their struggle to free the population from injustice and oppression. From their perspective, the shared political and armed resistance grants them legitimacy and supremacy over other political actors that did not put their lives on the line for the liberation cause. In his analysis of ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe, Ranger has conceptualized this self-understanding as "*patriotic history*" (Ranger 2004), a narrative intended to claim exclusivity for the revolutionary liberation of the country. The narrative of a patriotic history constitutes an attempt to impose a hegemonic reading of the past based on a stark division between those on the side of the right, the 'patriotic' liberators of the nation, and those on the side of the wrong, the 'unpatriotic' enemies of the nation. In the context of the armed anti-colonial liberation movements in Southern Africa, there is now a growing literature on the construction of patriotic history and its institutionalization through politics and arts (Southall 2013; Melber 2015). This liberation ethos is often underpinned by a messianic belief in the right to rule the country. According to research conducted by Levitsky and Way on competitive authoritarianism, the intimate ties developed during armed struggle provide one of the most forceful bases for group cohesion and authoritarian rule in the post-

Cold War era, if rebel political parties manage to access executive or legislative state power (Levitsky and Way 2010).

Identity and ideological projects are also crucial for our understanding of how rebel groups' interact with other political contesters, which might compete over ideational politics, and how they are perceived by international actors, which might not engage equally with all rebel political parties during the peace process and post-accord period (Cunningham 2011, 17). This is, for example, reflected in the historical competition between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD. The long-term exclusion of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL from the negotiation process (as compared to the CNDD-FDD) can be partly explained through the perception of this group as a radical militant organization by the international community (Cunningham 2011, 149).

Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood outline a two-fold research agenda to study how ideology shapes rebel groups' behavior, namely a "*weak*" and a "*strong program*" (Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood 2014). This twin approach can be fruitfully adapted to the study of ideational politics of rebel political parties. First, they argue that rebel groups could use ideology as an instrumental tool to motivate and constrain their actions. This "*weak program*" analyzes the instrumental adoption of ideology. Rebel leaders often develop an ideology to help mobilize and recruit their militants as well as to legitimize their recourse to violence. Even though, rebel leaders might use ideology in an instrumental way, identity projects are often internalized by the groups' members and influence their actions. Second, they argue that rebel groups could employ ideology in a normative way. This "*strong program*" explores rebel groups' normative commitments reflected in their specific ideologies and social preferences. By comparing ideological rhetoric and rebel groups' concrete actions on the ground, it is possible to try to

distinguish between the weak and the strong programs. For example, the CNDD-FDD in Burundi officially claimed to have a moderate ideology based on the restoration of democracy. However, on the ground, the CNDD-FDD was implicated in many massacres of Tutsi populations during the war (HRW 1998).

In sum, rebel political parties pursue certain identity and ideological projects, which influence their self-understanding and their relationship to other political actors. Rebel political parties' identity (based on ethnicity, kinship, caste, tribe, region, religion, language or social class) and ideological projects shape their membership base and self-understanding expressed through narratives around the self and the other. Rebel political parties, especially those becoming ruling parties, develop a particular perception of political legitimacy (through the construction of a 'patriotic history'), which frames any challenges to their rule as illegitimate. The collective identities and ideologies of rebel political parties are not fixed, but evolve "*in response to the experiences of the conflict itself, namely previous rebellious actions, repression and the ongoing interpretation of events by the participants themselves*" (Wood 2003, 19).

3.2.2.2. Power Politics: Struggles Within and Between Rebel Parties

Power-based approaches rooted in realist and neo-realist scholarship turn our attention to the importance of political actors' power considerations and cost-benefit calculations as key driving forces for explaining civil war dynamics (Morgenthau 1948; Waltz 1979). Power-based approaches take as their fundamental assumption that the pursuit of political power constitutes the primary objective of all political action. Power-based approaches ascribe to a materialist logic of explanation, in which differences in political actors' choices are "*caused by variation in the objective, material parameters of actors' choice situations. Material causes*

may include differences across cases in the relative material payoffs of the alternatives" (Jacobs 2015, 44). The grand majority of civil war and rebel-to-party transformation researchers assume (implicitly or explicitly) that rebel groups and their respective political party successors are rational actors. They therefore adopt a rational choice perspective to explain the onset, evolution and termination of armed conflicts (Collier and Hoeffler 2000; Kalyvas 2008), including recruitment patterns of rebel groups, power struggles within and among rebel groups as well as their political and violent behavior (Popkin 1979; Cunningham 2011; Kalyvas 2006).

Power-based approaches trace power struggles, defined as situations, in which two or more individuals or groups compete for the control and domination in a particular sphere of influence. Power-based approaches analyze the balance of power within rebel political parties (i.e. internal power struggles between diverse sub-groups), and among rebel political parties (i.e. external power struggles between rebel political parties and their competitors). The way, in which these power struggles are resolved, ultimately determines how rebel political parties behave and organize. As such, power-based approaches dismiss the importance of ideas. Some scholars even go as far as arguing that ideational factors are totally irrelevant, suggesting that identity and ideological projects are exclusively used as a tactical strategy to camouflage power interests, thereby solely embracing what Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood call the "*weak program*" (Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood 2014). However, as outlined above, identity and ideological projects can develop their own dynamics, underlining the importance of combining ideational and power-based approaches. In the following lines, I sketch out how the civil war and the rebel-to-party transformation literatures have conceptualized the power politics of rebel political parties.

Unlike ideational-based approaches, power-based approaches highlight the importance of selective, material incentives for convincing individuals to join the high-risk enterprise of an armed insurgency (Weinstein 2006). Rebel leaders often promise immediate (e.g. protection from state oppression and violence), but especially future benefits (e.g. remedies of past injustices, economic benefits) to local populations for their participation in the rebellion. The future selective incentives are especially linked to the rebel groups' ultimate objective of capturing executive or legislative state power, presented as an important means to tackle and eradicate past injustices. However, in many civil wars, these economic benefits might only materialize in the long-term, underscoring the difficulty of rationalist approaches to explain how rebel groups overcome the free-rider problem. A possible answer derives from the 'greed versus grievance' debate spearheaded by Collier and Hoeffler. Accordingly, greedy rebels are able to exploit natural resources and their rents during civil war, such as minerals or diamonds, which would otherwise not be available to them (Collier and Hoeffler 2000). Given the criticism towards the rigid and dichotomous 'greed versus grievance' model, Collier and Hoeffler subsequently favored an approach based on the analysis of opportunity structures, but also conceded that rebel groups can be driven by political grievances and ideology (Collier and Hoeffler 2004). A realistic picture of rebel recruitment and its impacts on the membership of rebel political parties therefore lies in a combination of ideational and power-based approaches.

There exist several different propositions to conceptualize the internal power struggles of rebel political parties in the rebel-to-party transformation literature (De Zeeuw 2008; Ishiyama and Batta 2011). Most notably, Ishiyama and Batta distinguish between "*standpatterns*", defined as hard-liners pursuing outright military victory, "*liberals*",

designated as middle-liners open to certain, political compromises, and "*reformists*", defined as soft-liners embracing democratic reforms (Ishiyama and Batta 2011, 371).[50] De Zeeuw and his colleagues put the spotlight on the divisions between civilian and military members. While civilian members are generally considered to have a more political outlook, military members are considered to be more radical and violent in their approach to the organization of the armed resistance (De Zeeuw 2008). These typologies can help us in distinguishing between different types of sub-groups among rebel political parties. They are not only helpful in understanding when rebel groups decide to officially abandon the armed struggle and integrate multi-party politics, but also their engagement in politics and violence during and beyond armed conflict.

Overall, most existing approaches in the rebel-to-party transformation literature are characterized by an extremely rigid and static conceptualization of these internal power struggles, rooted in the traditional rationalist presumption of stable preferences. However, internal groupings are no monolithic blogs and are themselves the subject of divisions and cyclical quarrels. In this vein, the interests and behavior of internal wings can and do change (either through changes in the material or ideational environment of rebel political parties). Political actors' preferences must therefore be defined in space and time (Chinchilla 2004). The difficulty of distinguishing between hard-liners and soft-liners runs through much of the

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[50] The distinction between hard-liners and soft-liners builds on O'Donnell and Schmitter's work on transitions from authoritarian rule (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986), which was subsequently adopted by many civil war scholars (Spears 2000, 112). In its original definition, O'Donnell and Schmitter argue that every democratic transition begins with a split between hard-liners and soft-liners. "*Hard-liners*" (*duros*) are defined as "*those who, contrary to the consensus of this period of world history, believe that the perpetuation of authoritarian rule is possible and desirable*". "*Soft-liners*" (*blandos*), for their part, are characterized by their "*increasing awareness that the regime they helped to implant […] will have to make use […] of some degree or some form of electoral legitimation*" (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 16) in their attempts to stay in power. The hard-liner and soft-liner camps can include several different sub-groups, including opportunists and unconditionals.

literature on authoritarian and war-to-peace transitions. In response to O'Donnell and Schmitter's original distinction between hard-liners and soft-liners based on their positions towards continuous authoritarianism versus liberalization (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986), Przeworski argues that hard-liners and soft-liners may, but do not need to, have different interests. Instead, he argues that hard-liners and soft-liners should be distinguished by their perception of risk, thereby differentiating between risk-averse and risk-taking hard-liners and soft-liners (Przeworski 1991, 68). In this perspective, the positions of hard-liners and soft-liners can change depending on a constant evaluation of the costs and risks involved in pursing their given interests in practice (in the case of rebel groups' potential political predecessors the decision to take up arms, in the case of rebel groups the continued armed resistance versus peace negotiations and in the case of rebel political parties the continued use of violence versus political activities or a combination of both).

In addition to the internal power struggles of rebel political parties, there is also an external dimension to these power scrambles. In the civil war literature, the external power dimension has most notably been addressed through the conceptualization of ripeness, essential for our understanding of when conflict parties engage in peace negotiations and how sustainable these peace negotiations are. According to ripeness scholars, disputes cannot successfully be brought to an end until the involved actors have passed through certain stages of conflict (Zartman 1989; Haas 1990; Stedman 1991). Zartman, the theoretical pioneer of the ripeness metaphor, views it predominantly in relation to the military situation between the conflict parties, their perceptions of that situation and the availability of possible solutions. He compares ripe moments to time spans, in which the conflict parties perceive a situation in

which neither of them can win the conflict without suffering excessive losses. This so-called "*mutually hurting stalemate*" is:

> […] *based on the notion that when the parties find themselves locked in a conflict from which they cannot escalate to victory and this deadlock is painful to both of them (although not necessarily in equal degree or for the same reasons), they seek an alternative policy out* (Zartman 2001, 8).

Overall, Zartman identifies three key elements of ripeness, including a mutually hurting stalemate, an impending, recently experienced or avoided catastrophe as well as a potential alternative exit route. Consequently, the conflict dynamics must change in a way that transforms the antagonists' cost-benefit calculations.

Stedman challenges Zartman's implicit assumption that the conflict parties are unitary actors, who "*perceive or calculate the gains and losses of combat, negotiation, and surrender in terms of the government or insurgency as a whole*" (Stedman 1991). In this vein, Stedman highlights the importance of studying the internal politics of conflict actors and how they shape ripeness. This includes the emergence of different groups and the evolving balance of power between hard-liners and soft-liners.

The notion of ripeness can be complemented with insights provided by the spoiler debate (Stedman 1997; Zahar 2006). Stedman defines "*spoilers*" as "*leaders and parties who believe that peace emerging from negotiations threatens their power, worldview, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it*" (Stedman 1997, 5). Stedman distinguishes between limited, greedy and total spoilers. While limited and greedy spoilers can be induced or socialized to join a peace process, total spoilers permanently threaten the peace process. Zahar criticizes Stedman's underlying assumption that it is solely opponents to peace, who resort to violence. Instead, she argues that the resort to violence constitutes just "*one of many strategies available to actors who seek to undermine a peace process as well as to those*

seeking to join in" (Zahar 2006, 33). Drawing on Hirschman's classic exist-voice-loyalty framework (Hirschman 1970), she illustrates how political violence can be used as an expression of voice towards the envisioned peace negotiations as well as a manifestation of exit from these negotiations (Zahar 2006).

Cunningham extends the spoiler debate through a veto player approach by arguing that peace processes can be 'spoiled' in multi-party conflicts at a variety of different stages, ranging from the negotiation to the post-agreement phase. Veto players are broadly defined as actors, who have the incentive and the capability to block an end to the war. They can include internal groups and external interveners. Cunningham identifies three necessary and sufficient conditions for a party to be characterized as a veto player, including divergent preferences, group cohesion and the capacity of unilaterally continuing the warfare.

> *Since veto players can block peace before, during, or after negotiations, it is important that peace processes be designed in ways that increase the odds that all these actors can find an agreement they prefer to continued fighting* (Cunningham 2011, 209).

These insights can be fruitfully adapted to the study of rebel political parties' trajectories and their resort to violence. Rebel political parties often maintain private militias, which can be conceptualized as spoilers or veto players, who might be capable of threatening and derailing the peace process. The literature on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P)[51] distinguishes between the willingness (i.e. the political will of the United Nations Security Council) and the capacity (i.e. the political, military and economic means) of the international community to prevent and, potentially, intervene in processes of mass atrocities (Bellamy

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[51] The principle of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) constitutes a global commitment, endorsed by the United Nations member states during the 2005 World Summit, to prevent genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The R2P principle was formulized and popularized by the *International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty* (ICISS), organized under the auspices of the Canadian government, which published its final report in 2001.

2013). Drawing on the R2P scholarship, it is helpful to distinguish between rebel political parties' capacity to resort to violence and their actual willingness to employ this capacity as a political tool.

In sum, rebel political parties engage in extensive internal and external power struggles. Internal power struggles revolve around risk-averse and risk-taking hard-liners versus soft-liners as well as civilian versus military members. The evolving balance of power among risk-averse and risk-taking hard-liners and soft-liners and their perceptions of the use of violence as an appropriate political tool ultimately determines how rebel political parties engage in politics and violence. The internal power struggles are complemented by external power struggles, depending on the number of competitors, spoilers and veto players participating in armed conflicts and peace processes. The higher the number of veto players in peace processes, the higher the chances that the peace process is derailed (depending on the capacity and willingness of veto players to employ violence for political ends).

3.2.2.3. Institutional Politics: Organizational Structures of Rebel Parties

Institutional approaches rooted in liberal scholarship take the role of institutions seriously (Keohane 1988). Institutional approaches put the focus on the independent effect that institutional design can have on political actors' behavior in civil wars and post-accord politics. Civil war and conflict resolution scholars have mobilized institutional approaches to study the diverse rebel governance structures of armed insurgents and the design of appropriate institutional arrangements for implementing lasting peace (Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015; Hartzell and Hoddie 2003; Jarstad and Sisk 2008).

The emerging research field on rebel governance has eloquently illustrated that rebel groups vary tremendously in the extent to which they build institutions and preserve political

order (Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015). Institutional approaches can assist us in identifying the long-term consequences of rebel groups' institutional politics developed during war and its impact on the post-accord period. As Mampilly writes:

> […] *local structures and practices developed during conflict, including those developed by insurgents, are likely to persist even after the culmination of fighting. Rebels transitioning from camouflage-wearing guerrilla fighters to suited bureaucrats are unlikely to simply abandon the governance practices developed during times of war* (Mampilly 2011, 265).

Institutional politics shape rebel political parties from within (i.e. through internal institutions regulating relationships among group members) and from outside (i.e. through external institutions regulating relationships with competing groups and the civilian population as well as through the institutional design of the domestic political order that rebel political parties operate in). As outlined in the previous section devoted to historical institutionalism, I follow North and conceive of institutions in a broad manner, namely that institutions constitute "*humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction*" (North 1990, 3). Institutional politics of rebel political parties include formal and informal institutions, ranging from formal organizational structures to informal organizational culture, which are shaped by rebel political parties' identity and power politics. In the following lines, I outline how the civil war and rebel-to-party transformations literatures have addressed rebel groups' institutional politics.

Scholars have theorized different ways to distinguish between the organizational forms that armed groups might adopt. Most commonly, academics distinguish between centralized (hierarchical, infrastructural) versus decentralized (networked or cellular) movements (Johnston 2008; Jordan 2009; Jones 2013). Centralized organizations are considered to be better equipped to coordinate the behavior of group members and monitor the discipline of

foot soldiers (Johnston 2008). Scholars have advanced different arguments on the likelihood of centralized versus decentralized rebel movements to transform into political parties. Centralized movements are theorized to have the necessary group coherence to transform into political parties. However, the hierarchical structures of centralized movements can make it very hard to turn these organizations into actors willing to accept the new democratic rules of the game. Decentralized movements are generally considered to lack the necessary internal cohesion to transform themselves into political parties. However, if they are able to undertake the transformation process, their decentralized nature is considered to make it easier for them to integrate the new rules of the game (De Zeeuw 2008; Sindre 2014).

Rebel groups also vary in the division of labor between political and military structures. Scholars have argued that rebel political parties with roots in political parent organizations are more easily converted into democratic political actors than rebel political parties without such roots (Manning and Smith 2016). The organizational make-up of rebel groups ranges from completely separated organizations (such as Sinn Féin and IRA in Northern Ireland), to separate political and military structures (such as the SPLM/A in South Sudan) and integrated politico-military structures within the same organization (such as FMLN in El Salvador). Rebel groups with separate political and military wings are generally considered to be less violent in their engagement with civilians and more prone to political negotiations than rebel groups with dominant military wings (Stanton 2013). This feature can be assessed through proxies, such as the degree of violence against civilians and rebel groups' compliance with international law. In addition, rebel groups with political wings are believed to set up explicit political organizational structures, which resemble political party structures (Lyons 2005). However, this varies tremendously from one organization to the other and

within one organization over time. It is therefore only through rigorous historical case studies that we can define this dimension and its evolution over time.

In addition to the organizational form of armed movements, it is also important to analyze the concrete formal and informal practices of armed movements, as reflected in leadership selection processes, decision-making processes and consultation procedures of local populations. Rebel groups often adopt their own internal regulations, inscribed in statutes, pamphlets, manifests, etc. These internal regulations should be compared with the actual practice of rebel groups, which may or may not correspond to formal and informal rules. For example, if the rebel group was primarily characterized by authoritarian leadership reversals, this practice is likely to shape post-accord politics. In contrast, if the rebel group already institutionalized democratic types of leadership selection during its armed resistance, this could facilitate its acceptance of new democratic rules in the post-accord period. In addition, leading back to identity and power politics, rebel groups develop their own institutional culture. Armed movements need to display secrecy, suspicion, discipline and hierarchy if they want to be able to effectively challenge an authoritarian regime. These deep-rooted institutional practices are likely to shape the trajectories of rebel political parties. The institution of war fundamentally transforms how members of rebel groups see and interpret the world; and by extension how they perceive the appropriate way of engaging in politics and violence. Civil war scholars have studied how protracted warfare leads to "*cultures of violence*" (Kalyvas 2006, 55-58), in which combatants and civilians are brutalized. This brutalization approach advances that the most violent individuals are the most likely to rise to positions of power (Kalyvas 2006, 57). If these individuals are able to maintain significant,

influential roles in rebel political parties, political violence is likely to continue to be perceived as a legitimate strategy to confront political enemies.

Given that civil wars divide territorial sovereignty, they often restrict the state's ability to enforce rules and provide public goods. In lieu of the state, armed movements (along with a host of other non-state actors) frequently fill this role as the primary providers of physical security and welfare services to civilian populations (Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015). In addition, some rebel groups organize extensive consultation procedures for the civilian populations (at times even through democratic practices) under their control while others do not engage in consulting the need of the populace (Kasfir 2005). Some rebel groups develop complex parallel administration structures and provide a variety of social services to civilian populations, including security, health, education, welfare and justice services. This has led some scholars to refer to them as states-in-waiting, embryonic states or even *de facto* states (McColl 1969; Pegg 1998). Conversely, other movements are loosely organized and provide few governmental services to local populations. In these cases, armed movements might only provide a limited set of services, such as security or tax collection. There might also be spatial variations and restrictions to rebel governance depending on rebel groups' territorial penetration and control, with movements governing densely populated urban areas without engaging smaller rural areas (or vice versa) (Förster 2015).

Rebel political parties are also shaped by the institutional design of the civil war era and the post-accord political order. Some rebel groups have political structures, which are legally recognized and allow them to partake in politics. Previous research has shown that around 17 percent of rebel groups were permitted to retain a legally recognized political wing by the opposing government (Jo 2015, 95; Cunningham, Gleditsch, and Salehyan 2013). In

addition, the specific electoral rules adopted after the formal end of hostilities are likely to have an important impact on the engagement of rebel political parties in politics and violence. Scholars have highlighted that rebel groups need to perceive the electoral rules of the transition period as beneficial to accept any political settlement (Allison 2006). In extension, the perception of the electoral rules and procedures is also likely to influence rebel political parties' engagement in political violence. Policy-makers have underlined that the electoral design should oblige rebel political parties to gather support from constituencies that do not constitute their core base inherited from the armed struggle. Building on the literature on electoral systems, certain institutional rules are more favorable to the establishment of new parties than others (Lijphart 1979, 500-502). In presidential elections, rebel political parties are more likely to succeed in majority run-off systems than in systems based on plurality voting. In contrast, in parliamentary elections, new parties are expected to emerge more easily in systems with proportional representation than in systems with majoritarian representation (Allison 2006, 152).

In sum, rebel group's potential political predecessors, rebel groups and their political party successors engage in extensive institution building. Internally, institutional politics leave long-lasting consequences for the organization and behavior of rebel political parties, be it during and after civil war. Centralized organizations are considered to provide the necessary internal group cohesion to transform into political parties. However, they are less likely to adopt democratic practices. Decentralized organizations are considered to lack the necessary internal group cohesion to transform into political parties. However, they are more likely to adopt democratic practices. Organizations with separate political and military wings are considered to have the political institutions to be more willing to adopt democratic practices.

Organizations with integrated politico-military structures are considered to be more military in their political outlook. Rebel groups, who were primarily characterized by authoritarian leadership reversals, are likely to continue this practice in the post-accord period. With regard to the external institutional design of the post-accord political order, rebel groups need to perceive the electoral rules as advantageous to decide to formally transform into political parties. In presidential elections, rebel political parties are more likely to succeed in majority run-off systems than in systems based on plurality voting. In parliamentary elections, rebel political parties are expected to emerge more easily in systems with proportional representation than in systems with majoritarian representation.

Analytical category	Explanation of analytical category	Implications of analytical category for rebel political parties
Ideational politics	Self-understanding	- Identity and ideological politics ➢ Rebel political parties' identity (based on ethnicity, kinship, caste, tribe, region, religion, language or social class) and ideological projects shape their membership base and self-understanding expressed through narratives around the 'self' and the 'other'. - Liberation ethos and messianism ➢ Rebel political parties develop a particular perception of political legitimacy (through the construction of a 'patriotic history')
Power politics	Power struggles	- Internal cleavages revolving around risk-averse vs. risk-taking hard-liners and soft-liners as well as civilian vs. military members ➢ The evolving balance of power among these internal cleavages and their respective perceptions of the risks and benefits of the use of violence as an appropriate political tool determines how rebel political parties engage in politics and violence. - Spoilers vs. veto players ➢ The higher the number of veto players in peace processes, the higher the chances that the peace process is derailed (depending on the capacity and willingness of veto players to use violence).
Institutional politics	Organizational structures	- Rebel political parties with roots in political parent organizations vs. rebel political parties without such roots ➢ Rebel political parties with roots in political parent organizations are considered to be more likely to accept the democratic rules of the game. - Centralized (hierarchical or infrastructural) vs. decentralized (networked or cellular) ➢ Centralized organizations are considered to provide the necessary internal group cohesion to transform into political parties. However, they are less likely to adopt democratic practices.

	➢ Decentralized organizations are considered to lack the necessary internal group cohesion to transform into political parties. However, they are more likely to adopt democratic practices. - Formal vs. informal institutional culture ➢ Organizations with separate political and military wings are considered to have the political institutions to be more willing to adopt democratic practices. ➢ Organizations with integrated politico-military structures are considered to be more military in their political outlook. ➢ Rebel groups, who were primarily characterized by authoritarian leadership reversals, are likely to continue this practice in the post-accord period. - Majoritarian vs. proportional electoral rule ➢ Rebel groups need to perceive the electoral rules as advantageous to decide to formally transform into political parties. ➢ In presidential elections, rebel political parties are more likely to succeed in majority run-off systems than in systems based on plurality voting. ➢ In parliamentary elections, rebel political parties are expected to emerge more easily in systems with proportional representation than in systems with majoritarian representation.

Table 3: Theoretical Framework for Analyzing Rebel Parties' Historical Trajectories

3.2.3. 'Historical Process Analysis': Rebel Parties at Critical Junctures

In the empirical analysis, this dissertation aims to trace the ideational, power and institutional politics of rebel political parties, conceptualized as "*hybrid politico-military organizations*" (Berti 2013), throughout their historical trajectories in order to study the continuities and changes in their engagement in politics and violence over time. Rebel political parties' trajectories can best be analyzed through systematic historical process tracing[52] around critical junctures. "*Systematic historical process analysis*" (Hall 2006) or "*process tracing*"[53] (Bennett and Checkel 2015), rooted in historical institutionalism, denotes "*a research procedure intended to explore the processes by which initial conditions are translated into outcomes*" (George and McKeown 1985, 35). It consists of historical case studies that reconstruct a sequence of events to identify the historical dynamics at play (Collier and Collier 1991).

Systemic historical process tracing usually employs a combination of induction and deduction. "*It is important that the investigator be open to all kinds of possible explanations and willing to follow the evidence wherever it leads*" (Bennett and Checkel 2015, 17). This approach has fundamentally shaped this dissertation project. The conceptual and theoretical framework has evolved throughout the research project with primary and secondary sources continuously informing the analytical lenses employed. Systemic historical process tracing can

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[52] Lyall discusses the important insights that systematic historical process tracing can advance for the study of civil war dynamics. He shows that surprisingly few articles in the top journals of political science rely on process tracing to discuss civil war onset, dynamics and resolution (Lyall 2014). He discusses Wood's work on insurgent collective action in El Salvador as an illustration for best practices of process tracing in civil war studies (Wood 2003).

[53] The term 'process tracing' was coined in the field of cognitive psychology in the United States during the late 1960s and early 1970s referring to "*techniques for examining intermediate steps in cognitive mental processes to understand better the heuristics through which humans make decisions*" (Bennett and Checkel 2015, 5). At the end of the 1970s, George introduced the term to political science referring to the systematic use of evidence from within case studies to make inferences about historically-embedded explanations (George 1979).

be used for positivist and interpretivist analyses, which permits the investigator to explore not only the causal '*what*', but also the constitutive '*how*' (Vennesson 2008).

I position my own work in an ontological, epistemological and methodological middle ground, "*where patterns of meaningful action may be abstracted away from local contexts in the form of social mechanisms that can travel across cases*" (Pouliot 2015, 238). As I heard testimonies about the 2010 elections and witnessed the 2015 elections first hand, I looked for analytical concepts that could capture the continuation of violence and its escalation around elections in post-accord countries. Accordingly, the "*no peace, no war*" (Marchal 2002; Richards 2005; Debos 2013) and the "*armed politics*" paradigms (Staniland 2015a) as well as the concept of hybridity (Mac Ginty 2011; Berti 2013) emerged as a key analytical tools during my field research to study and understand the behavior of rebel political parties' over time and how they engage in politics and violence during and beyond civil war.

A "*critical juncture*"[54] can be defined as a "*period of significant change, which typically occurs in distinct ways in different* […] *units of analysis and which is hypothesized to produce distinct legacies*" (Collier and Collier 1991, 29). Critical junctures are the point of departure for path-dependent processes. Pierson writes: "*Junctures are 'critical' because they place institutional arrangements on paths or trajectories, which are then difficult to alter*" (Pierson 2004, 135). Critical junctures constitute windows of opportunities, during which change with enduring consequences is possible.

> […] *The distinct feature of a historical juncture with the potential to be critical is the loosening of the constraints of structure to allow for agency or contingency to shape divergence from the past, or divergence across cases* (Soifer 2012, 1573).

[54] The literature on historical institutionalism variously refers to critical junctures as key moments of decision, critical periods, formative moments, turning points, crises or unsettled times.

During critical junctures, political actors have a tremendous power of agency to act upon these openings to induce change. Despite the fact that critical junctures contain the possibility of change, they are not necessarily followed by change. However, even though historical institutionalists and path-dependent researchers have underlined the importance of critical junctures, the analysis of these key moments as "*missed opportunities*", which do not result in change but rather continuity, remain understudied (Capoccia and Keleman 2007; Clark and Zahar 2015).

A key contribution of this dissertation lies in an in-depth analysis of critical junctures, during which continuities and/or changes in the political and violent behavior of rebel political parties are induced. Critical junctures constitute key decision moments to study the behavior, organization and practice of rebel political parties and how they evolve and change over time. Indeed, during these periods, rebel political parties undergo important developments, which have lasting impacts on their political and violent behavior. In other words, rebel political parties' choices, reflected in ideational, power and institutional realignments and arrangements at critical junctures, are sticky and can become permanently locked in.

In the empirical analysis, I build the systematic historical process tracing analysis of rebel political parties around key critical junctures across 'pre-war', 'war' and 'post-war' periods. The inclusion of critical junctures from these different periods stems from my conceptual embeddedness in the "*no peace, no war*" (Marchal 2002; Richards 2005; Debos 2013) and the "*armed politics*" paradigms (Staniland 2015a). Even though scholars might identify a variety of critical junctures during the 'pre-war', 'war' and 'post-war periods, I have decided to concentrate on just a few of these key decision moments (due to feasibility constraints). Future research might expand on the analysis of additional critical junctures.

During the 'pre-war' period, I identify the decision of rebel political parties to pick up the gun as a critical juncture, namely what I refer to as critical foundational moments. During the 'war' period, I analyze the various diplomatic initiatives, during which rebel groups negotiate if and how to formally renounce the armed struggle, namely what I refer to as critical peace negotiation moments. During the 'post-war' period, I discuss the post-accord electoral periods and the ways in which rebel political parties participate in elections, namely what I refer to as critical electoral moments. The critical foundational, peace negotiation and electoral decision moments provide important insights into the internal and external dynamics of rebel political parties' ideational, power and institutional politics.

In the empirical analysis, I investigate the extent to which each critical juncture set up patterns, which shaped the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD's subsequent developments. In particular, I analyze to what extent each critical juncture induced continuities and/or changes to the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD's ideational, power and institutional politics. The tracing will be undertaken through the analysis of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's and the CNDD-FDD's internal documents, discourses and interview excerpts coupled with the analysis of secondary sources, especially from other Burundi scholars as well as national and international watchdogs, such as the Association for the Protection of Human Rights and Incarcerated Persons (APRODH), International Crisis Group (ICG) or Human Rights Watch (HRW), to compare discourse and practice of rebel political parties.

	PRE-WAR PERIOD	WAR-PERIOD	POST-WAR PERIOD
Type of actor	**Rebel groups' potential political predecessors**	**Rebel groups**	**Rebel groups' political party successors**
Critical junctures	- Critical foundational moments (i.e. decision of political parent organization to pick up arms and start rebel recruitment)	- Critical peace negotiation moments (i.e. negotiations around renouncement of armed struggle and their impact on the internal and external dynamics of rebel political parties' ideational, power and institutional politics)	- Critical electoral moments (i.e. participation of rebel political parties' in elections and their impact on the internal and external dynamics of rebel political parties' ideational, power and institutional politics)

Table 4: Rebel Parties at Critical Junctures

3.3. Conceptual & Theoretical Recap

This chapter outlined my conceptual and theoretical framework. First, I presented my overall conceptual framework of studying rebel political parties as "*hybrid politico-military movements*" (Berti 2013), an approach embedded in the "*no peace, no war*" (Marchal 2002; Richards 2005; Debos 2013) and the "*armed politics*" paradigms (Staniland 2015a). These analytical perspectives posit that civil wars do not only destroy political institutions, but also reshape political orders in new ways, which have lasting impacts on post-accord politics. They scrutinize the traditional categorical distinction between war and peace as well as between rebel group and political party, which has resulted in a false dichotomy, in which war and violence are framed as a radical break from the normal order of things. In addition, political and violent competition of the 'pre-war' and 'war' period is often carried over into the 'post-war' electoral arena in countries emerging from conflict, where former rebel groups formally integrate post-accord party politics. We therefore need to integrate the study of rebel political parties in a systematic historical analysis by focusing on processes and trajectories rather than 'outcomes'.

Second, I outlined my theoretical framework rooted in Comparative Politics' historical institutionalism and International Relations' constructivist, realist and liberal approaches. I proposed to trace the continuities and changes of rebel political parties' ideational, power and institutional politics through a "*systematic historical process analysis*" (Hall 2006) at critical junctures before, during and after civil war. Overall, I identified three types of critical junctures, including critical foundational, peace negotiation and electoral moments. This approach shifts our analyses of rebel-to-party transformations from an outcome-oriented to a process-oriented analysis.

Chapter IV: Delineating the 'Field' – Research Design & Methodology

There are no facts, only interpretations."
(Friedrich Nietzsche, Notebooks, 1880)

In the summer of 2014, my research assistant and I organized interviews and focus groups with several former combatants from the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL in the hillsides of Burundi. In the run-up to the 2015 elections, the political climate was tense and political violence on the rise. It was not always easy to openly talk with ex-combatants about the history of the civil war and current political developments in the country. Indeed, gaining the trust of our informants and protecting their security became the most important challenges.

At the time, the CNDD-FDD was being accused of arming and training several of its youth members near Kiliba-Ondes in South Kivu in the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo. Burundian civil society members suspected the ruling party of wanting to establish its own private militia[55], which could potentially be used for political intimidation purposes during the 2015 elections. Pierre Claver Mponimpa, a renowned local human rights advocate and head of the Association for the Protection of Human Rights and Incarcerated Persons (APRODH), became one of the leading figures of the criticism of the ruling party. He was in May and held until September 2014 for denouncing the CNDD-FDD's militarization on private radio before being released from prison for medical reasons.

During a focus group with female ex-combatants, who are current CNDD-FDD party members, we talked about the accusations that the ruling party was arming parts of its youth movement on Congolese soil. One informant told us that she was not officially allowed to talk about this issue:

> […] *because this would mean that I would betray the plan of the party* […] *So here before you, I admit that if they knew what I am about to tell you, my destiny would be prison or maybe even death* (Interview with CNDD-FDD party member, Bubanza, 18 June 2014).

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[55] These allegations were subsequently confirmed by the UN Group of Experts on the DRC (UNExperts 2012).

Her eyes darkened and her voice trembled. Nevertheless, despite the risk, she decided to confide in us and confirmed that she knew several CNDD-FDD members who had left Burundi for Eastern DRC:

> *Our former comrades* […]*, we cannot denounce them publicly out of fear of being assassinated. But we know that they have left for the Kivus.* […] *To do what, we are not sure* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bubanza, 18 June 2014).

The rumor mill alleged that this was a continuation of the so-called "*Safisha*" (Kiswahili for 'to cleanse') operation, which had been denounced by local human rights activists in the aftermath of the 2010 elections to eliminate government opponents, especially members of the FNL. Our informant had thought about calling the local private media or human rights organizations, but in the end decided not to for fear of repercussions. However, when we approached her for an interview, she decided to share her knowledge anonymously with us. She hoped that she could make a small contribution, so that people would know what was happening and could better understand current political developments in her home country. Throughout the entire interview, she frequently stood up and nervously monitored the surroundings to ensure that nobody was listening to us. As a ruling party member, her revelations were her own, private act of resistance against the secretive policy and the continuing human rights abuses of the CNDD-FDD regime.

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This example illustrates several fundamental challenges that we confront during our fieldwork, most importantly gaining trust, retaining confidentiality as well as ensuring the security of our

informants and of our collected data. Indeed, conducting research in politically sensitive[56] and impoverished environments, such as Burundi, is no easy task and confronts the researcher with an array of diverse methodological, ethical and emotional challenges. The researcher's approach to these challenges ultimately shapes the research encounter, the type of information collected as well as the subsequent interpretation of the findings. It is therefore imperative to openly discuss these challenges and their potential impact. This self-reflective exercise can help in rendering qualitative research more transparent (Moravcsik 2014; Parkinson and Wood 2015; Cramer 2015) in light of continuing criticism from quantitative scholars, who often criticize qualitative analyses for lacking methodological rigor and transparency.

The grand majority of reflexive analyses on the challenges of conducting safe and sound field research have been developed in the fields of history, anthropology and sociology (Malinowski 1967; Barley 1982 [2000]; Geertz 1988). As Lecocq reminds us:

> *No account of fieldwork is complete without an evaluation of one's position in the field, remarks about method of observation, informants, power relations between self and subject, implications of one's actions in the field and so* (Lecocq 2002, 281).

It is only recently that scholars in political science have started to openly discuss and reveal the challenges that they face during their research. This has led to a growing body of literature on the methodological and ethical challenges in politically sensitive environments (Wood 2006a; Sriram et al. 2009; De Bruijin and Merolla 2010; Fujii 2010; Cramer, Hammon, and Pottier 2011; Thomson, Ansoms, and Murison 2013).

In this chapter, I present my methodology and research design. I proceed in four main steps. In the first section, I discuss the specific case selection of Burundi, including the choice

[56] This does not mean that field research in less sensitive settings, such as established democracies, does not entail its own set of challenges. For an excellent discussion, please see (Tomkinson 2015).

of tracing and comparing the historical pathways of the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. In the second section, I outline the qualitative research methods that I employed during my research. I specifically discuss how I continuously adapted my research design to the changing context in the field by relying on a dynamic, multi-method approach. In the third section, I describe how I came to adopt ethnography-inspired approaches, such as immersion and participant observation, as complementary devices for my research strategy. The final section discusses the major methodological and ethical challenges which I encountered during my research, by discussing diverse themes related to recruitment, informed consent, security of informants and collaborators, as well as reciprocity.

4.1. Selecting the 'Field': Introduction of Case Study

The first section of this methodology chapter discusses the specific case selection of Burundi. This includes a short exploration of the role of case studies in political science through a discussion of their benefits and pitfalls as well as a layout of the paired comparison based on the most-similar cases design employed for the selection of the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL as within-case studies.

4.1.1. Burundi as Peacebuilding 'Laboratory': An Illustrative Crucial Case

As mentioned in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, Burundi was long hailed as a major "*success story*" (Curtis 2013; Boutellis 2015, 737; Vandeginste 2015, 625; Jobbins and Ahitungiye 2016) of international liberal peacebuilding by academics and practitioners alike. For years, the United Nations cited Burundi as an exemplary model for the international and regional communities' efforts to foster peace and democratization. Burundi received extraordinary attention from regional and international actors (when compared to its

geopolitical position and perceived importance) during and after the country's civil war (UNNews 2013). The country was often called "*a 'laboratory' of international conflict resolution techniques and ideas, the recipient of the latest donor approaches to peace*" (Curtis 2013, 74). Burundi, together with Sierra Leone, was among the first countries to be placed on the agenda of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PCB). This subsidiary organ of the UN Security Council and the General Assembly was established to help consolidate peace and democracy in selected 'post-conflict' countries.[57] These countries were supposed to serve as role models to develop best practices for successful international liberal peacebuilding (Interview with staff member of UN Peacebuilding Support Office, New York, 25 January 2014).

However, the fervor for Burundi's peace and democratization process long neglected the fact that the country's ruling party, the CNDD-FDD took an authoritarian turn since the dawn of its accession to power in 2005, as reflected in the continuation of many authoritarian and violent practices inherited from the armed struggle. Similar dynamics can be observed within the FNL after it officially renounced the armed struggle in 2009. This makes Burundi an excellent illustrative crucial case study for scrutinizing some of the fundamental assumptions of the emerging research program on rebel-to-party transformations.

[57] The UN Security Council and the General Assembly formally established the PCB in December 2005, following recommendations of the outgoing Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The Commission emerged as a key peacebuilding tool following the 2005 World Summit in order to strengthen the UN's engagement in peacebuilding and peace consolidation. It formally started its work in June 2006. Between 2007 and 2013, the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) allocated around $USD 50 million to help consolidate peace and democracy in Burundi. This included a one-million-dollar-project, entitled "*Support to the Dialogue between the Burundian government and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and to the Facilitation process/Political Directorate*". Parts of this project supported the transformation process of the FNL (Interview with Arthur Boutellis, former BINUB staff member, by phone, 7 October 2014).

"*Illustrative case studies*" have as their objective to give the reader a "*feel*" for a theoretical framework through its application to at least one relevant case (Levy 2008, 6). "*Crucial case studies*" can be useful in evaluating theoretical propositions to trace specific analytical arguments in a case considered as a vital example of a given phenomenon (Gerring 2007, 231f). In this dissertation, I compare and retrace the historical trajectories of the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL to analyze if the key conceptual and theoretical propositions developed in the previous chapter can help us in better understanding the Burundian case as well as other countries emerging from civil war. If a long-hailed success story, such as Burundi, experiences major difficulties in its political transition and rebel-to-party transformation process, it is important for researchers and practitioners alike to understand this case in-depth. This can provide crucial insights into other comparable cases, such as South Sudan or Nepal.

4.1.2. Role of Comparative Case Studies: Benefits & Pitfalls

In Political Science, a case denotes "*a phenomenon, or an event, chosen, conceptualized and analyzed empirically as a manifestation of a broader class of phenomena or events*" (Levy 2008, 12). As outlined in Chapter II, the political integration of former rebel groups into post-accord multi-party politics, including the formal transformation of rebel groups into political parties, has emerged as a key peacebuilding tool in peace accords negotiated after the end of the Cold War. There are currently around 45 cases of former rebels groups that have formally transformed into political parties around the globe (Söderström 2014).

Case studies occupy a contentious role in political science research (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994; Vennesson 2008, 226). Even though the discipline continues to produce a high amount of case studies, small-n studies are often held in low regard given their limits in

providing generalizable insights. While large-N studies aim to uncover correlational patterns in a large amount of cases through a random selection of these cases, small-n studies examine a small number of cases through an in-depth analysis of deliberately chosen cases. Despite the limited scope of case studies, the in-depth study of one or several cases aims to "*elucidate features of a larger class of similar phenomena*" (Gerring 2004, 341).

Case studies entail a number of both benefits and pitfalls. They have the fundamental advantage of developing a detailed understanding of a case in question and generally provide thick, rich and contextual details about a subject at hand. They can provide a thorough exploration of crucial historical mechanisms and unpack fundamental dynamics at play, be it of a specific case of interest or a subject previously discovered through large-N studies (Russett 1993; Humphreys 2005). They can also focus on outliers thereby provoking new, innovative lines of thinking or uncover neglected explanations (Walt 1985).

Overall, case studies face challenges related to methodological rigor, researcher subjectivity and external validity. The selection of cases usually occurs in a non-random way rendering their representativeness problematic. The findings collected cannot necessarily be generalized to the wider population. Scholars have thus advocated for the inclusion of non-complying cases in order to avoid a potential bias in favor of the dynamics under study. I try to remedy this potential bias through the analysis and comparison of the two major rebel group-*cum*-political parties in Burundi, namely the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, whose selection logic I outline in the next section.

4.1.3. Case Selection: Small-N Study Based on Most-Similar Cases Design

The careful and adequate selection of case studies constitutes the most important challenge for single case studies and comparative qualitative analysis. The literature on the comparative

method offers several different approaches to the selection of cases. Traditionally, building on research models first laid out by the British philosopher John Stuart Mill (Mill 2002 [1843]), scholars have distinguished between the most-similar and the most-different cases design (Przeworski and Teune 1970; Dogan and Pelassy 1981; George and Bennett 2004). While the most-similar cases design compares similar cases with diverging outcomes, the most-different cases design features different cases with similar outcomes.

This dissertation employs a paired comparison based on the most-similar cases design. Paired comparisons represent a "*middle ground*" between single cases studies and large-N studies (Tarrow 2010). Building on process-tracing around critical junctures (Bennett and Checkel 2015), I undertake an in-depth comparison of the historical trajectories of the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL to flesh out key internal and external dynamics and processes at play. The CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL represent excellent cases for comparison because they share a number of theoretically relevant characteristics. They are both rebel groups rooted in social movements or political parties, which launched a political and ultimately violent struggle against the Burundian state. Each group challenged the authority of the state by trying to seize territory and by attempting to capture the capital (PALIPEHUTU-FNL, 1980-2009; CNDD-FDD, 1994-2003). Both signed peace accords, which authorized their formal transformation into political parties as well as their integration into the state institutions and the national army. Parts of both organizations have continued to use political violence after their official renouncement of hostilities. However, while the CNDD-FDD has become Burundi's current ruling party, the FNL has turned into the country's major opposition force. This crucial difference allows for a comparison between the dynamics of politico-military movements, which transform into ruling and opposition parties. It also

permits an analysis of how divisions within and competition between different insurgent movements can come to fundamentally shape patterns of post-peace accord governance and political violence. Last but not least, there is important intra-case temporal variation within the FNL, which, on several occasions, reconsidered to abandon its integration into party politics and return to the armed struggle.

Despite the promotion of the formal transformation of rebel groups into political parties following the fall of the Iron Curtain as one peacebuilding tool of liberal peacebuilding strategies, political parties rooted in armed struggle have long been considered as "*outliers*" in the literature on political party development (Ishiyama and Batta 2011, 370). However, given that there currently around 45 cases of rebel political parties around the world, this underscores the importance of better understanding the exact nature and internal dynamics of this specific type of political party. It also begs the question if political parties rooted in armed struggle are comparable to other political parties or if their history of armed struggle elicits specific legacies (Hydén 2011; Elischer 2013). Up until now, most studies on rebel-to-party transformation processes have focused on single case studies or inter-country comparisons. I aim to fill this lack through an in-depth, within-country comparison.

As outlined in the previous chapter, the historical trajectories of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD are analyzed using systematic historical process tracing around critical junctures. I trace the historical pathways of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD since their official inception (in 1980 and 1994, respectively) until today (with September 2016 as the cut-off point for this dissertation). My research topic is still in evolution. This does not make it easy to choose a 'finish line' for this dissertation project. However, mid-2016 constitutes an interesting closing point, since it allows for the inclusion of

three post-accord electoral processes, namely 2005, 2010 and 2015, in the systematic historical process tracing analysis of the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU. After the discussion of my case selection, I now turn to a presentation of my dynamic, qualitative, mixed-methods approach.

4.2. Adapting to the 'Field': Dynamic, Qualitative, Mixed-Methods

This dissertation is based on primary and secondary research on the transformation of rebel groups into political parties, with a particular focus on Burundi. Between 2013 and 2015, I undertook five rounds of field research, with a total amount of nine months spent in the field. Every round of fieldwork lasted approximately one to two months. Based in the capital, I also traveled the interior of the country, notably to Cibitoke, Bubanza, Bujumbura Rural, Bururi and Makamba provinces.

Over the course of my research, Burundi changed significantly. While the country enjoyed relative peace when I first traveled to Burundi in May 2013, the months leading up to the 2015 elections were marked by growing political tensions, a shrinking political space, mass demonstrations as well as escalating political and electoral violence. However, latent political violence had always been present throughout the entire research period, increasing in scope in the year before and immediately after the 2015 elections. These political changes have had a significant impact on my research and the data collection process, which prompted me to adopt a dynamic, multi-faceted, qualitative approach.

During my field research, I relied on several different methods. First and foremost, I conducted interviews with political elites. I wanted to collect as many perspectives as possible; so, I interviewed rebels-turned-politicians, ex-combatants, political party and civil society members, representatives of the international community and the diplomatic corps, as well as

local academics and practitioners. In total, I conducted 90 interviews with political elites in the capital of Bujumbura. I also conducted several interviews with exiled politicians as well as members of the Burundian diaspora in Europe and North America, especially after the outbreak of the 2015 electoral crisis and the heightening security situation in Burundi. This way I was able to complement my data and to better understand how the 2015 electoral crisis was related to my research subject. I also supplemented the elite interviews with conversations with former low-ranking combatants and civilians in the hillsides of the country. Most rebels-turned-politicians provided a well-rehearsed narrative about the armed rebellion. Many aspects were difficult to touch upon due to a continuing culture of secrecy and suspicion. The rebellions were presented in an extremely positive light, without, for example, openly discussing the specific organizational features of the movements and their respective human rights abuses during and beyond the civil war. Additional interviews with ex-combatants and civilians gave me the opportunity to better understand how ordinary combatants and citizens experienced the 'pre-war', 'war' and 'post-war' periods. The former combatants did not have the same privileged access to the peace dividends as their high-ranking counterparts. These interviews turned out to be extremely helpful and revealing with regard to the history and evolution of the armed rebellions.

Secondly, I organized several focus groups (ranging from 2 to 5 participants), first in Bujumbura, but also in the hillsides of the interior of the country. In total, the focus groups included 25 participants. While each focus group was supposed to count at least 3 to 5 participants, some focus groups only counted 2 participants given that several invited ex-combatants ended up deciding not to participate in the research. I repeated some focus groups several times in order to gain the confidence of my informants and dive deeper into their life-

histories and experiences of the armed rebellion. During the focus groups, I divided participants by rebel group affiliation and gender in order to foster a climate of trust and confidence among the participants.

Third, I tried to immerse myself into Burundian politics by relying on ethnography-inspired approaches, such as immersion and participant observation. I participated in several workshops for youth members affiliated with political parties organized by local and international non-governmental organizations in the run-up to the 2015 elections. The large majority of post-peace accord political violence has involved clashes between political party youth members, notably from the CNDD-FDD and the FNL. The organization of these workshops throughout 2013 and 2014 aimed at promoting a culture of peace among youth members with a view to dissuade them from engaging in political violence. The participation in these workshops gave me privileged access to an additional number of informants. I further had the opportunity to participate in several different political rallies of the ruling party in the run-up to the 2015 elections. Opposition parties were systematically prevented from organizing such rallies. I also interviewed several protestors during the first weeks of the popular contestation against the candidacy of incumbent President Pierre Nkurunziza for a third term in office. I further visited several voting centers during the 2015 communal and legislative elections in the capital of Bujumbura and interviewed voters and staff members. Last but not least, I participated in several political meetings of the Burundian diasporas (close to the government as well as the opposition) in Canada throughout 2015 and 2016 to closely follow the political developments in Burundi. All of these different activities helped me to get a more in-depth 'feeling' for the field, which has influenced my research, the collection of my data and the interpretation of my findings.

Fourth, I relied on research in several archives in Burundi, including at the University of Burundi, the Ministry of Interior, the National Assembly and political party headquarters. Throughout the research, I also consulted a number of primary and secondary sources, including, most importantly, analyses by African Great Lakes experts as well as human rights reports by national, regional and international organizations. This included a research stay upon the invitation of Professor Emeritus René Lemarchand, one of the most renowned historical scholars on the Great Lakes, during which I consulted his private and university archives at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

The combination of these methods helped me to collect as many different data sources and perspectives as possible. Table 5 summarizes the diverse methods that I employed during my research as well as the data collected. These diverse sources and data collection methods served the overall objective of triangulating my findings, evaluating the quality of the research findings, confirming the consistency of the findings as well as controlling for my own research bias (Denzin 2006).

Semi-structured interviews	Focus groups	Participant observation	Archival research
- 35 interviews with current or former members of CNDD-FDD - 20 interviews with current or former members of FNL - 10 interviews with opposition party members - 15 interviews with local civil society and media representatives - 5 interviews with local academics - 15 interviews with representatives of international organizations or diplomatic corps	- 5 focus groups with CNDD-FDD ex-combatants - 5 focus groups with FNL ex-combatants	- Participation in workshops for youth members affiliated with political parties organized by local and international NGOs in the run-up to 2015 elections - Participation in political party rallies in the run-up to the 2015 elections - Interviews with protesters during the popular contestation following the announcement of President Nkurunziza's renewed presidential candidacy in 2015 - Participant observation during 2015 legislative elections - Participant observation during Burundian diaspora meetings	- University of Burundi - Ministry of Interior - National Assembly - Political party headquarters - Private and university archives of René Lemarchand, Professor Emeritus at the University of Florida, Gainesville
TOTAL: 100 interviews	**TOTAL:** 10 focus groups with 35 participants	**TOTAL**: Around 30 interviews	

Table 5: Research Methods & Data

4.3. Studying the 'Field': Interviews, Immersion & Meta-Data

When I first started working on my dissertation, I did not think about adopting an ethnography-inspired approach. My envisioned methods, including most importantly semi-structured interviews and archival research, were anchored in a more traditional political science approach. However, as the work on this dissertation evolved and as I spent considerable amounts of time in Burundi trying to understand the complexities of the country's past and present, I found in participant observation and political ethnography, an interesting, indispensable, complementary approach. Soon after starting my research in Burundi, I realized that informal observation, such as attending party rallies, paying close attention to rumors or discussing Burundian politics on the streets or in local bars (a mainstay of Burundian culture), can be as important as formal observation, such as conducting interviews or focus groups. My research thus joins a growing number of political scientists, who have found in ethnography-inspired approaches a rewarding tool for the study of the everyday practices and perceptions of their research participants (Wedeen 1999; Thomson 2013b; Autesserre 2014).

4.3.1. Political Ethnography: A Complementary Approach

There exists an important, long-standing debate about how best to define ethnography. The term 'ethnography' literally means 'writing about the people'.[58] Wedeen defines ethnography broadly as involving "*immersion in the place and lives of people under study*" (Wedeen 2010, 257). Ingold adds the importance of "*long-term and open-ended commitment, generous*

[58] The word ethnography stems from the ancient Greek terms 'ἔθνος' (ethno) meaning 'folk, people, nation' and 'γράφω' (grapho) meaning 'I write'.

attentiveness, relational depth, and sensitivity to context" (Ingold 2014).[59] This broad definition illustrates that ethnographic approaches can make important contributions to the positivist and interpretivist research traditions. Political ethnography typically entails the resorting to several of the following activities:

> […] *living in the community being examined; learning a local language or dialect; participating in the daily life of the community through ordinary conversations and interaction; observing events (meetings, ceremonies, rituals, elections, protests); examining gossip, jokes, and other informal speech acts for their underlying assumptions; recording data in field notes that attempt to produce daily accounts of social and political life* (Bayard de Volo and Schatz 2004, 267).

This approach is inspired by what anthropologist Clifford Geertz has called "*thick description*" (Geertz 1973), borrowing a term first used by the British philosopher Gilbert Ryle (Ryle 1968). Thick description refers to the interpretation of social behavior by recording its circumstances, meanings and intentions.

During my research, I engaged in several of the above activities. First, I took an introductory language course in Kirundi and Kiswahili[60] in order to be able to engage (as much as possible) in a small talk conversation with my research participants. Second, through the participation in some of the everyday activities of my informants, I wanted to dive deeper into the self-understandings, narratives and practices of rebel political parties and their militants. I departed from the fundamental path-dependent assumption that the participation in armed struggle ultimately affects how rebel political parties and their members engage in post-

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[59] Ethnography has traditionally been the primary domain of anthropologists. Over the last years, it has increasingly been adopted by other disciplines, including political science. Ingold provides an excellent discussion of the difficulties of properly defining ethnography and the danger of overusing and misusing the term (Ingold 2014).

[60] Kirundi is the local language spoken in Burundi. Kiswahili is the most important regional language, spoken especially in urban centers in Burundi. In addition, many of the CNDD-FDD or PALIPEHUTU-FNL militants were, at some point during the history of their movements based in Eastern Congo or Tanzania, where Kiswahili is the most used language.

peace accord politics. By sharing several day-to-day activities with my research participants (such as political party meetings, some of them celebrating the armed history of the politico-military movements under study), I wanted to observe their behavior and discuss their perceptions of it in order to better understand Burundian politics today and how it has been shaped by the country's traumatic past.

4.3.2. Meta-Data: Key Concept for Approaching Burundian Politics

As many researchers working in conflict and post-accord settings have underlined, one of the biggest challenges persists in looking beyond the official and constructed political narratives and to understand their origins, motivations and meanings (Wedeen 1999). Overall, it was a daunting task to critically evaluate the discourse of many of my interview participants. Indeed, as Wood reminds us, in highly polarized settings, "*the usual imperatives of empirical research (to gather and analyze accurate data to address a relevant theoretical question) are intensified by the absence of unbiased data*" (Wood 2006a, 373).

Be it government, political opposition or civil society representatives, almost everyone presented a biased picture of the political landscape often driven by their own personal interests. The deliberate spreading of rumors has become a prominent political tool in Burundian politics or as a Burundian proverb puts it: "*Urukuru kuru niyo nkuru*" ('Rumor is information'). In addition to rumors, Barundi also highlight that they are characterized by a "*culture du mensonge*". "[…] *The culture of lying*[61] *is deeply embedded in our mentality. It's*

[61] For a discussion of the origins of this so-called "*culture du mensonge*" and its impacts on Burundian politics, please see (Chrétien 2012, 66). We should refrain from attributing a judgment to this "*culture of lying*", but instead scrutinize and analyze its origins and meanings.

sad, but it is extremely difficult to study our history" (Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 23 October 2013).

In contexts like Burundi, it is therefore extremely important to analyze, what Fujii has referred to as "*meta-data*", defined as "*informants' spoken and unspoken thoughts and feelings*", as these often reveal "*how the current social and political landscape is shaping what people might say to a researcher*" (Fujii 2010, 231f). The careful examination of rumors, jokes or lies can disclose important insights into current political developments and the political culture. Several Burundi researchers have problematized the role of rumors in the country's politics (Deslaurier 2005; Turner 2007).

The analysis of meta-data became a key tool during my research. Indeed, I quickly realized how much my interview data depended on my identity as a young, female, white and foreign researcher. For example, each political actor used "*demonization*" of other political actors as a key political strategy to influence my perceptions on the past and present of Burundian politics. The 2015 electoral crisis heightened the already existing political polarization between the government and the opposition camp even further. The discourse of my respondents radicalized. The language of each camp became extremely biased and heavily politicized. This was, for example, reflected in the constant, precarious comparisons of Burundi today with Rwanda in 1994. The increasing ethnicisation of the language of the political opposition, warning of an impending genocide, and of the ruling party, implicitly blaming the Batutsi for the popular contestation against President Nkurunziza's third term, was extremely dangerous and heightened fears of the possibility of renewed inter-ethnic conflict. This was a key change in the conflict dynamics, as most Burundians usually stressed that ethnic cleavages and tensions were a tragic episode from the past.

At present, researchers are confronted with two, radically opposed narratives. The opposition depicts a country on the brink of an imminent catastrophe, ruled by a totalitarian regime ready to employ genocide, and, consequently, lobbies for international intervention. The CNDD-FDD regime, for its part, maintains that it has only defended itself against terrorist insurgents in the run-up to the 2015 elections and has since then re-established security. Burundi seems trapped in a paradoxical situation. On the one hand, there is the CNDD-FDD regime, which has a vested interest in controlling violence to prevent international intervention. It seems to use violence in limited dosages to continue to install fear and to send warning signs to political opponents, while doing everything to contain mass violence. On the other hand, there is the radical, exiled opposition that states that it wants to prevent a potential genocide while it actually needs mass violence to lobby for and compel international intervention. These diametrically opposed portrayals of the current situation illustrate the difficulties of undertaking research on Burundi.

What's more, and intimately related to my research subject, rebel movements are extremely secretive about the details of their movement's history and organization. This is eloquently exemplified in the Kirundi term for the CNDD-FDD's militants, commonly known as *Abagumyabanga* ('those who guard the secret'). This stems from the military imperative of establishing a secretive organization able to efficiently challenge an existing regime during an armed insurgency. The continued infiltration of rebel movements during the civil war, be it by the national army or other competing rebel movements, also fostered a lot of suspicion. These embedded cultures of secrecy and suspicion continue to characterize these organizations after the official end of hostilities. As one informant explained during an interview when asked about official statistics on the number of CNDD-FDD members: "*These numbers exist, but I*

cannot just show them to you. This is key information that our adversaries are desperately looking for" (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 17 October 2013). This makes research and the collection of viable data on the trajectories of rebel political parties extremely challenging. It also underlines the importance of the dynamic, qualitative, mixed-methods approach outlined above, consisting of comparing and triangulating several sources, including primary and secondary material, in order to corroborate the data collected.

In short, it was very difficult to evaluate the political narratives that many of my informants presented of the past, present and future of the political landscape in Burundi. Every day, I was overwhelmed by the complexity of Burundian history and politics that I would never be able to fully understand. Rhetoric, secrecy, mistrust and suspicion were frequent companions during many of my interviews. I struggled to find my place as a researcher; that is my role as a young, white, German female undertaking research on the history and politics of Burundi. Indeed, whether we want it or not, we become actors in our own research underlining the importance of consistently reflecting upon our own position in the field, how this shapes our research encounters and, most importantly, the information that we collect.

4.4. Navigating the 'Field': Ethical & Emotional Challenges

After the presentation of my methodological approach, I now turn to an-in-depth discussion of the emotional and ethical challenges encountered during my fieldwork. This is supposed to assist the reader in better understanding the challenges of my data collection and the findings that I was able to gather during my field research. Drawing on Wood's work on ethical challenges of field research in conflict zones (Wood 2006a), I discuss challenges related to recruitment, informed consent, security of informants and reciprocity.

4.4.1. Recruitment of Participants: Gaining Inside (r) Perspectives & Trust

Overall, I did not have major difficulties in accessing the people I wanted to interview. Before my departure, I had established several contacts with Burundians and expatriates to discuss security measures and how to best approach research participants in the field. Once in the field, I used the snowball method to recruit my interview partners. Burundi is a small country (Burundians joke that its name can't even fit inside the country's outline on a geographical map) and it is relatively easy to inquire about the contact information of public figures.

To my surprise, it was generally no problem to call up high-ranking political figures, including heads of political parties and minsters, and schedule an interview (often immediately within hours or days of contacting the informants in question). As Thomson, Ansoms and Murison remind us:

> *In the research setting we are in a very privileged position. Indeed, for the first time in our lives, we may be in a position of power over our research subjects because of our race, gender, relative socio-economic advantage and so on* (Thomson, Ansoms, and Murison 2013, 3f).

Due merely to my skin color, I had privileged access to the political scene, something that does not equally apply to local, Burundian researchers. During several discussions with Burundian colleagues at the University of Burundi, they were struck by the political access to political elites that was granted to me.

Nevertheless, it was extremely challenging to gain the trust of my interlocutors. As a white foreigner, I was automatically associated with the broader international community, including most importantly Western countries and the community of human rights activists. Many informants affiliated with the ruling party perceive Western countries as an accomplice of the opposition parties and the civil society and assumed that 'I was out to get them'. The political narratives of the ruling party are filled with conspiracy theories trying to make sense

of the involvement of Western countries in Burundi, regularly framed as being purely guided by imperialistic and economic interests. Most recently, the Burundian government has framed the popular demonstrations against President Nkurunziza's third term and the subsequent failed coup d'état as a plot of Western countries to install a new political regime more favorable to grant these Western countries access to Burundi's natural resources. In turn, the political opposition often perceives white foreigners as their natural allies, hoping to influence international public opinion by fuelling the demonization of the ruling party. This makes the collection of viable data extremely challenging. I therefore interviewed a wide range of different political actors from various political backgrounds to avoid potential bias. In addition, I interviewed several interlocutors numerous times in order to gain their confidence and trust in discussing Burundian politics.

Despite facing no considerable challenges in accessing my research participants, many of my informants would remind me that it might not be advisable to mention how I had acquired the contact information in question. To give an example, I had conducted an interview with a leading human rights activist, who recommended several 'moderate' CNDD-FDD officials who would be interesting to interview about their perspectives of the internal dynamics of the ruling party. However, he advised me that I should not necessarily state who gave me their contact information. It might be safer to say that I had obtained the contact information through "*diplomatic contacts*", as these officials might not necessarily be eager to talk to me if they knew who had recommended them (Interview with local human rights activist, Bujumbura, 16 October 2013). During the 2015 electoral crisis, this issue became even more delicate. I interviewed several CNDD-FDD members, whom I asked for additional recommendations of possible people that I could interview. They would usually call up their

colleagues to ask them to meet me for an interview. During the subsequent interviews, some informants tried to inquire if I knew to which camp (pro- or anti-third mandate) their colleague belonged to. I obviously did not share this information, but this example illustrates how we (sometimes inadvertently) become actors in our own research and how we are constantly confronted with ethical challenges in the field.

The focus groups with ex-combatants in the hillsides were organized in collaboration with the Training Center for the Development of Ex-Combatants (CEDAC), a local non-governmental organization working on the economic integration of former combatants. The staff members of CEDAC would contact their respective focal points in the different communes to put us in contact with former ex-combatants interested in participating in the research. During my research, I relied heavily on the expertise of CEDAC's staff in approaching ex-combatants and interviewing them about the very traumatic experiences that they had lived through during the armed rebellion. Before entering a province and a commune outside the capital, we obtained the permission of the Governor and representatives of the local communities.

The length of the interviews would last between one and six hours. I prepared guiding questions beforehand, but usually let the conversation develop naturally without trying to guide the interview topics too much in order to let interviewees speak on their own terms. The interviews with political elites were usually much shorter than those with ex-combatants, who, due to their specific, (often) precarious living situation (generally lacking formal employment), could devote much more time to an interview. The grand majority of interviews, especially with political elites, were conducted in French. As mentioned above, during my fieldwork, I took a crash course in the local languages of Kirundi and Kiswahili. The

possibility of commencing an interview with small talk in Kirundi or Kiswahili often helped to 'break the ice' with many of my informants. For the interviews with former combatants and civilians in the hillsides, I relied on a research assistant, who consecutively translated the interviews from the local languages of Kirundi and Kiswahili into French. My research assistant comes originally from Uvira, South Kivu, in neighboring Eastern DRC. He had fled the DRC as a refugee in 1996 following the onset of the First Congo War. Since 1996, my research assistant has lived in Burundi and is fluent in Kirundi and Kiswahili. As a close observer of Burundian and Congolese politics, he was key in helping me understand the complex national and regional politics reflected in Burundi's past and present. During our interviews, we both came to understand that it was advantageous that I had hired a Congolese national, often perceived by our informants as a more neutral interlocutor, who did not identify ethnically or politically with Burundians. I also hired several research assistants who assisted in subsequent interview transcriptions (from Kirundi or Kiswahili to French). This was key to flesh out some of the nuances, which are not easily captured during consecutive interpretation.

4.4.2. Informed Consent: Negotiating Continued Endorsement

Informed consent is one of the most crucial ingredients for any ethical field research. University Ethics Boards, including the Ethics Committee at the University of Montreal, highlight that the principle of informed consent implies free, informed and ongoing endorsement throughout the research process. For my ethics application, I had to prepare a written consent form, which I eventually rarely used during the majority of my interviews. Ultimately, it was most important to verbally inform my participants about my research. Many informants reacted quite suspiciously to my initial demand of signing the consent form given that they did not necessarily want to leave a written trace of having participated in the

research. In addition, several of my informants were illiterate and thereby unable to read and sign the consent form.

During each research encounter, I would start by informing my research participants of the objectives as well as the potential risks and benefits of my research. Participants had the option of partaking anonymously or un-anonymously in the research project. While some of my informants preferred to remain anonymous, others agreed to be quoted directly by name or indirectly by professional affiliation. At the end of each interview, I would remind my informants that they could always change their initial choice or even retract their testimony altogether. If we had covered sensitive ground during the interview, some of my research participants, who had initially agreed to be quoted by name, would decide to remain anonymous or only be quoted by their professional affiliation. In addition, I left my email and phone number with my informants in order to give them the opportunity to change their choice at any time. Until today, I sometimes receive emails or phone calls from informants changing their initial choice (in the light of the heightening political situation in Burundi). I thus learnt very quickly and first-hand that respecting the principle of informed consent "*must also acknowledge that consent is not a one-off event; it is something that must be renegotiated over time* […] *through the period of fieldwork, and beyond*" (Thomson 2013a, 150). Informed consent is intimately linked to the security of our informants, who, at the time of the interview, might not be able to anticipate the potential consequences of their participation in the research, raising enormous ethical dilemmas for research in sensitive environments.

Ensuring informed consent constituted a specific challenge in my interviews with ex-combatants. I had to be extremely careful not to spread false hopes among informants with regard to the potential benefits of the research. In impoverished environments like Burundi,

the mere presence of a white person is often associated with the fact that new development funds are underway. Indeed, it was very difficult to explain to former combatants that they would not be financially compensated for the participation in my research project given that this would risk biasing the information collected. They often assumed that they would receive a per-diem payment given that this is what they or their friends had received when talking with representatives of international governmental or non-governmental organizations. I did, however, compensate ex-combatants' participation by, when applicable, reimbursing them for their transportation costs and/or offering them a meal during our interview. Notably, many ex-combatants preferred to receive the monetary equivalent of the meal instead of being invited for a meal. Female ex-combatants, for example, stated that they would rather save this money to be able to pay future hospital bills for their children. This example highlights the complexities of adequately applying the ethics rules defined by our ethics boards at Western universities in the field.

4.4.3. Security of Participants and Collaborators: Protecting People & Data

The protection of the security of our informants constitutes one of the most crucial challenges for research in politically sensitive environments. While we have the luxury to leave, our informants stay and risk repercussions for sharing their stories with us.

> *Fieldwork is a dynamic experience and the context within which you are doing fieldwork can change rapidly. As a result, you will have to maintain a dynamic risk assessment throughout your time in the field* (Hammett, Twyman, and Graham 2015, 131).

Throughout my research, I was worried about the security of my research participants. I consulted with many Burundian colleagues and friends in order to maintain a constant risk assessment. On several occasions, I decided not to undertake certain interviews in order to

protect my research participants. This was especially necessary during the 2015 electoral crisis. In the run-up to the communal and legislative elections, I wanted to undertake interviews in the hillsides to understand the unfolding political dynamics in these parts of the country. However, many local colleagues recommended that I do not go ahead in order to protect my informants due to the heightening security situation. I did, however, undertake several interviews with informants in the capital. Nevertheless, this prevented me from getting a full understanding of the political perceptions of the CNDD-FDD's and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's strategies in the interior of the country as the elections approached and political violence became more frequent.

4.4.4. Reciprocity & Empowerment: Giving Back

During my fieldwork, I was constantly asking myself what I could give back to the participants, who had agreed to take part in my research and taken the time to share their stories with me. I felt a mix of powerlessness and guilt when I was faced with the daily struggles of my research participants, especially the former low-ranking ex-combatants lacking economic perspectives.

I was also confronted with a sense of reluctance and suspicion among several respondents to share their stories with me given that we, as researchers, make our careers based on their stories. While we reap the benefits through the research and publication of our analyses, our informants are left behind and continue to struggle. For example, during a focus group with female ex-combatants in the hillsides of Burundi, one of the women looked me deeply in the eyes and asked me what I was going to do for them after they had shared their stories with me. In the end, I was only one of many researchers that had come and gone. "*They do their interviews, write up their reports and are never seen again*" (Focus group with former

CNDD-FDD combatants, Bubanza, 18 June 2014). As Berger Gluck and Patai, two anthropologists, remind us:

> […] *of the frequent claim that the interview process is empowering in that it 'gives a voice' to those who might otherwise remain silent, one might well ask: is it empowerment or is it appropriation?* (Berger Gluck and Patai 1991, 147).

I attempted to mitigate this ethical dilemma by trying to give something back to the Burundian communities. For example, I assisted CEDAC in looking for funding opportunities for projects aimed at generating livelihoods for former combatants. I taught a class in International Relations with a Burundian colleague at the University of Burundi. I gave advice to several of my informants about possible study and professional opportunities abroad. Nevertheless, I was left with an uneasy feeling of not being able to give back enough, an experience that made me reflect a lot about the tensions between empowerment and appropriation and how best to navigate between them in a respectful way.

In sum, this dissertation builds on secondary research and extensive fieldwork in Burundi. The paired comparison of the historical trajectories of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD allows me to hold many of the contextual factors constant, while focusing on exploring the differences and similarities in the pathways of these rebel political parties. The next four chapters are devoted to an-depth case study of Burundi. In Chapter V, I introduce Burundi's history and its legacies. In Chapter VI, VII and VIII, I investigate the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD's trajectories at critical junctures. Chapter VI analyzes the road to their decision to pick up the gun as well their intricate political and military structures during the war. Chapter VII and VIII study the rebel parties' trajectories at peace talks and post-accord elections.

Chapter V: War vs. Peace Revisited – Introduction to Burundi's History

"*Epochal moments belong rightly to history,*
and it is history that holds the only hope of mapping the twisted road
that has brought us to this terrifying path."

(Carr 2003, 6)

> *Welcome to Burundi, a country tottering on the edge of the abyss, deciding hour by hour if it is going to follow Rwanda and plunge itself into a full-scale tribal war between Tutsi and Hutu, or somehow pull back. For the moment, Burundi is in Rwanda slow motion. The ethnic cleansing here by Tutsi and Hutu – the same tribal mix as in Rwanda – happens just every other day, in every other village. There is still a shred of order. But the best-case scenario is for increasing violence; the worst is for a Rwanda style cataclysm that will spill hundreds of thousands more refugees across central Africa* (Friedman 1996).

These lines appeared in an editorial written by the renowned journalist Thomas L. Friedman for the New York Times on January 24, 1996. Published in the midst of Burundi's civil war, the op-ed illustrates that the country's conflict is often simplistically depicted as an inter-ethnic 'tribal conflict' between the Bahutu majority and the Batutsi minority. The common media narrative often portrays the civil war as the peak of an ancient, essentialist Hutu-Tutsi divide. However, a closer examination of Burundi's history and the country's political cleavages reveals a much more complex picture. First, the ethnic divisions did not become salient until the Belgian colonization. Second, throughout Burundi's history, they have frequently overlapped with economy-based, clan-based and regional-based divisions. Third, the civil war did not only pit the Batutsi against the Bahutu, but, additionally, a Tutsi-dominated national army against a variety of different Hutu-dominated rebellions. These rebel groups, with the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD emerging as the most important fighting forces on the ground, did not only contest the authority of the Burundian state, but also competed among themselves for the legitimate stewardship of the liberation cause. This illustrates the diversity of potential conflict cleavages other than the prominent narrative of the "*master cleavage*" (Kalyvas 2003). This complex net of political divisions underscores the importance of a long historical perspective to understand the continuities and changes in Burundi's evolving power relations (Laely 1997, 697).

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Burundi's past is filled with stories of victimhood, rebellion, repression and liberation. This chapter lays out an introduction to Burundi's history in order to provide the background for the emergence of the country's rebellions over the course of Burundi's post-colonial history. Burundi's post-independence account is emblematic for the fuzzy boundaries between war and peace. Since its independence in 1962, the country has been afflicted by returning cycles of political violence, most notably reflected in high-level political assassinations, politico-ethnic massacres, military coups, rebellions and state repressions. Over the last five decades, Burundi has experienced several intermittent periods of low- and high-level violence, which reached their climax with the outbreak of the country's decade-long plus civil war in 1993,[62] thereby underscoring the importance of conceiving of war and peace in processual terms. A quick glance into Burundi's history is crucial to understand the roots and the context of the emergence of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD as Burundi's two major Hutu-dominated rebel groups, their long-standing grievances, the outbreak of the civil war and the conflict resolution process.

This chapter is divided into five main sections. The first section describes the challenges of undertaking Burundian historiography. The second section summarizes the pre-colonial history of Burundi. The third section tackles the colonial past of the country. The fourth section describes its post-independence history mired in periodic sequences of politico-

[62] The UCDP Armed Conflict Data Set (1946 to 2015) identifies the years 1965, 1991-1992, 1994-1999, 2003-2006 and 2008 as minor armed conflict (defined as resulting in 25 to 999 battle-related deaths) and the years 2000-2002 as major armed conflict (defined as experiencing at least 1,000 battle-related deaths per year) (Pettersson and Wallenstein 2015). This cursory overview (whose reference numbers are contestable given that they contrast with historical accounts of the intensity of the civil war given by informants) illustrates that Burundi has experienced recurrent armed conflict throughout its post-colonial history during and beyond its 'official' civil war (1993-2008).

ethnic violence. The last section concludes by outlining the historical legacies of Burundi's past for understanding present and future political dynamics in the country.

5.1. Burundian Historiography: Controversies & Meta-Conflicts

Often referred to as the "*false twin*"[63] of Rwanda (Lemarchand 1970), Burundi is a small, land-locked nation in the heart of the African Great Lakes Region. Bordering Rwanda to the North, the Democratic Republic of Congo to the West and Tanzania to the East, the country's history is intimately intertwined with that of its neighbors. Burundi's size is comparable to the territory of Belgium, which, after Germany, was the country's second former colonial power. Along with its neighbor Rwanda, Burundi is today one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. This poses tremendous challenges for the majority of the country's population, who is highly dependent on agriculture for its survival. While Burundi counted less than one million inhabitants in the 1920s and 3.5 million inhabitants in 1972, its population is at present estimated at 10.5 million people.[64]

Before diving into a summary of Burundi's history, it is important to emphasize that the account of the country's history has often involved major disagreements and intense

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[63] Burundi and Rwanda have a lot of features in common. The two neighbors have the same ethnic composition, speak almost the same language and share many cultural traditions. In addition, they were founded as pre-colonial kingdoms, which have more or less kept their pre-colonial boundaries (in contrast to the great majority of African countries characterized by artificial borders inherited from the colonial period). Both colonized by Germany and Belgium, the two countries have the sad distinction of having experienced a series of inter-ethnic and genocidal massacres during their post-independence history. However, Burundi and Rwanda also differ in many respects. While postcolonial Burundi was for a long time governed by the Tutsi minority (1966-1993; 1996-2003) and regularly challenged by Hutu-dominated rebellions, it was the Hutu majority that took power during the 'Rwandan Revolution' in 1959 just before Rwanda's independence in 1962 before being overthrown by a Tutsi-dominated rebellion following the 1994 genocide (Lemarchand 2009). These divergent histories have led to different conflict dynamics in both countries. For an excellent comparison between the historical trajectories of the two countries and the processes of mass violence that unfolded in Burundi and Rwanda, please see (Uvin 1999).

[64] The most recent population census of 2008 counted a little over 8 million people. In several provinces, families consisting of more than five people live on a property of less than 0.4 hectares (not even half of a soccer field), which is largely insufficient to feed a family.

disputes among Burundi scholars and political actors. Depending on their political ideology and ethnic affiliation, they offer different narratives of Burundi's pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial history. French-American scholar and Great Lakes expert René Lemarchand has eloquently coined the term "*meta-conflict*"[65] to refer to the conflict about the nature of the conflict (Lemarchand 1996). This is heightened by the fact that the deliberate spreading of misinformation and rumors has become an important tool of political actors. Or as Ngayimpenda writes about the difficulty of undertaking Burundian historiography:

> […] *regardless of the alert level of the researcher, there remains a risk of being misled by false tracks from informants* […] *who have everything to win from misrepresenting the facts* (Ngayimpenda 1998).

As in the Rwandan case, Burundi's pre-colonial and colonial history has become the subject of heated debates about the origins of ethnicity and ethnic conflict, "*not only to scholarly debate and paucity of evidence, but to bitter political struggle*" (Malkki 1995, 23). The scholarly debates have evolved around the classic divide between primordialism (a paradigm defining ethnicity as an essential, age-old phenomenon), instrumentalism (a paradigm defining ethnicity as an artificial construct employed as part of a political strategy) and constructivism (a paradigm underlining the different ways in which ethnic identity emerges and changes over time) (Harff and Gurr 2004, 96f). These disputes have informed the genesis and narratives of the Hutu-dominated rebel groups and are indispensable for understanding their historical trajectories.

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[65] This is a reference to Donald Horowitz's analysis of South African politics (Lemarchand 1994, 17). Given these fundamental disagreements about the nature of the conflict, the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi, in Protocol I, Article 8, stipulates that "*The* [National Truth and Reconciliation] *Commission shall also be responsible for clarifying the entire history of Burundi, going as far back as possible in order to inform Burundians about their past. The purpose of this clarification exercise shall be to rewrite Burundi's history so that all Burundians can interpret it in the same* way."

Often simplistically portrayed as an inter-ethnic conflict between the Bahutu majority and the Batutsi minority,[66] most scholars agree today that the Burundian conflict is above all entrenched in the struggle of the country's political elites for access to power, the economic gains associated with it, and the control of the armed forces, perceived as the ultimate guarantor of political control of the country (Lemarchand 2009; Chrétien 2000; Ngaruko and Nkurunziza 2000). During these power struggles, ethnicity has become an important tool for political manipulation, especially after the country's independence.

Throughout Burundi's history ethnic cleavages have overlapped with economy-based, clan-based, and regional-based cleavages. This puts into question the depiction by many media outlets and several Burundian political actors of an age-old, essentialist conflict between the ethnic Bahutu majority and the ethnic Batutsi minority. In addition, this highlights the importance of defining ideational politics in broad terms, including identity (based on ethnicity, kinship, caste, tribe, region, religion, language or social class) and ideological politics, as discussed in Chapter IV. Or as Twagiramungu eloquently puts it:

> […] *like any other 'imagined community' in the tradition of Anderson (1983), the people who identify as Barundi have multiple and overlapping social and political identities that have changed over time* (Twagiramungu 2016, 58).

In addition, the extent of the human losses of each conflict actor and the specific triggers of the series of politico-ethnic violence that have afflicted the country since independence are controversially debated among Burundians and Burundi scholars alike.

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[66] Burundi counts three different ethnic groups, the Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa. The ethnic belonging is determinant by a patriarchal tradition. According to the majority of sources (based on a highly controversial census by the Belgian colonizers from the 1930s using cattle ownership and physical stereotypes as the major criterion for ethnic distinction), the people of Burundi are made up of three different ethnicities, including about 85 percent of Bahutu, 14 percent of Batutsi and 1-2 percent of Batwa. For an excellent discussion of the concept of ethnicity in Burundi and the politicization of these "*imagined communities*", please see (Chrétien and Prunier 2003).

5.2. Pre-Colonial History: Dawn of Clan-Based, Unified Kingdom

Historical scholars caution that Burundi's pre-colonial history remains to a large extent hypothetical due to limited historical sources and the long-standing oral tradition of the country. However, scholars agree that the country that we have come to call Burundi has for centuries been a central meeting place and melting pot for many different populations. It is generally assumed that the Batwa, a pygmy people, constitute the indigenous inhabitants of the country. Between the fifth and the eleventh centuries, Burundi has known several waves of Bantu migrations, which have come to be considered as the ancestors of the Bahutu ethnic group. Another wave of different migrations arrived during the fourteenth and fifteenth century from the North and the East of Africa, which are considered to be the ancestors of the Batutsi ethnic group (Malkki 1995, 21f; Chrétien 2000).

During pre-colonial times, since around the fifteenth century, Burundi came to be ruled as a unified and centralized kingdom. A distinct and complex socio-political hierarchy characterized the traditional monarchy (Uvin 2009). At the top, there was the king, the *Mwami*, who embodied the nation and enjoyed tremendous loyal support among the Barundi. The Mwami was surrounded by an aristocratic, dynastic class, which was commonly called the *Baganwa*, which literally translates to 'princes of the blood'. Neither the Mwami nor the Baganwa identified as Bahutu or Batutsi and scholars underline that they asserted themselves to have mixed ancestry. The Baganwa have sometimes been considered a separate ethnic group and it was only later (towards the end of Belgian colonization) that they were subsumed under the Tutsi ethnic banner, a group that they traditionally perceived as well beneath their own (Lemarchand 1970). The *Intore* ('the chosen ones'), a group of traditional male warriors, were in charge of protecting the Mwami.

In the daily management of the kingdom, the Mwami and the Baganwa were assisted by a group of chiefs and sub-chiefs, both Batutsi and Bahutu[67], who controlled the territory and collected tributes for the Mwami from the districts and the *umusozi* (the mountainous hillsides of the country that have become the smallest administrative boundaries). The middle of the socio-political pyramid was made up of various clans of Batutsi. For example, there were the Batutsi-Banyaruguru (literally "*the people from up*" or "*highland people*", who allegedly arrived before all other tribes), who were known for their higher social status due to their historical connections with the monarchy, and the Batutsi-Bahima, who had an inferior social status than the Batutsi-Banyaruguru (Lemarchand 1996). The term Mututsi also became a socio-economic reference given that many Batutsi were cattle herders. However, a Muhutu could become a Mututsi by acquiring his own cattle. Lower in the social hierarchy, there was the majority Bahutu population, which was mainly made up of cultivators. But there were several Bahutu from prestigious clans, such as the Bahutu-Bahanza clan, who were considered to enjoy higher social status than the Batutsi-Bahima underlining the complexity of the social hierarchy (Sommers 2001). At the very bottom, there was the small minority of the indigenous Batwa, ill considered by the rest of the social hierarchy and mostly living in the forests as hunter-gatherers and later potters (Uvin 1999). A special place in pre-colonial Burundian society belonged to the *Bashingantahe*, highly respected notables, who were in charge of mediating local conflicts and land disputes. Many Bashingantahe belonged to the Bahutu ethnic group. Some experts refer to the Bashingantahe as the democratic nucleus of Burundian society as these wise men were chosen based on merits and virtues (Lemarchand 1996, 39).

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[67] According to some estimates, the Bahutu occupied around 33 percent of the posts of chiefs (Nzisabira 2011).

This brief outline illustrates that the social boundaries between Batutsi and Bahutu were fairly fluid during pre-colonial times. People could move up the social pyramid (sometimes even change their ethnic affiliation) and intermarriages were common. There are no historical records of ethnic-based massacres from the pre-colonial time (UN 2002; Uvin 1999). Burundi scholars highlight that kinship and clan cleavages (*umuryango*) were the most important determinants of political and social status during this time (Lemarchand 1996; Chrétien 2000; Uvin 2009). The main political rivalries took place between different Baganwa factions, including the Batare, Bezi, Bataga and Bambutsa, each named after the king from whom they descended. Interestingly, all Barundi people spoke (and continue to speak) the same language and shared (and continue to share) the same cultural and religious practices.[68] It is therefore impossible to find a well-defined Batutsi-, Bahutu or Batwa territory in Burundi (Chrétien 2000). There are also traces of Batusi and Bahutu sharing the same clan affiliations (Sommers 2001).

In sum, Burundi's pre-colonial history as a monarchy left the legacy of a clan-based, unified and centralized (albeit much less so than its Rwandan counterpart) kingdom, which was hierarchically organized from the royal court administration to the districts and hillsides. Unlike the majority of African countries characterized by artificial borders imposed by colonizers, Burundi has enjoyed a long history of national unity and nearly unchanged borders since the territorial expansions of its kingdom during the first half of the 19th century. Unlike its northern neighbor Rwanda, pre-colonial Burundi was characterized by a much more fluid socio-political hierarchy with a certain degree of social mobility among the two major ethnic

[68] For example, all Barundi traditionally believe in one God, commonly referred to as *Imana*.

groups, the Bahutu and the Batutsi. Ethnic attachments were complemented by economy- and clan-based affiliations. The main political cleavages evolved around the different Baganwa factions. On the eve of the colonial period, the conflict lines emerged especially between the Bezi and the Batare.[69]

5.3. Colonial History: Making of the Salience of Ethnicity

The countries that we have come to know today as Rwanda and Burundi were among the last territories to be colonized by European powers during the great scramble for Africa. The colonial period, first under a short German rule (1899-1916) and then under Belgian rule (1916-1962),[70] set in motion a profound transformation of Burundi's society based on the polarization and institutionalization of the two main ethnic identities, the Bahutu and Batutsi. Both Germans and Belgians governed Burundi through indirect rule and formally recognized the Burundian monarchy. As Uvin writes:

> *As a result, while formally the old political structure of the country remained intact, colonization profoundly altered its nature. Political, social, and economic relations became more rigid, unequal, and biased against Hutu* (Uvin 2009, 8).

The Baganwa and the Batutsi were perceived as superior ethnic groups destined to occupy leading roles in the colonial administration. In contrast, the Bahutu were seen as naturally inferior to the Batutsi. This ethnicist interpretation of Burundi's society has its origin

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[69] After the death of King Ntare IV Rutaganzwa Rugamba, who had doubled the size of the Burundian kingdom during the first half of the 19th century, his youngest son Mwezi Gisabo, became the new king of Burundi (around 1852). This prompted a bitter power struggle between, on the one hand, Mwezi Gisabo and his descendants (commonly called the Bezi) and, on the other hand, his older brothers and their heirs (commonly called the Batare) (Lemarchand 1996).

[70] Rwanda and Burundi were ruled as two separate protectorates under German colonization. From 1922 to 1946, they were joined together as Ruanda-Urundi under Belgian colonial rule. From 1946 to 1962, Ruanda-Urundi became a UN Trust Territory remaining under Belgian administration until Rwanda and Burundi's respective independence in 1962.

in the racist interpretation of the first European explorers and missionaries, who suggested the so-called "*Hamitic Hypothesis*".[71] According to this dictum, the Batutsi (stereotypically described as tall, thin and graceful people with small noses) were considered to be intellectually and physically superior to the Bahutu (pejoratively described as short and stout with big noses), because they emigrated from northern Africa (possibly Egypt or Ethiopia) and were thus perceived as not entirely 'black African' and more closely related to the Europeans (Chrétien 1993, 320).

This racist reading inspired by Social-Darwinism found its macabre expression in the eugenic experiments of the Belgian colonizers, which aimed to classify the Barundi people into different ethnic groups according to the physical stereotypes promoted by the Hamitic thesis (Twagiramungu 2016, 58). In 1933, the Belgians institutionalized ethnic identities by issuing formal ethnic identity cards. The number of Bahutu chiefs was progressively reduced and replaced with the better educated Baganwa and Batutsi, who enjoyed preferential access to the colonial-run school system and administration. In his colonial account, Gahama reports that the number of Bahutu chiefs continuously fell from 20 percent in 1929, to 7 percent in 1933, to 2 percent in 1937 and, finally, to 0 percent in 1945 (Gahama 1983, 104). The Bahutu were largely excluded and the Batwa entirely left out. Overall, the colonizers did not do much to promote education among the local Burundian population. By the end of the colonial period, less than 10 percent of Burundi's population was literate, most of them of Baganwa or Batutsi origin (Krueger and Krueger 2007, 26).

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[71] John Speke, a British Indian Army Officer most known or his search for the source of the Nile in Central Africa, was among the first European explorers to visit the kingdoms of Rwanda and Burundi and to advocate the "*Hamitic Hypothesis*" in the 1860s (Speke 1863).

In addition to the polarization of ethnicities, scholars also highlight how the colonizers not only reinforced the divisions between Bahutu and Batutsi, but also among the Baganwa, particularly between the Bezi and the Batare factions, with "*each seeking to manipulate the colonial authorities to bolster their territorial claims as well as their claims to recognition*" (Lemarchand 1996, 42). When the colonizers arrived, the Bezi had taken control of the kingdom. They were allowed to retain this role and dominated the colonial administration's structures. However, relations between the Belgian colonizers and the Bezi deteriorated after the Second World War, when the Bezi started to ask for independence. The Batare, who wanted to improve their political position before advocating for independence, therefore became the new preferred allies of the Belgian colonizers (Chrétien 2000, 272).

To sum up, while the pre-colonial period was characterized by the emergence of a complex, fluid and largely clan-based socio-political hierarchy, the colonial period restructured the socio-political pyramid into a more essentialized, ethnic-based hierarchy. Thus, while members of the minority Batutsi ethnic group were systematically privileged by the colonial regime and members of the majority Bahutu population marginalized, it is important to note, that, on the eve of independence, the principal political cleavage did not yet pit Bahutu against Batutsi, but that it involved the main Baganwa factions, the Bezi and the Batare, who enjoyed ethnically mixed support from Bahutu and Batutsi alike.

5.4. Post-Colonial History: Volatile Regime Change & Violence

Burundi formally gained independence on July 1, 1962. Since then, the country has been shaken by several political assassinations, coups d'états, cycles of politico-ethnic violence, rebellions and episodes of civil war (Lemarchand 1996). Throughout the country's post-colonial history, periods of regime change, transitions and elections have been nothing short of

volatile. Upon independence, Burundi became a constitutional monarchy and entered into a brief period of democratization. However, this democratic transition was suspended when, in 1966, a group of Tutsi army officers, led by Captain Michel Micombero, seized power in a military coup. This putsch set the stage for three decades of military dictatorship dominated by the Batutsi-Bahima. These authoritarian regimes provided the backdrop for the emergence of several political and violent Hutu-dominated resistance movements, whose subsequent practices are also reflective of their socialization under Tutsi-dominated authoritarian regimes. The post-independence state rulers and challengers would use the manipulation of ethnicity as well as clan-based and regional-based divisions, coupled with the resort to political violence, as prominent tools in their struggle to access, maintain and contest political power.

5.4.1. The Lost Hero: Burundi's Traumatic Accession to Independence

During the years leading up to independence, several political parties were created, most importantly the *Union pour le Progrès National* or *Union for National Progress* (UPRONA), which advocated for immediate independence, and the *Parti démocrate chrétien* or *Christian Democratic Party* (PDC), which, backed by the Belgian authorities, was much more conservative in its position towards independence (Chrétien 2000, 273). The main leaders of UPRONA and PDC, despite some exceptions, reflected the Bezi-Batare divide. Prince Louis Rwagasore, the oldest son of the incumbent King Mwambutsa IV, emerged as the main leader of UPRONA. Rwagasore was born in 1932 in the Central province of Muramvya, the traditional political center of the Burundian kingdom and the residence of all Burundian kings. The Western-educated and charismatic prince aimed to reunite all Burundians across ethnic lines and enjoyed tremendous support among Bahutu and Batutsi alike.

In September 1961, UPRONA won competitive legislative elections supervised by the United Nations with a landslide victory. Rwagasore was going to lead Burundi towards independence. However, agents of the PDC assassinated Rwagasore (with the alleged complicity of Belgian authorities) on October 13, 1961. When Burundi finally gained independence the following year, the celebrations were overshadowed by an atmosphere of national mourning for Rwagasore, who has come to be celebrated as one of the heroes of national unity. "*Thus, political assassination was present at the creation of the newly independent Burundi*" (Krueger and Krueger 2007, 28). Rwagasore's call for national unity among the Barundi people did not survive the prince's assassination. In the aftermath of this tragic event, Burundi plunged in a series of internal crises and power struggles. In the four years following independence, it went through the formation of seven different governments and the appointment of six prime ministers. Burundian politics became more volatile and ethnic manipulation prominent (Watt 2008).

The years after Burundi's independence were characterized by several attempts by the Bahutu majority to contest the emerging political supremacy of the Tutsi minority. These power struggles crystallized in several localized Hutu uprisings, notably in 1965, 1969 and 1972. Each time, the increasingly Tutsi-dominated national army responded with severe retaliation against the insurgencies. In 1965, for example, a group of Bahutu gendarmerie and army officers unsuccessfully tried to overthrow the constitutional monarchy by attacking the royal palace in the center of the capital city. The coup attempt took place in the aftermath of the assassination of a Muhutu Prime Minister, Pierre Ngendandumwe, in January 1965, which remained unpunished "*causing strong suspicions within the Hutu elite*" (Ngaruko and Nkurunziza 2000, 374). In addition, during the legislative elections of May 1965, in which

UPRONA won over 60 percent of seats in the Parliament, many of the victorious members were Bahutu who hoped for a Hutu Prime Minister given their results at the ballot box. Instead, the king favored a member of the Baganwa, who had never participated in elections, deeply offending the victorious Hutu candidates (Krueger and Krueger 2007, 28). The national army reacted to the failed coup with severe repression and the killing and imprisonment of many Bahutu intellectuals and an estimated five thousand Hutu civilian victims in the hillsides.

The Tutsi army officer in charge of that operation, Captain Michel Micombero, a graduate of the Royal Military Academy of Belgium, subsequently became Minister of Defense and Prime Minister. In November 1966, Micombero, who was only in his mid-twenties, successfully launched a military coup and overthrew the constitutional monarchy. Burundi's last king, Ntare V, fled into exile, first to West Germany and later to Uganda.

5.4.2. The Three Republics: Batutsi-Bahima Military Dictatorships

From 1966 until 1993, Burundi was governed by military dictatorships, whose leaders exclusively came from the Batutsi-Bahima faction, which hailed from the southern region of Bururi. The military leaders Michel Micombero (1966-1976), Jean-Baptiste Bagaza (1976-1987) and Pierre Buyoya (1987-1993), all came from the same *colline* ('hill') and the same extended family. They installed a political system, in which the Batutsi, especially the Bahima from Bururi (commonly referred to as *Groupe de Bururi* or 'Bururi Group'), would progressively come to dominate the institutions of the state, including the *Forces armées burundaises* or *Burundian Armed Forces* (FAB). The once inclusive UPRONA, one of the country's oldest political parties that had led the country to independence, was transformed into a Tutsi-dominated political party operating in a one-party state.

> […] *the state also hijacked civil society organizations to consolidate state ideology. Youth and women associations and labor unions were branches of the unique party used as propaganda instruments* (Ndikumana 2005, 8).

Ethnic-based oppression was high and the country was characterized by latent and manifest ethnic conflicts and massacres (notably in 1972 and 1988), which attained their peak with the beginning of the civil war in 1993 (Watt 2008, 33ff). The political dominance was underpinned by the establishment of "*predatory bureaucracies*" (Ngaruko and Nkurunziza 2000), which manipulated economic markets and state-led development to bolster the monopoly of the Batutsi-Bahima from the South. Excessive market regulation allowed Micombero, Bagaza and Buyoya to extract rents through various forms of corruption favoring their preferred political allies (Ndikumana 2005).

5.4.2.1. First Republic: Micombero Rule (1966-1976)

The First Republic under the leadership of Captain Micombero is usually characterized as a weak but extremely brutal republic. Micombero ensured his political survival by running the country with an iron fist. The captain started to install a political system favoring his own clan, the Batutsi-Bahima, especially those from his own home province Bururi (Chrétien and Dupaquier 2007, 55-74).

Burundi's civil war is often described as a legacy of the tragic events of 1972 (referred to in Kirundi, as *ikiza*, meaning 'scourge'), in which up to one quarter of a million Bahutu lost their lives. In the aftermath of the 'Rwandan Revolution' (1959-1961), a Hutu social uprising that overthrew the Tutsi-dominated monarchy, thousands of Tutsis fled from Rwanda to Burundi. Their accounts of the horrific events in neighboring Rwanda heightened ethnic tensions in the highly unstable Burundi. While many Bahutu perceived the Rwandan model, often described as *demokarasi* (meaning ethnic majority politics), as an example to aspire to,

the Tutsi elite feared for the loss of its hegemony and aimed to avoid the Rwandan scenario at all costs, even if that meant killing Bahutu.

It is in this volatile climate of inter-ethnic tensions that Burundi was torn apart by the first recorded genocide in Central Africa (Lemarchand 1996). In April 1972, several localized Hutu-led insurgencies erupted, notably around Nyanza-Lac and Rumonge in the South of the country, as a response to the growing "*Tutsification*" of the state (Reyntjens 2009, 29; Watt 2008, 33ff). These Hutu uprisings appeared at a time of intense power struggle between the Batutsi-Bahima and the Batutsi-Banyaruguru as well as the sudden return of Burundi's last King Ntare V, who had been ousted by Micombero in 1966. Idi Amin, Uganda's President at the time, claimed that Micombero had promised him that Ntare could safely return to Burundi and live as a private citizen. However, after Ntare's arrival, he was immediately put under house arrest and accused of plotting a coup against Micombero. The increasing intra-ethnic competition among Batutsi-Bahima and Batutsi-Banyurugura ushered in an exacerbation of inter-ethnic conflict echoing Horowitz's statement that "*where ethnic hostility is reinforced by the exigencies of intraethnic party competition* […] *ethnic conflict is likely to take a nasty turn*" (Horowitz 1991, 456).

During the local revolts, the insurgents killed thousands of Batutsi as well as those Bahutu, who refused to join the rebellion.[72] The Tutsi-dominated national army resorted to massive state repression to secure its grip on power. Given the alleged involvement of Congolese Mai-Mai rebels in the Hutu uprisings, the government of Zaire assisted the Burundian government to suppress the insurgencies (Lemarchand 1996). Over a period of four

[72] The estimates of the victims continue to be debated by historians. For example, while Lemarchand estimates a total of between 1.000 and 3.000 people killed by the insurgents (Lemarchand 1996, 92), Ngayimpenda accounts for 2.000 to 3.000 victims killed in the Province of Bururi alone (Ngayimpenda 1998, 429).

months, what had started as a reprisal counter-insurgency campaign soon transformed into systematic, genocidal massacres, resulting in the killing of up to 300.000 Bahutu and the flight of over 150.000 people to neighboring countries, especially Tanzania (McDoom 2010). It is estimated that the FAB murdered about 10 to 15 percent of the total Hutu male population and up to 75 percent of all educated Bahutu (Krueger and Krueger 2007, 29).

Qualified by Lemarchand as "*selective and retributive genocide*" (Lemarchand and Martin 1974), these massacres aimed to systemically eliminate all Hutu elites and potential elites (including university students and school children) and "*occurred in response to what was perceived by the state as a major threat to its survival*" (Lemarchand 2009, 160).[73] The anti-Hutu violence ensured Tutsi political dominance for the coming decades "*execut*[ing] *a repression so pervasive in its brutality that Hutu would be stunned into submission*" (Weinstein and Schrire 1976, 51). In the aftermath of 1972, many Hutu families were afraid to send their children to school fearing that this could put their lives in danger. It is important to note that many Batutsi-Banyaruguru also fell victim to the repression of the Micombero regime (highlighting the overlap of ethnic- and clan-based divisions).

The tragic events of 1972 would have crucial ramifications for Burundi and the whole Great Lakes Region, including the spread of "*Hutu radicalism*" (Lemarchand 2011, 145) and mass refugee flows, especially to Tanzania, but also other neighboring countries as well as

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[73] The 1972 genocide in Burundi is often referred to as the "*forgotten genocide*". For a detailed analysis of the 1972 events and a comparison between the Rwandan and Burundian genocide, please see (Lemarchand 1996). It is important to note that there have never been any formal, national or international investigations into these events. The United Nations' International Commission of Inquiry for Burundi determined in its work that acts of genocide against the Batutsi took place in Burundi in 1993 and recommended investigations into the 1972 events (ONU 2002). At present, there is a *Collectif des Survivants et Victimes du Génocide Hutu de 1972* or *Collective of Survivors and Victims of Genocide against the Hutu in Burundi before, during and after 1972*, which is lobbying for the recognition of the Hutu genocide of 1972 by the United Nations.

Europe and North America.[74] In her influential work among Burundian refugees in the 1980s, Malkki recounts the emergence of a strong self-awareness among the Hutu population as a martyred and victimized community in the refugee camps in Tanzania. Through what she terms "*mythico-histories*", the refugees glorified "*the past of the Hutus as 'a people'*" (Malkki 1995, 55), categorically distinct from the evil Tutsi 'Other'. Turner would subsequently investigate how these mythico-historical narratives constituted an integral part of the construction of distinct political ideologies among diverse refugee camp factions over the 'real truth' about the Burundian conflict in order to gain hegemony in the camps (Turner 2010).

It was in one of the Hutu refugee camps in Tanzania that the PALIPEHUTU-FNL was founded at the beginning of the 1980s, first as a social protest movement to promote the return of Hutu refugees to their motherland and subsequently as an armed resistance movement (Alfieri 2014). Many members of the various Hutu-dominated rebellions that would emerge in Burundi in the years and decades to come, including the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD, are survivors of the 1972 massacres, commonly referred to as "*orphelins de 1972*".

To sum up, the First Republic was characterized by rule through terror. Micombero's regime systematically used violent ethnic oppression, including selective genocide against Bahutu intellectuals, to solidify the hegemonic dominance of the Southern Batutsi-Bahima clan. As Lemarchand highlights, it is probably no coincidence that the Batutsi-Bahima claimed their political hegemony, constituting somewhat of a revenge act for their marginalization by the Batutsi-Banyaruguru during the pre-colonial times (Lemarchand 1996).

[74] Belgium and Canada became the most important Western host countries for these Burundian refugees.

5.4.2.2. Second Republic: Bagaza Rule (1976-1987)

As criticism of Micombero's corrupt and despotic leadership grew, the Captain was ousted in November 1976 in a bloodless palace coup by one of his own cousins, Lieutenant Colonel Jean Baptiste Bagaza. Bagaza had served as Chairman of the Supreme Revolutionary Council giving him selected access to key army officers to stage his coup. Bagaza's Second Republic became particularly known for its relative stability, its promotion of economic development and its harsh crackdown on Christian churches, especially the Catholic Church.

Despite Bagaza's initial promises of initiating a process of political opening and reconciliation following the dark years of 1965, 1969 and 1972 (Prunier 1995), the systemic discrimination of Bahutu continued. Bagaza tried to hide the continuing marginalization of the majority population by banning all ethnic references from public discourse. "*Thus, though making up 85 percent of the population, Hutus generally received less than 10 percent of the positions in the schools, universities, and Parliament*" (Krueger and Krueger 2007, 30). In other words, even though only accounting for 14 percent of the population, Batutsi generally occupied more than 90 percent of the positions in all skilled sectors (apart from the agricultural and the working class sector).

The discrimination of Bahutu in the education sector reached its peak during the Bagaza years. Under Bagaza, around 47 percent of all children did not have the opportunity to attend school. In 1985, only 4 percent of Burundi's young generation were enrolled in secondary school, the grand majority of them Batutsi (Krueger and Krueger 2007, 30). In order to ensure the exclusion of Bahutu from secondary schools, the schools' examination system was systemically controlled and rigged. Many Barundi recount the frequent practice according to which students had to specify which ethnic group they belong to by writing *I* (for

Tuts*i*) or *U* (for Hut*u*) on their exam sheets. This opened the opportunity for the school administration to systemically limit the success rate for Hutu students.

Bagaza embarked on a massive program of promoting economic development, mostly financed by foreign investment, aid and debt. As its neighbor Rwanda, Burundi attracted high amounts of development aid turning the country into another "*development dictatorship*" supported by the West (Scherrer 2002, 222). Bagaza created several public corporations, which served as political tools for rent collection and re-distribution among his preferred political allies. Many of these public companies were not able to survive economically without massive life-support from state subsidies. Bagaza became extremely famous for his large infrastructure projects, reflected in the expansion of roads, access to electricity, drinking water and housing (Ndikumana 2000).

Bagaza firmly controlled the political space by censuring the press, reinforcing the secret service and imprisoning people suspected of opposing the regime (especially sympathizers of the emerging PALIPEHUTU-FNL). In light of the closed political space, the Catholic Church constituted one of the last defenders to advocate for a minimum of freedom of expression resulting in a fierce crackdown against the churches. Indeed, Bagaza perceived the churches as potential harbors of any future Hutu uprising, perhaps due to the important role played by the churches during Rwanda's Revolution of 1959 (Lemarchand 1996). In addition, the churches were key actors in promoting the education of young Burundians without distinction. Bagaza confiscated church properties, enacted rules and regulations to control religious practices and expelled many missionaries. However, the suppression of Catholic churches did not fare well among the highly religious Burundians, a large majority of whom (estimated at around two thirds of the population) belong to the Catholic denomination.

In summary, what Micombero had achieved through selective genocide, the elimination of a Hutu elite, Bagaza tried to cement through the systematic exclusion of Bahutu from educational opportunities. Just like the current Rwandan government under President Paul Kagame, Bagaza prohibited any ethnic references from public discourse in an attempt to mask the repressive system through the promotion of the country's economic development.

5.4.2.3. Third Republic: Buyoya Rule (1987-1993)

In September 1987, Jean-Baptiste Bagaza was ousted in a bloodless palace coup by another Mututsi-Muhima from the Bururi group, Major Pierre Buyoya (Lemarchand 1996). Faced with growing international pressure, Buyoya initiated a series of limited liberal reforms. However, the national army, which had become the major tool of repression, remained almost entirely in the hands of the Batutsi (Curtis 2013, 79). While political liberalization unfolded too slowly for Hutu hard-liners, it extended too far for Tutsi hard-liners reinforcing ethnic tensions.

In the summer of 1988, ethnic tensions grew in the North of Burundi around the two communes of Ntega and Marangara in the provinces of Kirundo and Ngozi respectively. There were increasing rumors from Rwanda that the national army was about to massacre the Hutu population. What seems to have started as a local dispute between Hutu peasants and a wealthy Tutsi turned violent, when the Tutsi made use of his firearm to disperse the alleged aggressors. When the people in the surrounding areas heard the gunshots, rumors intensified that the Tutsi army was back to kill the Hutu people (Twagiramungu 2016, 64). With the tragic memories of 1972 still alive, hundreds of Hutu peasants armed with machetes started to attack Tutsi populations. Yet again, the Tutsi-dominated army responded with a repressive anti-Hutu campaign leaving between at least 10.000 and 25.000 victims (Guichaoua, Chrétien, and Le Jeune 1989; Lemarchand 1990).

For Buyoya, the 1988 events became somewhat of a violent eye-opener resulting in an increased liberalization based on the conviction that he had to address the country's ethnic antagonism before it risked ushering in the destruction of the country (Prunier 1995). In the aftermath of the ethnic violence and with the changing international context at the end of the Cold War, Buyoya promised to establish a more democratic government, thereby also responding to increasing pressure from the international community. Faced with the risk of international aid withdrawal, Buyoya initiated a series of political reforms. In October 1988, Buyoya announced a new cabinet. This included a new Prime Minister, Adrien Sibomana, who was the first Hutu to occupy the premier's post since the assassination of Pierre Ngendandumwe in 1965. Buyoya also established a Special National Commission to study the question of national unity, compromising an equal number of Bahutu and Batutsi. Despite these encouraging signals, persecution of out-spoken Hutu opposition members continued. In the aftermath of Ntega-Marangara, 27 Hutu intellectuals had addressed an open letter to Buyoya denouncing ethnic and tribal persecution. Six of the 27 signatories were arrested and nine others fled to Rwanda (Lemarchand 1996, 134).

To sum up, after decades of closed authoritarian regimes, Buyoya allowed an increasing liberalization. In March 1992, Barundi adopted a new democratic Constitution by referendum, which introduced a multi-party system, and resulted in the legalization of several formerly clandestine Hutu-dominated political parties. After three decades of military dictatorship, and as the third wave of democratization swept through Sub-Saharan Africa, Burundi organized its first free presidential elections in June 1993.

5.4.3. *Amagume* or *La Crise*: 'Slaying' Democracy & Onset of Civil War

The 1993 milestone elections resulted in a landslide victory for the newly legalized, predominantly Hutu party, the *Front pour la démocratie au Burundi* or *Front for Democracy in Burundi* (FRODEBU), whose leader, the charismatic Melchior Ndadaye, became the new President. Ndadaye, who was born in 1953 in Muramvya Province, had been forced to flee Burundi during the 1972 massacres finding refuge in neighboring Rwanda. After his return to Burundi in 1983, he founded FRODEBU together with other political activists as an underground political movement in 1986. FRODEBU was legally recognized as a political in party in 1992 following the adoption of the new Constitution. Ndadaye's election constituted a milestone on several fronts since he was not only the first Hutu President, but also the first President, who did not come from the traditionally privileged Southern region of Bururi.

At the time, the 1993 elections were internationally praised as a remarkable example of democratic transition. Despite Ndadaye's appointment of a national unity government (comprising 7 Tutsi and 15 Hutu ministers) and a Tutsi Prime Minister,[75] discontent grew among the Tutsi (Lemarchand 1996, 183), who feared to loose their privileged status, especially in the public sector and the military (Curtis 2013, 80). Tensions were heightened by the massive return of Hutu refugees from neighboring countries (Kamungi, Oketch, and Huggins 2005). The euphoria following the 1993 watershed elections remained short-lived, when only three months later, Ndadaye (along with the President and the Vice-President of the National Assembly, the next two politicians in line of succession to serve as Burundi's

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[75] Ndadaye had suggested to Buyoya to postpone the elections for a transitional period of five to ten years (during which Buyoya could remain President and Ndadaye would become Prime Minister) in order to prepare the Burundian population for the upcoming elections. However, Buyoya, who was convinced that he would be able to win the 1993 elections, rejected this proposal (Interview with Willy Nindorera, Jinja, 10 June 2013).

President, as well as other high-ranking political personalities) was assassinated by elements in the Tutsi-dominated national army unwilling to concede power to a Hutu President (Reyntjens 2009). Many people suspected Buyoya's involvement in the assassination. However, there has been no detailed investigation into these events. Ndadaye's assassination[76] precipitated the beginning of the civil war, often referred to by Barundi as *amagume* ('the crisis') or by several informants as "*slaying of democracy*" (Focus group with CNDD-FDD ex-combatants, Bubanza, 18 June 2014). Over the next fifteen years, Burundi's civil war would result in a vicious cycle of inter-ethnic violence costing the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, Bahutu and Batutsi alike. It is estimated that Burundi's civil war would cost the life of around 300,000 people and result in the exile of 500,000 refugees and the displacement of thousands of IDPs.

President Ndadaye's assassination "*hit the countryside with the force of an earthquake*" and "*a blind rage suddenly seized Frodebu militants and peasants alike in almost every province*" where they proceeded to kill all Batutsi in sight, collectively scapegoating them for the assassination of President Ndadaye. Many historians highlight the importance of the 1972 *ikiza* for understanding the unfolding of the 1993 elections. For instance, Lemarchand writes that, only in light of the 1972 events, can we try to apprehend:

> […] *why in 1993 some Tutsi extremists within the army and government found it intolerable to surrender power to a Hutu president. But perhaps the most dramatic blow-back effect of 1972 found expression in the orgy of violence triggered by the news of Ndadaye's assassination, when thousands of innocent Tutsi civilians fell under the blows of enraged Hutu youth* (Lemarchand 1996, xiii).

[76] For a detailed personal account of the events surrounding Ndadaye's assassination and members of his cabinet, please see (Krueger and Krueger 2007).

These events provide the backdrop for the creation of the CNDD-FDD. As FRODEBU proved to be incapable of controlling the country, the young party split over whether or not to share power with the former ruling party UPRONA. While one group of FRODEBU activists favored political dialogue, a breakaway faction convinced that armed resistance was the only alternative resulting in the creation of the CNDD-FDD. Despite initial attempts at unification (to be explored in detail in Chapter VI), the CNDD-FDD emerged as the competitor to the historic rebel movement of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and its various splinter groups. During the civil war, the CNDD-FDD would become the strongest fighting force followed by the PALIPEHUTU-FNL.

After Ndadaye's assassination, domestic and international criticism of the coup attempt helped FRODEBU to formally retain control over the government. In September 1994, FRODEBU agreed with the opposition parties, most importantly UPRONA, on an internal power-sharing agreement, known as the *Convention de Gouvernement* or ('Convention of Gouvernement'), in which the opposition managed to increase its share in government to 45 percent (even though FRODEBU had won the 1993 elections with 71 percent of the vote) (Curtis 2013, 81). However, the make-up of the national army was totally excluded from the discussions, reinforcing the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL in their belief in the inevitability of armed resistance. Indeed, members of both movements perceived the Convention of Government as nothing more than a betrayal of the 1993 elections and Ndadaye's legacy.

Over the next three years, Burundi would experience what Professor Filip Reyntjens has referred to as a "*creeping coup*" (Reyntjens 2009, 34), leading to the continuous erosion of power of the elected FRODEBU government. Tutsi political hard-liners and army members

systematically aimed to delegitimize FRODEBU by accusing it of having planned the genocidal massacres of the Batutsi populations following Ndadaye's assassination and by foisting a political order, which only aimed at consolidating the 1993 coup (Lemarchand 2009, 161).

On April 6, 1994, Burundi's new President Cyprien Ntaryamira, a 1972 survivor and FRODEBU founding member who had replaced Ndadaye as President after his assassination, was the victim of the attack on the plane of Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana which cost the lives of both Presidents who were on their way back from a regional summit in Dar-Es-Salaam. The assassination became the catalyst of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide. Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, another FRODEBU founding member and former Foreign Minister under Ndadaye, replaced President Ntaryamira.

During the following years, the security situation in Burundi became more and more volatile. Inter- and intra-ethnic violence escalated. Hutu rebels killed Tutsi populations. The Tutsi-dominated national army cracked down on the Hutu insurgencies. The rebels battled each other on numerous occasions. In July 1996, several massacres of Tutsi populations took place. In this climate of fear, the "*creeping coup*" was 'officialized' on July 25, 1996, when Major Buyoya seized power for the second time through another military putsch (Reyntjens 2009, 41). In the process, FRODEBU split into an internal wing (consisting of FRODEBU members remaining in Burundi) and an external wing (comprising exiled FRODEBU members, who, after Buyoya's putsch aimed to form a government in exile in Tanzania to protest Buyoya's coup d'état).

5.4.4. The Arusha Peace Process: Negotiating Burundi's Political Transition

During much of the civil war period, Burundi's political elites sought to negotiate an inter-ethnic power-sharing agreement that could bring back peace to the country. After a series of failed negotiation attempts, peace talks started in earnest in Arusha in neighboring Tanzania in 1998, under immense pressure from the international and regional community. After an initial mediation period led by Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, South African President Nelson Mandela took over as chief negotiator after Nyerere's death. Scholars highlight that it was essentially South Africa's leadership role that helped push for an internationally mediated peace agreement (Curtis 2013, 83).

The negotiations culminated in 2000 in the signing of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, which lays out an extensive inter-ethnic power sharing agreement and a blueprint for a democratic transition in Burundi. The Arusha Accord consists of a formal peace accord followed by five protocols, which were signed by the Government of Burundi, the National Assembly as well as 17 political parties and groups (divided into the G10 representing Tutsi groups and G7 representing Hutu groups). Arusha includes several political and military power-sharing agreements. Politically, it stipulates an ethnic quota system for Burundi's political institutions – giving the Tutsi minority 40 percent of posts in government and the National Assembly as well as 50 percent in the Senate, whereas the Hutu majority occupies 60 and 50 percent respectively. Militarily, it stipulates a reform of the defense and security forces, which grants an equitable representation of 50 percent of posts for Bahutu and Batutsi through the integration of the various Armed Political Movements and Parties (commonly called PMPA) into a new national army. These ethnic quotas are supposed to function as security guarantees in order to prevent any future inter-ethnic violence. Arusha

provided for a thirty-months-long transition period (to be led by a Tutsi and then a Hutu President) culminating in the holding of elections.[77]

However, the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL remained outside of the regionally and internationally sponsored Arusha peace process until 2003 and 2006 respectively. In 2003, peace negotiations would lead to a cease-fire agreement between the CNDD-FDD and the transitional government (Nindorera 2008, 103). Hereafter, the CNDD-FDD initiated its formal conversion into a political party and joined the state's political and military institutions (Falch 2009, 13). While peace returned to most of the country, instability persisted, because the PALIPEHUTU-FNL continued its insurgency, most importantly in its traditional fiefdom of Bujumbura rural province. It was not until 2008, after years of negotiations, that the PALIPEHUTU-FNL would finally agree to officially renounce its armed struggle and to also initiate its formal transformation into a political party. The PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD's behavior at the peace talks will be discussed in detail in Chapter VII.

5.4.5. The Post-Accord Transition: An Unfinished Business?

In mid-2005, Burundi organized its first free and fair elections since the beginning of the civil war. The elections followed the adoption of a new Constitution by referendum earlier that year (with an approval rate of 92 percent of the votes). The new Constitution stipulated many of Arusha's key inter-ethnic power-sharing provisions.

The 2005 elections resulted in a landslide victory for the CNDD-FDD, which had just been officially transformed into a political party. Immediately after the CNDD-FDD's

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[77] It was later agreed that Buyoya would lead the first half of the transition followed by Domitien Ndayizeye, a FRODEBU member, who had stayed in Burundi during the civil war (Curtis 2013, 84).

electoral success, hopes for peace and democracy were extremely high (Peterson 2006). However, since the CNDD-FDD's accession to power and the subsequent consolidation of its power during the 2010 and 2015 elections, the ruling party has increasingly returned to authoritarian practices. The 2005 elections radically transformed Burundi's political landscape and fundamentally changed the country's most important political cleavages:

> […] *while the situation in 1993 was bipolar in a double sense – opposing two parties (Frodebu and Uprona) and two ethnicities (Hutu and Tutsi) – in 2005 the landscape has become multipolar. The two main 'Hutu' parties (CNDD-FDD and Frodebu) enter into competition for the Hutu electorate, while several 'Tutsi' parties attempt to seduce Tutsi and UPRONA's supremacy is threatened by other parties such as Parena and MRC*[78] (Reyntjens 2006b, 16).

In addition to the rising importance of intra-Hutu political competition, the violent anti-PALIPEHUTU-FNL campaign following the accession of the CNDD-FDD to power contributed to the banalization of ethnic cleavages. Indeed, for the first time in Burundi's history, the population directly witnessed that violent oppression does not necessarily primarily occur among Bahutu and Batutsi, but also among traditionally Hutu-dominated groups. Consequently, the long-standing inter-ethnic cleavages have become less salient and have been superseded by intra-ethnic political rivalries. This tendency was even more reinforced when the PALIPEHUTU-FNL officially renounced its armed struggle and integrated the political game as a political party in the run-up to the 2010 elections. However, recent events around the 2015 electoral crisis have revived concerns that ethnic violence might become a challenge once again. Chapter VIII provides an in-depth empirical analysis of the

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[78] The *Parti pour le redressement national* or *Party for National Recovery* (PARENA) is a party founded by former President Bagaza in 1994. Bagaza led the party from 1994 until his death in 2016. The *Mouvement pour la Réhabilitation du Citoyen* or *Movement for the Rehabilitation of Citizens* (MRC) is a party founded by Colonel Epitace Banyaganakandi in 2002. Banyaganakandi led the party from 2002 until his death in 2015.

historical trajectories of the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL during the post-accord elections.

5.5. Historical Recap: Burundi's Authoritarian Legacies

Burundi's turbulent past and present are a tragic testimony to the important role that political violence has come to play in the country's politics. Table 6 provides a summary of Burundi's key historical legacies. Political violence and targeted high-level political assassinations have emerged as an important political tool that has been employed by all political actors: those who oppose and those who sustain an existing political order. This does not mean that the country is constantly in a state of war. Instead, political violence has become a structural pattern of politics in recurrent cycles of rebellion, repression and rapprochement.

Burundi's authoritarian past (1966-1993) and the civil war (1993-2008) illustrate that political power has usually been acquired, maintained, and challenged by military force. While the Tutsi-dominated authoritarian regimes used political violence against the Hutu majority population, including during the 1972 "*selective genocide*" (Lemarchand and Martin 1974), to ensure their grip on power, it was prolonged armed struggle that brought the CNDD-FDD to power and contributed to the emergence of the FNL as a major opposition force. As will be discussed in-depth in Chapters VI, VII and VIII, political violence remains an important political tool in Burundi's present political landscape. What Basedau and his colleagues eloquently highlighted in 2007 remains valid today:

> *Taken together, all systemic experiences with violence – including political murder and a 'selective genocide' – produce a certain conditioning of the main actors in their attitude towards violence. In Burundi, violence can be seen as the dominant mode of political competition (in comparison to consensus or co-operation)* (Basedau, Erdmann, and Mehler 2007, 211).

It is against the history of colonialism, authoritarianism, political violence and civil war that we have to analyze the twin historical trajectories of the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. During the comparative analysis undertaken in Chapter VI, VII and VIII, it is important to keep in mind that both politico-military organizations have been fundamentally socialized and shaped by the country's past.

Summary of historical legacies for Burundi's current political landscape:

1. Political violence has become a structural pattern of politics in recurrent cycles of revolts, repression and rapprochement.
2. Political rulers and challengers have become socialized to the employment of political violence as a political tool to pursue their interests, including, most notably, targeted high-level political assassinations.
3. Elections have traditionally been volatile, contested and accompanied by violence.
4. The deliberate spreading of rumors and misinformation has become a prominent political instrument among all political actors.
5. Political authority has historically been linked to military power (reflected in the conviction that the national army constitutes the ultimate arbitrator of political power) leading to a continuing militarization of politics.
6. After decades of ethno-political violence, the conflict fault lines have changed and primarily take place along political lines. However, the manipulation of ethnicity remains an important characteristic of Burundian politics.
7. The large majority of perpetrators of political violence have never been brought to justice leading to an entrenched culture of impunity fuelling the continued use of political violence.
8. There is a high degree of victimization and a constant struggle for the *ukuri*, the 'real' truth, about the root causes of the Burundian conflict as well as the representation and interpretation of Burundian history.
9. All political crises are interlinked. Each episode of violence has its roots in previous ones. Each incident of violence has to be studied in regards to past incidents.
10. Burundi's history is intimately intertwined with that of its regional neighbors. Events in one country of the Great Lakes can have important repercussions on other countries of the region.

Table 6: Key Historical Legacies of Burundian Politics

Chapter VI: Choosing Armed Resistance – Genesis & Evolution of Rebellion

"*Bapfaniki, barutwa na bamaraniye iki.*"[79]

(Burundian proverb)

[79] This Kirundi proverb roughly translates into "*Brotherhood stops where interests begin*".

In the summer of 2015, I interviewed a locally elected official of the CNDD-FDD. During the civil war, he was a *mobilisateur politique*, who raised awareness among the local population for the cause of the armed rebellion. He described how he promoted the liberation image of the movement among the local population in his home province. He helped raise awareness among the populace for the need to rise up against enduring injustice and oppression. He was also charged with setting up clandestine parallel administration structures to support the local population. The CNDD-FDD framed the armed struggle as an indispensable necessity. My interviewee cited former rebel leader and current President Nkurunziza underscoring that "*this war was forced upon us, we did not start it*".

We continued the interview by talking about the historical competition between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD during the civil war. My informant highlighted the fierce battles that had been taking place between the two movements.

> *During the civil war, some of the most brutal battles opposed our FNL militants and FDD fighters.* […] *The national army just stood by and watched how we mutually destroyed each other* (Interview with former FNL member, Courtrai, 13 October 2015).

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The following three chapters analyze the evolving dynamics of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD's ideational, power and institutional politics at critical junctures, including critical foundational (Chapter VI), peace negotiation (Chapter VII) and electoral decision moments (Chapter VIII).[80] All three chapters are devoted to an in-depth investigation of the hybrid politico-military structures of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD.

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[80] As a reminder, please see subsection 3.2.3 for a discussion of my adoption of "*systematic historical process analysis*" (Hall 2006) and the reasons for why I have chosen three types of critical junctures, including critical foundational, peace negotiation and electoral decision moments.

In this chapter, I specifically investigate the common political roots of both movements, the key moments when they decided to turn to armed struggle to pursue their political goals as well as the subsequent evolution of their intricate political and military structures during the civil war.

6.1. Picking Up the Gun: Investigating Political Roots

Both the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD constitute excellent examples to illustrate the fuzzy boundaries between rebel groups and political parties brought to the forefront by the "*no peace, no war*" (Marchal 2002; Richards 2005; Debos 2013) and the "*armed politics*" (Staniland 2015a) paradigms. In this section, I retrace the common political roots of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD. While, as will be discussed below, both movements share a common, clandestine[81], political parent organization, divisions over ideational, power and institutional politics eventually led to a divorce and distinctive trajectories. Figure 3 provides a summary timeline of the movements' twin histories, from their foundation until today (spanning from pre-war to war and post-war periods). Efforts at unification and sporadic collaboration attempts between the two groups continued throughout the civil war, but these efforts remained short-lived underlining the importance of inter-rebel dynamics for our comprehension of civil war dynamics (Fjelde and Nilsson 2012; Cunningham 2013; Seymour 2014).

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[81] I use the term 'clandestine' in reference to the illegal status that the various Hutu-dominated political movements were operating under in Burundi during the Tutsi-dominated authoritarian regimes. From exile (including from Europe or neighboring Rwanda and Tanzania), the movements were able to operate more openly, regularly publishing important manifestos. However, their work outside of Burundi depended on the fluctuating support from third countries.

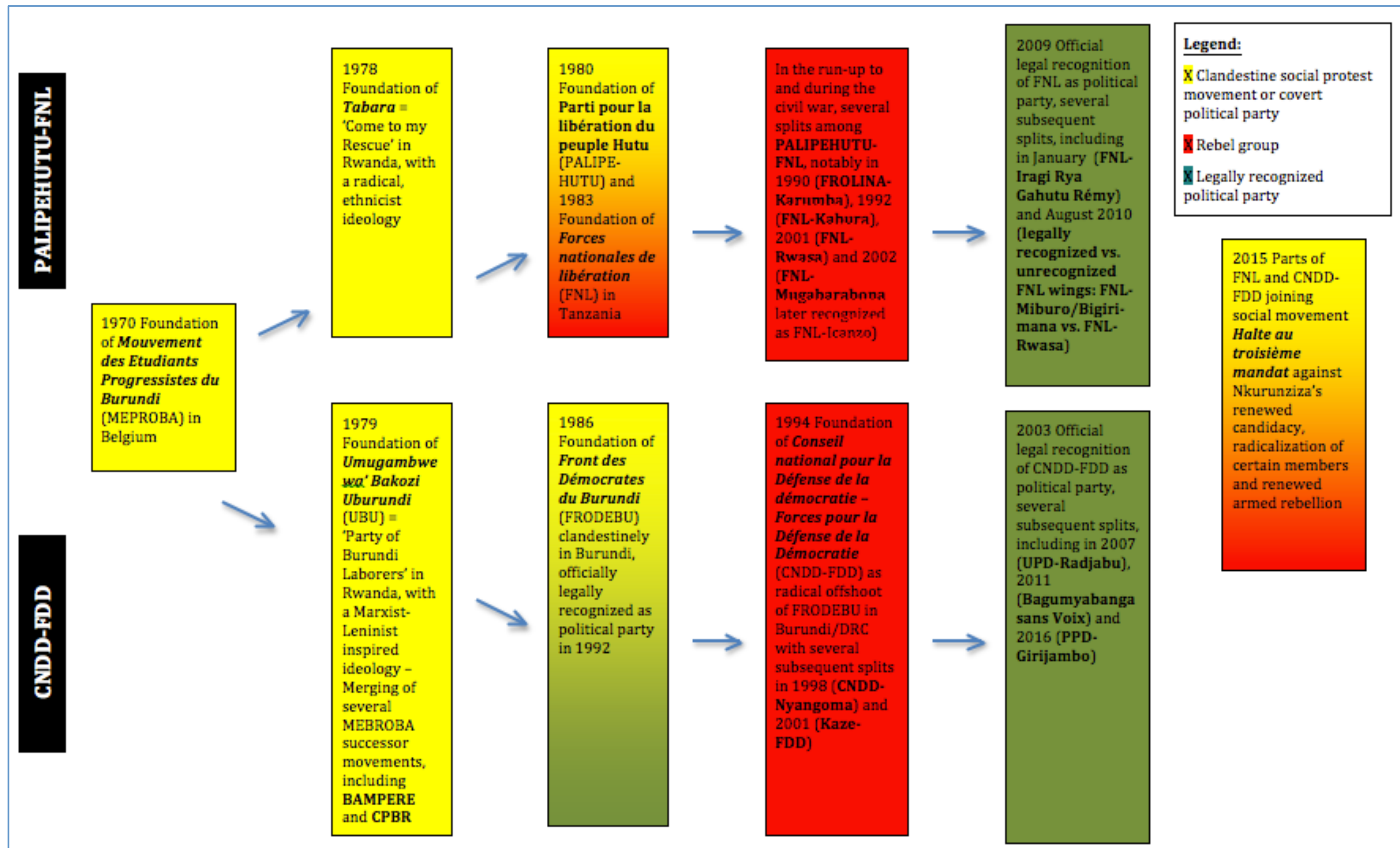

Figure 3: Timeline of PALIPEHUTU-FNL & CNDD-FDD's Histories (1970-2015)

6.1.1. Splintering of MEPROBA: Mapping Distinctive Historical Paths

Both the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD have their origins in student associations, social protest movements and political parties. In interviews with supporters of both movements, most militants framed their resistance as primarily political and their recourse to armed struggle as the last and ultimate resort in fighting against decades of oppression and injustice (Interview with Agathon Rwasa, Bujumbura, 11 October 2013; Interview with Léonard Nyangoma, Lille, 25 October 2015).

Both rebel movements have their roots in a leftist student organization founded in exile, the *Mouvement des Etudiants Progressistes Barundi* or *Movement of Progressive Burundian Students* (MEPROBA). Several prominent members of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD were once members of MEPROBA, including, for example, Rémy Gahutu, the founder of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, and Jérôme Ndiho, the CNDD-FDD's spokesperson during the civil war.

MEPROBA was established in Belgium at the beginning of the 1970s to oppose the repressive nature of Burundi's regime. MEPROBA contested what it called the reactionary, tribal and neo-colonial regime in Bujumbura (Chrétien and Dupaquier 2007, 324). The foundation of MEPROBA was triggered by the events of 1969, when the Micombero regime used allegations of a Hutu-led coup attempt to arrest around 30 Hutu personalities from the government and the army and ultimately executed twenty of them. Historians stress that the 1969 events were part of a purge against Hutu personalities intended to install political and military Batutsi-Bahima primacy. "*Following the 1969 purge, both the officer corps and the troops were largely Hima in origin*" (Lemarchand 1996, 87).

MEPROBA subscribed to the principles of scientific socialism and developed a primarily class-based interpretation of the Burundian conflict[82] (Chrétien and Dupaquier 2007, 324). Its ideational underpinnings were double: it found its inspiration in revolutionary and national liberation movements. According to MEPROBA's interpretation, Burundi was characterized by a growing class conflict between the Batutsi bourgeoisie and the Bahutu (and Batwa) proletariat. For MEPROBA, political struggle came first, but armed resistance was envisioned as a last resort (Interview with former MEPROBA member, Bujumbura, 15 July 2014). In theory, MEPROBA's final recourse was the revolutionary overthrow of the Burundian regime through a progressive alliance of workers, peasants and intellectuals. "*The movement's commitment to a class-based revolution implies a categorical rejection of 'tribalism', even though the bulk of its membership is Hutu*" (Lemarchand 1996, 145). However, members disagreed on the exact definition of the clandestine political struggle and the moment when the movement would eventually be obliged to pick up the gun (Interview with FNL member, Courtrai, 13 October 2015).

During and after the 1972 selective genocide, MEPROBA published several testimonies recounting the tragic events of the *ikiza* and putting forward the association's interpretation of the events.[83] The following excerpt reflects MEPROBA's Marxist underpinning:

[82] For a more detailed understanding of MEPROBA's political positions, please see the assocation's regular publication *La Voie du Progrès* or *The Way of Progress*.
[83] MEPROBA's potential links with the localized Hutu rebellion in the run-up to the 1972 selective genocide are controversially debated. For a summary of MEPROBA's positions during the 1972 *ikiza*, please see (Chrétien and Dupaquier 2007, 324ff).

> […] *This is thus the fundamental significance of the events in Burundi. Sure, two ethnicities oppose each other and it would be easy to talk about a tribal conflict. However, one, the Batutsi, form a dominant minority class at the service of foreign interests and their own class privileges, and this class wants under all circumstances marginalize the majority Hutu class from all participation in the management of national affairs.* […] *the Tutsi domination serves the defense of neocolonial interests of Belgium and other nations* (MEPROBA 1972, 2).

In addition to Marxist inspirations, political resistance against the Burundian regime was also cast as a national liberation struggle coupled with an explicit opposition to the imperial politics of the great powers, accused of using the African continent in general and Burundi in particular as a battle ground in their scrambles for political influence.

MEPROBA gained particularly prominence after the 1972 tragedy, which contributed to swelling its numbers, especially as refugees that had fled Burundi joined the movement. The horrific events of the *ikiza* contributed to growing tensions inside the movement. These divisions eventually culminated in the split of MEPROBA into two clandestine, political movements, namely TABARA ('Come to my Rescue') and *Umugambwe wa' Bakozi Uburundi* (UBU) ('Party of Burundi Laborers'), which would become the political parent organizations of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD. Given their illegal status in Burundi, TABARA and UBU operated primarily from neighboring countries, most notably Rwanda and Tanzania (supported by Burundian diasporas in Europe and North America).

The split was rooted in growing disputes among MEPROBA members about the appropriate interpretation of the Burundian conflict, i.e. ethnic- versus class-based interpretation. In addition, parts of MEPROBA had grown increasingly dissatisfied with what they saw as empty left-wing rhetoric. Indeed, the movement had remained primarily composed of intellectuals without reaching the popular masses (Lemarchand 1996, 145). Several MEPROBA members advocated for transforming the student movement into a political party

to move from theory to practice and, above all, to build a genuine presence in the interior of Burundi. Others believed that MEPROBA was not ready for this and should rather wait and diplomatically challenge the Micombero regime from outside (Interview with FNL member, Courtrai, 13 October 2015).

The radical branch would found TABARA, the more moderate one formed UBU. Even though rooted in MEPROBA's Marxist ideology, TABARA developed a more essentalist, ethno-centric interpretation of the Burundian conflict and promoted the installation of a Hutu ethnic majority political system. TABARA primarily established itself in Rwanda, where it sought close ties with refugee organizations to reach out to the Hutu masses, which had fled Burundi after the 1965, 1969 and 1972 massacres. UBU, for its part, maintained a strong Marxist inspired reading based on social class divisions and advocated for the equality of all ethnic groups in Burundi and the installation of a democratic political system. UBU also featured an explicit commitment to *gusubikanya*, a political concept based on distributive, equitable social justice[84] to diminish the differences between the social classes in Burundi.

Both, TABARA and UBU, considered the use of armed resistance as a possible last resort. However, TABARA supporters were considered more militant, whereas UBU sympathizers were more timid in their promotion of violence. While many TABARA members would be at the origin of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, several UBU members would eventually help found FRODEBU clandestinely in 1986 and later the CNDD-FDD. These groups would not only engage in a political struggle against the Burundian regime, but they would also compete among themselves for the legitimate stewardship of the liberation cause.

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[84] *Gusibikanya* is inspired by the Marxist principle of "*from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs*" (Interview with UBU founding member, Bujumbura, 15 July 2015).

6.1.2. Genesis of PALIPEHUTU-FNL: Ethno-Centric & 'Mythico Histories'

> *The present work is the perfect key to understanding the problems of* […] *Burundi* […]. *We urgently demand that the Hutus of Burundi* […] *teach their children the exact truth about their subjugation. The goal of the document is to remove the misunderstandings and falsifications of Burundian history that have been encouraged by certain corrupt members of the blood-soaked Tutsi regime and to uncover the hidden truth and the irregularities and injustices that the Hutu people have suffered. The Tutsi cannot accept sharing power with the Hutu, and only a bitter struggle will enable the Hutu to regain their rights* (Gahutu N.D., Preface).

Today, the *Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu – Forces nationales de libération* or *Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People – National Forces of Liberation* (PALIPEHUTU-FNL) describes itself as the ancestor and the mother of all Hutu-dominated rebel groups in Burundi (Interview with Agathon Rwasa, FNL leader, Bujumbura, 11 October 2013). To this date, former PALIPEHUTU-FNL combatants take great pride in having fought for the first movement that grasped the necessity of picking up the gun against the Tutsi-dominated political regime. Indeed, they often describe the PALIPEHUTU-FNL as the historical and legitimate guardian of the Hutu liberation cause. According to many former combatants, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL laid the groundwork for the political and armed struggle in the fight against decades of oppression and injustice of the Bahutu (Focus groups with former FNL combatants, Bujumbura, 17 October 2013 and 24 October 2013).

On April 18, 1980, Rémy Gahutu officially founded the PALIPEHUTU in the refugee camp of Mishamo in Tanzania (Lemarchand 1996, 144). Born in 1945 on Kabuguzo hill in Muramvya Province to a Tutsi mother and a Hutu father, Gahutu attended primary and secondary schools in Burundi. During the 1960s, he had the opportunity to study in Belgium, where he received several degrees in agronomy from the University of Ghent and the Catholic University of Leuven amongst others. In the wake of the 1972 *ikiza*, Gahutu helped found

MEPROBA and later joined TABARA. In 1978, he moved to Rwanda, where he became a prominent TABARA militant, actively opposing and criticizing the Bagaza regime. Gahutu's call for an end to the Tutsi-dominated dictatorship and his criticism of Bagaza's human rights abuses made him *persona non grata* in his home country. In May 1979, together with other TABARA activists, Gahutu managed to smuggle a communiqué denouncing Bagaza's oppression of the Bahutu into the conference room of a Franco-African Summit that was held in Rwanda's capital of Kigali. Bagaza severely criticized this move and stormed out of the meeting as a result. As diplomatic ties between Burundi and Rwanda worsened (Rich 2012, 407f), the Rwandan authorities eventually expelled several TABARA militants, including Gahutu and two of his closest associates, Jean Bahimanga and Hilaire Kaboma (Lemarchand 1996, 145). From Rwanda, TABARA moved to Tanzania where Gahutu started to work for several aid committees in the refugee camps, including the Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service (TCRS), a local branch of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). "*He wanted to be close to his people to help them overcome their suffering*" (Interview with Alfred Bagaya, former FNL Vice-President, Courtrai, 13 October 2015).

Three years after the foundation of the PALIPEHUTU, Gahutu resigned from his work to dedicate himself exclusively to the development of the clandestine political party. Gahutu aimed to establish a movement to represent the interests of Hutu refugees and demanded their safe return to their motherland. He subsequently became a mythical figure in the Tanzanian refugee camps, namely Mishamo, Katumba and Ulyankulu, where he taught agronomy to the refugees who learnt how to systematically cultivate land, which was provided to them by the Tanzanian authorities, and started to contribute parts of their income to the PALIPEHUTU's political activities (Alfieri 2016).

Gahutu was key in shaping the PALIPEHUTU's ideational project. It was in the Tanzanian refugee camps through the inspiration of Gahutu's teachings that the PALIPEHUTU developed what Malkki has conceptualized as a "*mythico-historical*" (Malkki 1995) discourse, based on an ethnocentric, radical interpretation of the Burundian conflict and aiming to liberate the Bahutu from years of oppression at the hands of the Tutsi-dominated ruling elite. Gahutu's project is summarized in his book "*Persecution of the Hutu of Burundi*" (the exact publication date is unknown and estimates vary between 1979 and 1985), which subsequently became one of the most important manifestos of "*Hutu radicalism*" (Lemarchand 2011, 145). The book, an excellent illustration of the construction of a "*patriotic history*" (Ranger 2004), aims to 'reinvent' Burundi's pre-colonial past to offer Burundian refugees explanations for the 1972 events and their flight (Malkki 1995). It challenges the then dominant governmental claim that ethnicity became politically salient only with the arrival of the colonizers, which set in motion a profound transformation of Burundian society based on the polarization and institutionalization of the two main ethnicities, the Bahutu and Batutsi. Instead, the ethnic confrontations between Bahutu and Batutsi are traced back to the pre-colonial period by portraying the Bahutu as the traditional inhabitants of Burundi. According to Gahutu's account, Bahutu started to settle in the land that we have come to call Burundi around 3000 BC (finding only a small group of indigenous people, the Batwa, a pigmy people). With the advent of the "*Tutsi invaders*", who arrived around 1500 BC from the North (Gahutu N.D., 3f)[85], the Bahutu and the Batwa were increasingly subjugated by the Batutsi.

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[85] In a way, Rémy Gahutu turned the "*Hamitic Hypothesis*" on his head. John Speke, a British Indian Army Officer, who undertook several exploratory expeditions to Africa, suggested the so-called racist "*Hamitic Hypothesis*" in the 1860s, which advocated that Baganwa and Batutsi were intellectually and physically superior

Gahutu's account of Burundi's history is underpinned by a pan-African and socialist discourse aiming to educate and awaken the oppressed Hutu masses and to mobilize them for a national liberation struggle.

Narratives of deep-rooted traumatism run though Gahutu's book and the PALIPEHUTU's subsequent historical documents, in which the movement decries the atrocities against the majority Hutu population by the Tutsi-dominated authoritarian regimes and especially the mono-ethnic national army (Malkki 1995; Lemarchand 2011).

> *In general, the Hutu of today think of nothing else than the liberation of their country. Since all the ideologies employed by the Tutsi have already been discovered* […] *this is why all the Hutu* […] *think of nothing else but Burundi, the native country* […] *The troubles of '72 awakened us because the Tutsi killed the children, the old people, the pupils in schools, the pregnant women and* […] *all the inhabitants of the country of Hutu origin* (Malkki 1995, 101).

The PALIPEHUTU enviously looked to the Rwandan model where, after the Rwandan Revolution in 1959, the Hutu majority controlled the state institutions and the national army (often referred to as *demokarasi* meaning 'ethnic majority politics') (De Veenhoop 2007; Uvin 2009). According to the principle of *demokarasi*, in a democratic system (based on the principle of one person, one vote), the Bahutu would always win due to their demographic advantage. Indeed, many critics highlight that the PALIPEHUTU confused ethnic majority politics with political majority politics (Interview with civil society member, Bujumbura, 6 July 2013). The PALIPEHUTU advocated for a "*viable social contract*", which should be based on a proportional ethnic representation, and a fair share of the country's resources. As Aimé Magara, the FNL's spokesperson, explains:

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to the Bahutu, because they emigrated from Ethiopia and were thus not entirely 'black African' and more closely related to the European colonizers (Speke 1863).

> *Even though the Bahutu represented 85 percent of the population, they were systematically marginalized.* […] *We prepared a long process of social awakening based on legitimate grievances. We helped mature a consciousness, an ideology, a real cause* (Interview with Aimé Magera, FNL spokesperson, Montréal, 27 January 2015).

While its action in Burundi was clandestine, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL initially prepared for political, not armed struggle. During the founding years (around 1980 to 1985), the PALIPEHUTU mobilized the Tanzanian refugees for a national liberation struggle. The PALIPEHUTU-FNL set up covert political networks inside and outside Burundi in the hope of one day becoming a legally recognized political party (Alfieri 2014). The movement demanded the holding of a national round table to tackle the social marginalization of the Bahutu as well as their safe return to Burundi. However, the Bagaza regime showed no interest in responding to PALIPEHUTU's demands. As discussed in the preceding Chapter V (sub-section 5.4.2.2.), under Bagaza's rule, ethnic notions were officially banned from public discourse. The promotion of economic development was supposed to overshadow the continuing social marginalization of the Bahutu (Turner 2010). Instead of engaging the PALIPEHUTU, the Bagaza regime persistently persecuted its sympathizers. In light of Bagaza's reluctance to initiate a political dialogue, the PALIPEHUTU's Party Congress decided in 1983 to establish a military branch, the FNL, as the ultimate means to bring back justice for the Bahutu of Burundi.

The PALIPEHUTU-FNL recruited primarily from Burundian refugee camps (most notably in Tanzania), but also started recruitment campaigns inside Burundi. Given the tight organization of the Burundian state under the authoritarian regimes, the recruitment inside Burundi was extremely difficult and limited the movement's membership base. From the mid-1980s on, the FNL organized covert military training programs in the forests of Tanzania. Donatien Misigaro, a 1972 survivor and a former commander of the Burundian army, was

charged with organizing the military trainings. Even though the Tanzanian authorities suppressed the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's militant activities at times, they mostly tolerated the movement given that its struggle was perceived as a just cause (often compared to the apartheid regime in South Africa). The FNL also used Rwanda as a rear base for training and cross-border incursions until the downfall of President Habyarimana's regime in 1994, when the Tutsi-dominated *Rwandan Patriotic Front* (RPF) took power (ICG 1999).

In sum, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL was originally founded as a peaceful protest movement, which, only after seeing no other option, turned to violent struggle to make its political grievances heard. It developed an ideational project based on a radical, ethno-centric, essentialist interpretation of the Burundian conflict. Its membership was exclusively of Bahutu origin. The PALIPEHUTU-FNL built its ideational project around five key pillars, including (1) the awakening of a political consciousness among the oppressed Bahutu; (2) the promotion of unity among the oppressed (including Bahutu and Batwa); (3) the creation of a political party representing the oppressed; (4) the recruitment of party leaders, who love their country and their people; and (5) the creation of a paramilitary organization. The PALIPEHUTU-FNL's militants, commonly called *Banamarimwe* ('those who understand things the same way'), had to subscribe to these broad principles during their initiation in the movement (Interview with Aimé Magera, FNL spokesperson, Montréal, 27 January 2015).

6.1.3. Genesis of CNDD-FDD: Unifying Pockets of Popular Resistance

> *This is not an armed struggle for the liberation of Hutus. We are fighting to restore democracy in the interests of all Burundians without distinction*. (Léonard Nyangoma in Libération, 19 April 1995)

The *Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie – Forces pour la défense de la démocratie* or *National Council for the Defense of Democracy – Forces for the Defense of Democracy* (CNDD-FDD), emerged in the aftermath of the first democratic presidential elections, organized in 1993. As discussed in Chapter V (sub-sections 5.4.2.3 and 5.4.3.), in 1988 and following another series of inter-ethnic massacres coupled with increasing international pressure, President Buyoya initiated limited liberal reforms. In June 1993, multi-party elections resulted in a landslide victory for the newly formed, predominantly Hutu party, *Front pour la démocratie au Burundi* or *Front for Democracy in Burundi* (FRODEBU). Melchior Ndadaye, a founding member of MEPROBA and UBU as well as head of FRODEBU, became President. While the PALIPEHUTU-FNL was never legalized due to its ethnocentric ideology and its clandestine armed struggle, its militants overtly threw their political support behind the more moderate FRODEBU. Indeed, that the movement had adopted armed struggle did not mean that it had completely given up on non-violent politics: the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's grassroots network is often cited as a major contributing factor to FRODEBU's electoral success (Focus group with former FNL combatants, Bujumbura, 19 June 2014).

In October 1993, only three months after his election, Ndadaye, the first democratically elected Hutu President, was assassinated. In the words of many future CNDD-FDD militants, Ndadaye's assassination resulted in a "*spontaneous popular insurrection*" all over the country.

During one interview, a former CNDD-FDD combatant described the beginning of the rebellion in the following words, an account echoed in many other interviews:

> *In the aftermath of Ndadaye's assassination, the population saw itself being aggressed after years of experiencing military coups, assassinations, oppression, massacres. The population finally said no* […]. *It rose up conscious of never wanting to cross its arms again and idly stand by. The population started to militarily defend itself to eradicate decades of subjugation that had become the norm in this country. Over time, leaders tried to unite these pockets of popular resistance and launched an organized armed movement* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 10 October 2013).

After Ndadaye's assassination, the spread of inter-ethnic violence resulted in a 'balkanization' of Bujumbura as the neighborhoods of Burundi's capital segregated along ethnic lines. Many people joined existing or emerging militias – such as the *Sans Échec* and *Sans Défaite* for the Batutsi or the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, FROLINA and the emerging FDD for the Bahutu – to defend their communities against the threat of the 'other'. Both communities cited previous massacres of which they had fallen victim as the primary motivation for joining the various self-defense groups.

> *A psychosis and collective hysteria simultaneously gripped the Hutu and Tutsi populations, the former fearful of a repeat of the 1972 genocide, the later fearful of a bloody revenge from the demographic majority. Hutu peasants indiscriminately massacred innocent Tutsi populations* […] *and the army responded to each atrocity with a renewed escalation of violence* (ICG 2000, 80).

This underscores the security dilemma type situation (Posen 1993) reigning in Burundi at the time. Between October and November 1993, multiple Hutu uprisings left several thousand Batutsi dead, particularly in the Central and North Eastern parts of the country. In return, the Tutsi-dominated national army used severe repression killing thousands of Bahutu. Between 30.000 and 100.000 people, Bahutu and Batutsi alike, were estimated to have been killed during the massacres following Ndadaye's assassination (Twagiramungu 2016, 65). Whereas CNDD-FDD members speak of a spontaneous uprising of the majority Hutu

population to prevent another 1972-like tragedy, UPRONA denounces a genocidal plan prepared by FRODEBU and PALIPEHUTU-FNL against the Tutsi population.[86]

The amalgamation of the various pockets of popular armed uprisings culminated in the official establishment of the CNDD-FDD in 1994. Ndadaye's assassination triggered the emergence of a radical FRODEBU breakaway faction. Unlike the moderate FRODEBU, which agreed to a negotiated way out of the crisis and signed the Convention of Government in October 1994[87], the radical offshoot considered that there was no other option but to take up arms to restore democracy, which had been "*decapitated*" by Ndadaye's assassination (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 10 October 2013). This FRODEBU splinter group would become the nucleus of the CNDD-FDD's political leadership; for its part, the FDD's military branch would solicit former FNL militants given their experience with guerilla tactics (Rufyikiri 2016a).

The CNDD's name, Conseil ('Council'), signaled the initial ambition to create a political coalition or umbrella organization, which would unite all (legal and illegal) Hutu-dominated political and military movements as well as the diverse pockets of popular armed resistance opposed to the coup d'état attempt (Interview with Jérôme Ndiho, CNDD-FDD Spokesperson during the civil war, Bujumbura, 15 July 2014). The CNDD-FDD thus emerged from the conviction that, to successfully rule Burundi, it had to build its own military force and ultimately replace the mono-ethnic national army.

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[86] The UN International Commission of Inquiry for Burundi established in 2002 that acts of genocide had taken place against the Tutsi minority in the aftermath of Ndadaye's assassination (UN 2002, Paragraph 496).
[87] As discussed in Chapter V (sub-section 5.4.3.), the Convention of Government stipulated a power-sharing agreement between FRODEBU (receiving 55 percent) and UPRONA (receiving 45 percent of posts).

In the summer of 1994, the military branch FDD, also known as *Intagoheka*[88] ('those who never sleep to remain vigilant') organized a founding assembly[89] in the Zairian town of Uvira, a few kilometers away from the Burundian border (and the Burundian capital), to plan the merger of the pockets of popular armed resistance and thus enhance the efficiency of the insurgency. As a further illustration of the ambition of wanting to unite all Hutu-dominated groupings, the constituent assembly included many PALIPEHUTU-FNL members as well as members of the *Front pour la libération nationale* or *National Liberation Front* (FROLINA), a PALIPEHUTU-FNL splinter group (see sub-section 6.2. for more details). Given the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's experience with guerrilla warfare, the FDD's founding assembly nominated Donatien Misigaro, the FNL's former chief of staff, who had organized the clandestine military trainings of FNL militants in Western Tanzania, as the FDD's first military chief of staff (Interview with Jérôme Ndiho, CNDD-FDD Spokesperson during the civil war, Bujumbura, 15 July 2014). However, the attempt to fuse the FDD and the FNL would not last due to struggles over ideational and power politics (for more on this, see sub-section 6.1.2.).

After the foundation of the FDD in Uvira, the military branch was officially put under civilian command following the model of other African liberation movements (Rufyikiri 2016a, 8). Léonard Nyangoma became the political leader, culminating in the official creation of the CNDD as political branch with the FDD as military branch on September 24, 1994 in Bubanza Province, the original fiefdom of the CNDD-FDD.

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[88] The term emerged during Ndadaye's electoral campaign and designated FRODEBU's youth members, which were charged with watching over Ndadaye's security.
[89] This included, most notably, FRODEBU, UBU, the *Parti du peuple* or *People's Party* (PP), founded in 1959, the *Rassemblement du peuple burundais* or *Rally for the Burundian People* (RPB), aggregated in 1992, PALIPEHUTU-FNL and FROLINA.

Nyangoma was born in 1952 in Songa in the Southern province of Bururi, the native province of the former military leaders, Micombero, Bagaza and Buyoya. Unlike Gahutu, Nyangoma, a 1972 survivor, never left Burundi during the Tutsi-dominated authoritarian regimes. He attended primary and secondary school in the traditionally privileged South of Burundi. During the 1970s, he taught at the *École Normale* at Rutovu and subsequently studied mathematics at the *Université du Burundi* in Bujumbura. As a member of JRR, UPRONA's youth movement, he organized debates on the question of national unity, in which he and his colleagues tried to raise the delicate question of the social marginalization of the Bahutu. "*We tried to infiltrate and change UPRONA from the inside*" (Interview with Léonard Nyangoma, CNDD-FDD founding leader, Lille, 25 October 2015). On several occasions, he risked being imprisoned for his political opinions. He served as Assistant Secretary-General of the *Union des Travailleurs du Burundi* (UTB), the national labor union, and helped place Bahutu in key positions that had become newly available to the community following the liberalization period initiated by the Buyoya I regime.[90] During the 1990 Party Congress of UPRONA, Nyangoma helped circulate a memorandum asking for a political transition of five to ten years before the organization of multi-party elections to prepare the Burundian population for such elections. Nyangoma was subsequently excluded from UPRONA and devoted all his political activism to FRODEBU, which was eventually legally recognized in 1992. Nyangoma's political vision for the emerging rebel movement revolved around the importance of restoring the democracy that had been lost with Ndadaye's assassination (Interview with Léonard Nyangoma, CNDD-FDD founding leader, Lille, 25 October 2015).

[90] This included, for example, Melchior Ndadaye, who would become the head of UTB in the town of Gitega, or Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, who was charged with political mobilization at UPRONA's National Secretariat.

The neighborhoods in the North of the capital city, Kamenge and Kinama (sometimes referred to as Chechnya given the heavy fighting that took place there after the beginning of the civil war), became the most important symbols for the popular resistance. In April and May 1994, Kamenge was besieged for 29 days and ultimately totally destroyed.

> *For months,* […] *the Hutu community of Bujumbura had been progressively, continuously squeezed within the iron fist of the Burundian army. Trying to escape, many of the victims of ethnic cleansing in various parts of the capital had fled to the quartier of Kamenge, the final remaining Hutu refuge. In late May, Kamenge sheltered 50,000 people. Two weeks later, it shouldered none.* […] *The flight of 50.000 innocents from Kamenge to the hills was but one major stone in an avalanche of destruction that roared across Bujumbura* (Krueger and Krueger 2007, 216-218).

Adolphe Nshimirimana, a former PALIPEHUTU-FNL militant who would become one of the key FDD generals during the civil war and the chief of national intelligence after the civil war, was among the fighters in Kamenge, where he mobilized young Bahutu into self-defense groups with his comrade Pascal Gashirabake (alias Savimbi). Nshimirimana was born in 1964 in the commune of Gishubi in the Central Province of Gitega. During the 1972 massacres, he fled with his family to Rwanda, where he attended primary and secondary school. After high school, he moved to (what was then) Zaire for military training and even joined the Zairian national army. He returned to Burundi before the 1993 elections and established himself in Kamenge, which would become his personal fiefdom (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 15 June 2015).

The brutal military crackdown on Kamenge underlined the limits of urban guerilla warfare given the tight control that the Burundian national army exerted over Bujumbura. After the FAB managed to dislodge the armed fighters, branded as bandits and *génocidaires*, the Hutu rebel fighters fled the capital. The emerging FDD rebel force found sanctuary in the Kibira Forest in the North West of Burundi. Echoing the insights of the literature on

opportunities for rebellion (Collier and Hoeffler 2004), the Kibira Forest constituted a very strategic location to organize a guerilla war against the Burundian national army. Only a few kilometers away from the capital atop the mountains of the Congo-Nile divide, the terrain provided an excellent hiding place for the FDD fighters. Many FDD fighters also set up military camps in Eastern Zaire, especially in South Kivu and Katanga Provinces.

In sum, in contrast to the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, the CNDD-FDD officially developed a more moderate, inclusive ideational project based on the restoration of democracy. Former combatants often describe the armed resistance as a last resort "*to force the army to accept the 1993 election results*" (ICG 2002, 7). In their view, for decades, the Tutsi-dominated military elite succeeded each other pacifically through bloodless military coups. But when the first Hutu President was democratically elected, the Tutsi-dominated national army assassinated the President only three months after his election. Ndadaye's assassination underscored the importance of accessing and controlling the national army for anyone wanting to successfully rule Burundi. While the PALIPEHUTU-FNL was initially exclusively made up of Bahutu, the CNDD-FDD admitted several Batutsi members to illustrate its more moderate ideology. However, both movements primarily recruited along ethnic lines underscoring the importance of shared grievances as well as intimate social ties among co-ethnics for effective rebel recruitment (Denny and Walter 2014).

6.1.4. Divorce between PALIPEHUTU-FNL & CNDD-FDD

Despite their common political roots in MEPROBA and initial attempts at creating a united political and military front to fight the Burundian government following the outbreak of the civil war in 1993, the relationship between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD transformed into an intense political and violent competition throughout the civil war. While several intermittent attempts at renewed unification or collaboration did take place, they remained fragile and unsustainable (Interviews with CNDD-FDD and FNL militants, Bujumbura, summer 2015).

> *The FNL and the FDD detested each other like cats and mice. At the beginning, they were and wanted to be together, but afterwards this did not work* […]. *They had different ideologies* […] *Each of them wanted to be more important than the other* […] *They killed each other in masses* […] *and, that's a pity, because they should have stayed together, but they were not able to* (Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 23 October 2013).

The divisions between the two movements emerged on two main fronts: First, there were differences in the interpretation of the Burundian conflict and the willingness of inclusion of the Batutsi. While the CNDD-FDD was willing to integrate Batutsi into its movement, this was categorically rejected by the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, which harbored deep-rooted suspicions towards Batutsi fueled by its ethnocentric reading of the Burundian conflict. During the civil war, the CNDD-FDD's Political Bureau included several Batutsi members, including, most notably Christian Sendegaya, a former FRODEBU parliamentarian, and Léonce Ndarubagiye, a former FRODEBU member and Governor of Muramvya Province (Nindorera 2010, 15). It is important to underline that Batutsi were only allowed to hold high-ranking political positions in the CNDD-FDD; they were excluded from similarly high-ranking military positions. This politico-military boundary is eloquently reflected in the following excerpt from an interview with a former CNDD-FDD combatant:

> *The Hutus were in the majority. The Tutsis you could count them on the fingers of one hand* […] *The Tutsis were regarded with a lot of suspicions* […] *The Tutsis were not allowed to handle high-caliber weapons out of fear that they could turn against their comrades* […] *The Tutsis were not allowed to live with us in the military camps* (Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 23 October 2013).

Second, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD split over which organization should carry more political weight in the Council. PALIPEHUTU-FNL members sought more political influence in the emerging rebel force because of the movement's historical status, its claim to be the mother of all Hutu-dominated rebel groups, as well as its experience in guerrilla warfare. As for former FRODEBU members, their claim to preeminence was based on their perception that they were the legitimate representative of the Barundi people given that FRODEBU had won the 1993 elections (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 17 July 2014).

The divorce between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD occurred in January 1995. According to one informant, it was triggered by controversies over the content of the programs broadcasted by Radio *Rutomorangingo* (roughly translating to 'the one who expresses things clearly'), established by the PALIPEHUTU-FNL in Cibitoke Province. In one of the programs, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL claimed that Sendegaya had infiltrated the CNDD-FDD and was, in fact, secretly working for UPRONA. As a Tutsi, Sendegaya, who had won a parliamentary seat with FRODEBU during the 1993 elections in his home province Kayanza, a province with an estimated 80 percent of Bahutu voters, was vulnerable to such accusations.[91] For the CNDD-FDD's political leadership, this incident illustrated the

[91] During my interviews, I was not able to confirm this version with PALIPEHUTU-FNL members. Even though, this might be a specific narrative developed by CNDD-FDD members, I decided to include it in the dissertation since it illustrates the perceptions and divisions between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD.

impossibility of developing a common ideational project. The above-mentioned informant, a FRODEBU and then CNDD-FDD activist, explains:

> *The phenomenon Sendegaya would have never been possible within the PALIPEHUTU-FNL if the rebel movement would have been accepted to participate in the 1993 elections* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 15 July 2014).

Despite the divorce between the two movements, several former PALIPEHUTU-FNL militants remained within the CNDD-FDD and shaped the movement's ideational politics. This included, most notably, Alain Guillaume Bunyoni, Radjabu Hussein, Evariste Ndayishimiye and Adolphe Nshimirimana, who would all become some of the most important strongmen of the CNDD-FDD during the civil war (Rufyikiri 2016a, 10). Most of them were convinced that they were better able to serve their personal interests in the CNDD-FDD.

In light of the divorce between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD, it was Nyangoma's nephew, Jean-Bosco Ndayikengurukiye, until then in charge of military affairs, who replaced the aging Misigaro, as military chief of staff in January 1995. Born in 1966 in Songa, in the Southern Province of Bururi, Ndayikengurukiye, who had lost his father and his older brother in 1972, had been one of the rare Hutus to be admitted to the *Institut Supérieur des Cadres Militaires* (ISCAM),[92] the military training institution for the FAB. After the assassination of President Ndadaye, he defected together with four other Hutu comrades in May 1994. At first, they organized one of the pockets of popular armed resistance in Gisovu, in Bujumbura Rural province. A few months later, they joined the FDD fighters in the Kibira Forest. The former ISCAM cadets would become instrumental in developing the military

[92] The Burundian Armed Forces (FAB) were almost exclusively made up of Tutsis. The Burundian soldiers received their military training at the *Institut Supérieur des Cadres Militaires* (ISCAM). ISCAM was founded in November 1975. For years, not one Hutu was admitted to this institution. After a lot of pressure, the Buyoya regime opened ISCAM to a handful of Bahutu for military training at the beginning of the 1990s. Several of them would later join the Hutu-dominated rebellions during Burundi's civil war.

strategy of the FDD's armed rebellion (Interview with Prime Ngowenubusa, former ISCAM student and FDD General, Bujumbura, 8 April 2015).

To sum up, the common political roots of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD underscore the interlinkages between rebel groups and political parties. After their official creation, both movements (first within MEPROBA, then within TABARA and UBU/FRODEBU) developed organizational structures similar to political parties. These political structures were subsequently underpinned by military structures when both movements reckoned that they had no other option than to take up arms despite an original commitment to a peaceful political struggle. Following the example of other national liberation movements in Africa, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD organized initially with separate political and military branches. Ideational differences and power politics are crucial for understanding why they did not remain united in their opposition to the Burundian government, instead, engaging in a fierce competition with each other over the mantle of the liberation struggle. Over the course of the civil war, the CNDD-FDD would develop into the strongest fighting force followed by the PALIPEHUTU-FNL[93] and various splinter groups.

[93] It is estimated that, at the height of the civil war, the CNDD-FDD counted around 18.000 combatants and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL around 5.000 combatants (Uvin 2009, 15ff).

	PALIPEHUTU-FNL	CNDD-FDD
Political predecessors	MEPROBA (1970) TABARA (1978)	MEPROBA (1970) UBU (1979) FRODEBU (1986)
Foundational context	- PALIPEHUTU founded on April 18, 1980 in the aftermath of 1972 *ikiza* as peaceful social protest movement in Tanzania - FNL founded in 1983	- FDD founded in the summer of 1994 in Zaire after Ndadaye's assassination - CNDD founded on September 24, 1994 in Bubanza putting the FDD under civilian command
Ideational politics	- Conservative, exclusive, radical, ethno-centric - Promotion of *demokarasi* (ethnic majority politics) - Originally exclusively Hutu	- Moderate, inclusive - Promotion of the restoration of democracy - Several high-ranking Tutsi members among political wing - Large majority of Hutu members, especially among FDD fighters
	- Disagreement over the interpretation of the Burundian conflict and the integration of Tutsi leading to ultimate divorce between the two movements	
Power politics	- Claiming legitimate stewardship of liberation struggle due to status as first Hutu-dominated movement to pick up the gun	- Claiming legitimate stewardship of liberation struggle given its political roots in FRODEBU, which had won the 1993 elections
	- Power struggle over internal distribution of positions between PALIPEHUTU-FNL and CNDD-FDD leaders leading to ultimate divorce between the two movements	
Institutional politics	- Both organized initially with separate political and military branches - Despite initial unification attempts, eventual divorce leading to separate institutions	

Table 7: Impact of Foundational Context on PALIPEHUTU-FNL & CNDD-FDD

6.2. Doubled-Edged Competition: Politics & Violence During War

In this section, I retrace the hybrid politico-military struggle of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD during the civil war. Both movements were initially organized as rebel groups with distinct political and military branches. As the armed struggle went on, their respective political branches were increasingly sidelined and the movements organized as integrated politico-military organizations. Both movements invested heavily in building grassroots political networks and rebel governance structures to rally the local populations behind their cause. They were predominantly present in rural areas given the tight control of the urban centers, especially the capital, by the Burundian national army. Appendix II provides a map demarcating the fiefdoms of both movements as well as their splinter groups. Their limited territorial control and respective fiefdoms varied over the course of the war underscoring the spatial variations and fluid nature of rebel governance (Förster 2015).

6.2.1. Evolution of PALIPEHUTU-FNL: The 'Underdog' Rebellion

The PALIPEHUTU was initially organized around three main sections, which corresponded to the three Tanzanian refugee camps, namely Mishamo, Katumba and Ulyankulu. A committee was charged with organizing the political activities in each refugee camp. Members of all three committees met regularly to coordinate their activities. This coordination committee would later be transformed into the military general staff (Interview with Agathon Rwasa, Bujumbura, 13 October 2013). With the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's increasing activity in Burundi, it would progressively establish five additional regional commands, roughly corresponding to Burundi's geographical areas, namely *Imbo-Migwa* (North-West), *Kirimo-Mugamba* (Central-South), *Buyenzi* (Central-North), *Buragane-Kumoso* (South-East) and *Buyogoma* (North-East) (Interview with FNL member, Courtrai, 13 October 2015).

At the beginning, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL recruited primarily from the Tanzanian refugee camps. Its members were exclusively Hutu. Observers note that the fact the movement was born outside of Burundi, unlike the CNDD-FDD, contributed to its difficulties in recruiting a large number of militants inside the country (Jones 2013, 185f). The advent of multi-party elections afforded an opportunity for many of the movement's supporters to return to Burundi. However, even during the civil war, a large number of PALIPEHUTU-FNL supporters lived in Tanzania (Malkki 1995, 129f). Inside Burundi, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL tended to attract most of its support from the poorest, most neglected and most marginalized provinces, most notably Bujumbura Rural, which became the movement's permanent fiefdom during the height of the civil war. This is where the PALIPEHUTU-FNL progressively set up parallel administrative structures, which reached from the hillsides to the communal, provincial and national level (Interview with Agathon Rwasa, Bujumbura, 13 October 2013). Over time, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's political branch created covert political party structures. This included the establishment of integrated youth and women structures, namely the *Jeunesse patriotique hutu* (JPH) ('Patriotic Hutu Youth') and the *Mouvement des femmes patriotiques hutu* (MFPH) ('Patriotic Hutu Women Movement'). Depending on the density of its presence and penetration, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL would progressively nominate governors, administrators, *chefs de zone*, *chefs de quartier* and *chefs de cellule* in its fiefdoms.

With the official launch of the FNL in 1983, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL formally organized as a movement with separate political and military branches. However, given the movement's limited membership base, various militants evolved in both branches. The FNL's historic leader, Agathon Rwasa, for example, joined the PALIPEHUTU-FNL as a simple political supporter in 1989, after fleeing from Burundi to Tanzania in the aftermath of the 1988

events. A few months later, he was asked to work with the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's *Commission de l'information*, charged with promoting the movement's ideational project among the refugee populations in Tanzania. He soon earned a reputation as a charismatic political mobilizer. He subsequently underwent clandestine military trainings in the forests of Tanzania and thus started his career and rise to fame as one of the most important military commanders of the movement (Interview with Agathon Rwasa, FNL leader, Bujumbura, 13 October 2013).

The initial separation between the political and military branch is illustrated by Figure 4, which presents the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's organizational chart under Gahutu's leadership (around 1991). The Political Bureau coordinated the political activities of four sub-commissions, namely the *Commission de coordination* ('Coordination Commission' acting as the Secretariat), the *Commission de l'information* ('Commission of Information'), the *Commission de trésorie* ('Commission of Treasury') and the *Commission de relations extérieures* ('Commission of External Relations'). However, informants highlighted that the separation was mostly rhetorical and the movement soon adopted an integrated politico-military structure. Decision-making was hereafter undertaken jointly, but the military members were cited as having more influence (Interview with Agathon Rwasa, FNL leader, Bujumbura, 13 October 2013; Interview with FNL member, Courtrai, 13 October 2015).

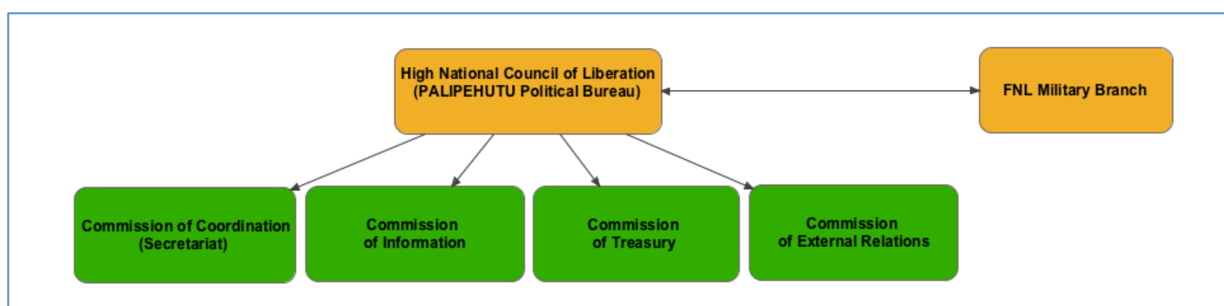

Figure 4: Organizational Chart of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL (Around 1991/1992)
Source: Author's own graph based on interviews

Throughout its history, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL remained a fragmented organization rooted in several cleavages among the Hutu majority population. At the beginning of the 1990s, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL experienced two splits following the death of its founding leader Rémy Gahutu in a Tanzanian prison in 1990,[94] which resulted in the movement lacking internal cohesion. While the first split centered around regional, clan-based cleavages, the second evolved around politico-military divisions (Jones 2013; Sommers 2001). After Gahutu's death, Etienne Karatasi, a medical doctor and Gahutu's deputy, took over the lead of the movement.

Regional power struggles culminated in a first split in 1990, when Joseph Karumba launched a PALIPEHUTU-FNL offshoot, the *Front pour la libération nationale* or *National Liberation Front* (FROLINA), in his home region in the South. Karumba challenged Karatasi's leadership, which favored Banyaruguru ('high-land people') militants from Central and Northern Burundi. Consequently, Karumba created his own rebel group backing Imbo (designating the Southern lowland areas alongside Lake Tanganyika) members from the South (Sommers 2001).[95]

Politico-military divisions culminated in a second split in 1992. At the beginning of the 1990s, Karatasi, Gahutu's successor, initiated secret political negotiations regarding the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's potential integration into the political system with the Buyoya

[94] Gahutu died in Tanzanian detention in August 1990. While the Burundian refugees were sure that he died of unnatural causes assassinated by the Burundian government with the complicity of the Tanzanian authorities (possibly through poison) (Interview with FNL member, Bujumbura, 17 July 2014), Amnesty International cited "*illness, possibly exacerbated by harsh prison conditions and poor medical facilities*" (Malkki 1995, 273) as the cause of death.

[95] Among Tanzanian refugees, FROLINA is also referred to as *Ubumwe* ('unity'). Sommers provides an excellent discussion of the different factions among Hutu refugees or the Banyaruguru-Imbo divide (Sommers 2001, 53ff). FROLINA would only remain a minor rebel movement during Burundi's civil war, mostly confined to the South.

government in Paris brokered by Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana. However, as soon as rumors about the negotiations circulated, the peace talks became highly controversial among FNL's members: Karatasi was accused of taking bribery money from the Buyoya regime (Interview with former FNL member, Courtrai, 13 October 2013; Interview with former FNL member, Montreal, 30 July 2015). The military branch, led by Cossan Kabura, a former member of the Tanzanian national army, harshly criticized this negotiation attempt, and in 1991, it launched its first military attacks, notably against Bujumbura, to protest Karatasi's move. Starting from Cibitoke, Bubanza and Bujumbura Rural provinces, the FNL succeeded in attacking strategic locations in the Burundian capital.[96] This led to a split between the political (led by Karatasi) and military branch (led by Kabura) in 1992. Kabura, who favored violence to achieve the FNL's goals, rallied the majority of militants behind his military faction, which was subsequently organized as an integrated politico-military movement. Kabura would later face the same fate as Karatasi, when he initiated political negotiations and was ousted by Agathon Rwasa in 2001 (Interview with Agathon Rwasa, FNL leader, Bujumbura, 14 April 2015).

The PALIPEHUTU-FNL perpetrated a series of human rights violations during the civil war. National and international human rights organizations reported numerous attacks on internally displaced persons camps, which had been established by the Buyoya II regime to protect Tutsi populations from the rebel groups in the interior of the country. Several infamous, ethnically motivated massacres, including the Titanic Express Massacre (2000) and the Gatumba Massacre (2004), have been attributed to the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. In addition,

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[96] The locations included military posts and other strategic installations, such as gas stations, bridges and electric lines. At the time, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL rejected responsibility, but has since then confirmed that it was behind the attacks.

the PALIPEHUTU-FNL persecuted local civilian populations, Batutsi and Bahutu alike, which were suspected of collaborating with the Buyoya regime or the other rebel groups (HRW 1998; ITEKA 2000).

6.2.2. Evolution of CNDD-FDD: Making of Largest Rebel Movement

Upon its inception in 1994, the CNDD-FDD also favored a separation between its political and military branch. And, like the FNL, the CNDD-FDD was constantly beleaguered by intense power struggles between both branches.

In Nyangoma's vision, the CNDD was foremost a political movement – with the FDD as a distinct military branch and political instrument subject to the supremacy of the political wing (Interview with Léonard Nyangoma, CNDD-FDD founding leader, Lille, 25 October 2015). In this perspective, the military struggle was framed as just one political instrument among others, such as diplomacy or education. Figure 5 provides a schematized organizational chart of the CNDD-FDD under Nyangoma's leadership. The organogram illustrates that the military branch (FDD) was but one among five departments coordinated by the Political Bureau (CNDD). The four other departments included the *Departément de relations internationales* ('Department of International Relations'), the *Département de communication* ('Department of Communication'), the *Département social* ('Department of Social Affairs') and the *Département d'éducation populaire* ('Department of Popular Education').

Figure 5: Schematized Organogram of CNDD-FDD (Around 1995)
Source: Author's own graph based on interviews

However, Nyangoma's controversial political leadership, due to his absence from the battlefield and increasing accusations of corruption, led to his ousting in 1998 (for a more detailed discussion, please see Chapter VII, sub-section 7.1.1.). The CNDD-FDD military commanders felt that the movement's leader should oversee both the political and military branch. They pushed for a commander-in-chief more connected to the combatants, and installed Jean-Bosco Ndayikengurukiye, and later Pierre Nkurunziza, as the leaders of the newly integrated politico-military movement. The separate political structures were nevertheless revived at times when the movement wanted to participate in internationally sponsored peace negotiations, which were brokered throughout the civil war (Nindorera 2010). Figure 6 presents a schematized organogram of the CNDD-FDD under Ndayikengurukiye and Nkurunziza's leadership. The organogram illustrates the transformation of the CNDD-FDD into an integrated politico-military movement. The joint politico-military bureau was assisted by five sub-committees, including the *Comité politique et*

idéoloqique ('Political and Ideological Committee'), the *Comité diplomatique* ('Diplomatic Committee'), *Comité legal* ('Legal Committee'), *Comité de defense et sécurité* (Comitee of Defense and Security') and the *Comité économique et financier* ('Economic and Financial Committee)'.

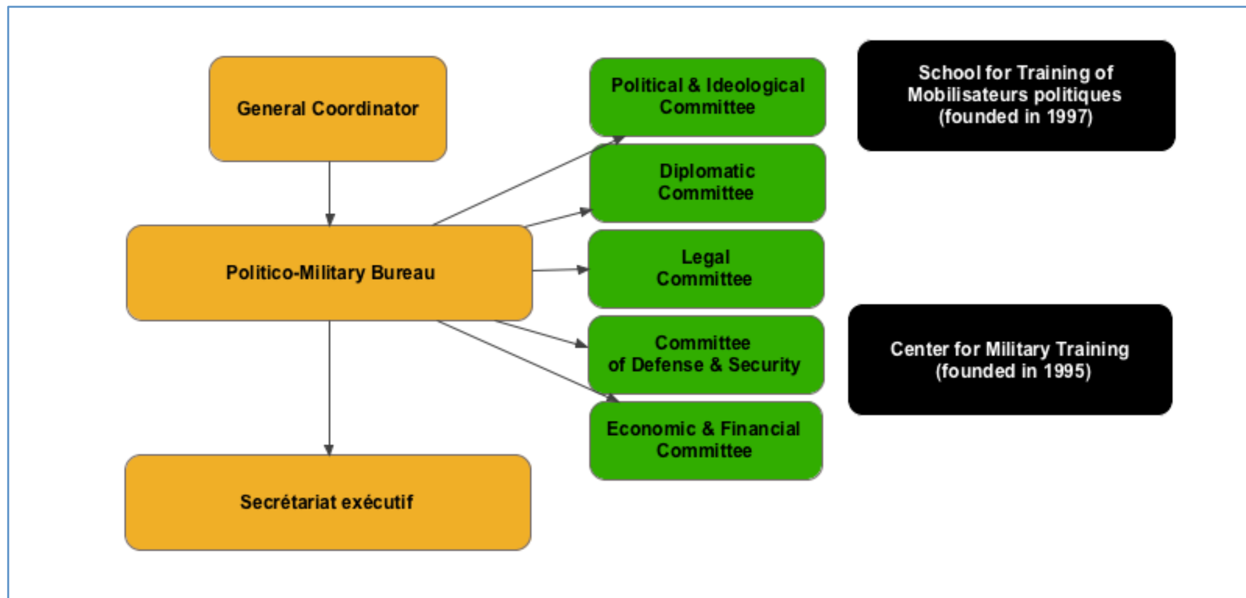

Figure 6: Schematized Organogram of CNDD-FDD (Around 2000/2001)
Source: Author's own graph based on interviews

The CNDD-FDD organized as a grassroots movement reflecting the different pockets of armed resistance from which it had emerged. The armed resistance was, at first, primarily organized around two main military regions, the North and the South. Figure 7 provides a schematized organogram of the CNDD-FDD's organization of the two military regions. Both regions operated fairly independently from one another. The various combat units were also organized rather autonomously. Although they received military strategy guidelines from the general staff, each was in charge of it own logistics. A former FDD General explains:

Each region was supposed to be operating self-sufficiently. So that, if the national army was able to challenge one region, the other one could pursue the struggle without a problem (Interview with former FDD General, Bujumbura, 8 April 2015).

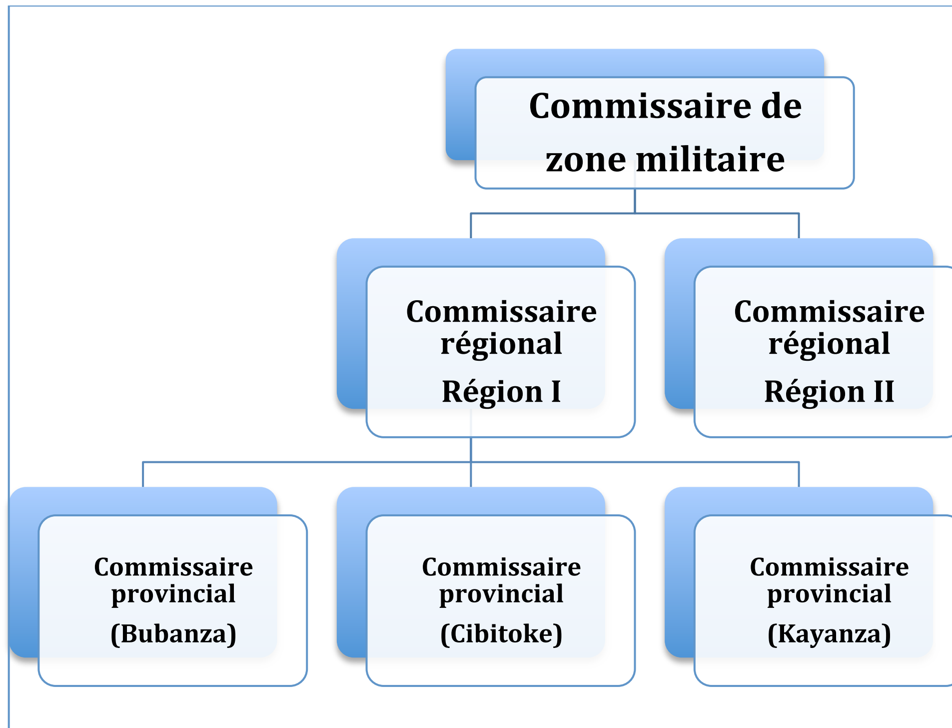

Figure 7: Schematized Organogram of military regions of CNDD-FDD (Around 1998)
Source: Graph adapted from interviewee's graphical representation

Over the course of the war, the CNDD-FDD gained limited territorial control over several areas, especially between the Kibira Forest in the Northwest and the Ruzibazi River in the South of the capital. Although the movement managed to extend its military bases from its original fiefdom around the Kibira Forest, the FDD remained depended on guerrilla warfare.

According to Human Rights Watch, by 1995 or 1996, the CNDD-FDD had set up parallel administration structures in its fiefdoms where it received substantial material support from residents (HRW 1998, 23). CNDD-FDD informants recall that the establishment of parallel administration structures started in earnest in mid-1995 (Interview with Gaspard Kobako, former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 18 July 2014), at first in Bubanza Province

and then spreading to other operational centers, most notably Cibitoke and Bujumbura Rural provinces. These "*local shadow administrations*" (Uvin and Bayer 2013) reached from the hillsides to the communal, provincial and national level, mimicking the structures of the Burundian state. In these partly liberated zones, the movement installed regional and communal commissioners, who replaced state authorities. These commissioners were responsible for mobilizing the population in support of the movement's cause, protecting it from armed combat, and consulting with it on daily needs.

> *As regional commissioner, one of my duties was the protection of the civilian population.* […] *I was charged with the planning of channel systems to escort the population from the combat zones* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 6 April 2015).

The movement also provided public goods, including education, health, and justice services (Jones 2013). In Bubanza Province, one of the key rebel fiefdoms, commissioners educated the population on how to improve its protein intake to protect it from malnourishment (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 6 April 2015). The commissioners worked with the *École de formation des mobilisateurs politiques* (EFM), a school for training of political mobilizers founded in 1997 in Bururi. The political mobilizers constituted the civilian backbone responsible for mobilizing the population in support of the movement and of its cause. Many *mobilisateurs politiques* were later recruited as combatants.

The establishment of shadow administrative structures allowed the CNDD-FDD to forge intimate ties with the local population, which provided not only ideational but also material support, most notably food and shelter. According to CNDD-FDD members, the local population gave everything for the cause of the armed struggle and became instrumental in the movement's survival (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 12 July 2013; Focus group with former CNDD-FDD combatants, Bubanza, 16 October 2013). During the height of

the civil war, around 1995 or 1996, the CNDD-FDD also founded its youth movement, known as the *Imbonerakure* ('those who see from afar'). They were most often civilians charged with watching the hillsides to report on the movements of the Burundian army and other armed groups (Interview with former FDD general, Bujumbura, 8 April 2015).

Even though the CNDD-FDD officially claimed to be more moderate and inclusive than the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, the movement would become implicated in numerous massacres of Tutsi populations during the civil war (HRW 1998). In July 1996, CNDD-FDD members massacred hundreds of internally displaced Tutsi civilians in Bugendana (Gitega Province) and Teza (Muramvya Province). In April 1997, CNDD-FDD rebels attacked the Junior Seminary in Buta (Bururi Province) and killed 40 students, both Bahutu and Batutsi, after the students refused to separate into two separate ethnic groups. Despite the CNDD-FDD's moderate ideational project to legitimize the armed struggle, the combatants on the ground did not necessarily internalize this political program given the long-standing inter-ethnic tensions in Burundi. Some observers even argue that the moderate ideational project was deliberately adopted by the CNDD-FDD as a strategy to gain international support (Interview with local journalist, Bujumbura, 20 June 2015).

Overall, interviews suggest that whether CNDD-FDD members held ethno-radical or moderate beliefs depended on their specific individual history and situation. This contrasts with the official depictions of the movement in international media. While the CNDD-FDD was portrayed as the less extreme rebel force, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL was presented as a more radical and violent insurgent force. These discrepancies between rhetorical discourse and practice underscore the importance of the "*weak program*" versus the "*strong program*" outlined by Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood. This distinction highlights the importance of analyzing

if an ideational project stems from genuine normative commitments or the instrumentalization of an ideology for political purposes (Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood 2014).

6.2.3. Rivalry between PALIPEHUTU-FNL & CNDD-FDD

While the previous two sections discussed the hybrid political and military dimensions of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD's armed struggle with regards to their internal organization, this section takes a look at the interrelated nature of politics and violence with regards to the relationship and rivalry between these two groups. During the civil war, both rebel groups competed politically and militarily for the support of the local populations.

> *During the civil war, the FNL and FDD fought over the hearts and minds of the local population.* […] *Some of the most brutal battles opposed our FNL militants to FDD fighters.* […] *The national army just stood by and watched how we mutually destroyed ourselves* (Interview with FNL member, Bujumbura, 22 June 2015).

As outlined above, at the outset of the civil war, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD considered unification and collaboration. However, attempts at alliance building proved volatile and short-lived and ushered, instead, into intense political and military competition throughout the civil war. As early as October 1995, FNL and FDD forces started to clash militarily (Interview with FNL member, Bujumbura, 15 July 2014).

> *Strange phenomenon, the Bahutu said to be liberators of the Bahutu, but it happened that CNDD-FDD and FNL, both Hutu movements, fought and killed each other for the only reason that everyone wanted to be the only representative of the liberation struggle* (Focus group with former CNDD-FDD combatants, Bubanza, 18 June 2014).

As they fought for the mantle of the liberation struggle, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD took political and military measures to convince or coerce the local populations into supporting them. Both built their own legitimacy claims in order to gather the local populations behind their movements. Reinforced military and political efforts often reflected heightened political frictions, with each side wanting to establish supremacy over the

other. In line with established Burundian practices, both movements deliberately spread rumors about each other. The PALPEHUTU-FNL cast itself as the real underdog of the rebellions that had always remained truthful to the rebel cause. The movement regularly claimed that the CNDD-FDD was infiltrated by Batutsi elements and that it collaborated with the authoritarian regimes (Interview with FNL member, Brussels, 16 October 2015).

> *We* [the PALIPEHUTU-FNL] *were born in poverty* […] *The CNDD-FDD members, some of which evolved in our movement, were just opportunists, who had always been part of the system in some ways* […]*, like Nyangoma, who was part of the national labor union* […]*, these people were well connected* […] *while we, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, were totally excluded and our militants systematically persecuted.* […] *We have always remained truthful to our ideas* (Interview with FNL member, Brussels, 16 October 2015).

The CNDD-FDD portrayed the FNL as a radical and racist organization. The movement belittled the FNL's capabilities by stating that it did not have any significant military means to challenge the Burundian government.

> *They* [PALIPEHUTU-FNL] *said that they had a military branch, but that was only bluff* […]. *Maybe, one or the other member knew how to manipulate a gun.* […] *They only had one or three guns and a couple of Molotov cocktails.* […] *After Ndadaye's assassination, we learnt that they had indeed nothing* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 13 April 2015).

Violent clashes increased[97] whenever both movements fought over the support and control of local populations as well as whenever potential peace negotiations loomed (an aspect that will be discussed in detail in Chapter VII). Attacks by both rebel groups and confrontations between the rebel groups and the BAF more than doubled between 1997 and

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[97] The following analysis of the violence patterns between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD is based on data provided by the *Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project* (ACLED) and the *Uppsala Conflict Data Program* (UCDP) on Burundi, which is available on their websites. Unfortunately, it is not always easy to detangle the data to distinguish between PALIPEHUTU-FNL and CNDD-FDD given that, for the most part of the civil war, these two groups and their respective splinter groups are listed together under the label of 'Hutu rebel groups'. It is also important to note that given that the CNDD-FDD constituted the major fighting force during the civil war, there is generally more data available on this group.

2000. In 1995, the FDD and the FNL fought each other militarily, most notably in Cibitoke and Bubanza Provinces in the North of Burundi, where they battled over the support of the local population leading to hundreds of civilian victims. Cibitoke and Bubanza were strategic locations in that both provinces neighbor Eastern Zaire, which constituted an important rear base for both rebel movements to regroup and acquire weapons. Interviewees from the FDD and the FNL mutually accused the 'other' of having provoked the military fighting. At least 600 civilians were killed during these battles and more than 30,000 people were displaced (HRW 1998, 136). The United Nations reported at the time that the rivalry "*appears related to Palipehutu's perceived loss of support to CNDD, particularly in Bubanza*" (IRIN 1997). In the process, the FNL was forced to progressively abandon its fiefdoms of Cibitoke and Bubanza and subsequently established itself in Bujumbura Rural province (Interview with former FNL member, Courtrai, 13 October 2013). In January 1998, the United Nations reported that the PALIPEHUTU-FNL had permanently moved its headquarters from Cibitoke to Bujumbura Rural province (IRIN 1998). From a strategic point of view, Bujumbura Rural, as the province surrounding the capital, was extremely valuable.

In 1997, military fighting broke out when the PALIPEHUTU-FNL found out that the CNDD-FDD had engaged in secret peace negotiations with the Buyoya government brokered by the Sant'Egidio Community. In 2000, violent confrontation escalated over the Arusha peace negotiations. In 2002, both the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD, reconsidered military collaboration to jointly attack and overtake the capital. Instead, suspicion culminated in fierce military battles, as the CNDD-FDD prepared itself for ceasefire negotiations. Some observers go as far as to suggest that the number of victims from fighting among and within the Hutu-dominated rebel groups is probably much higher than the number of Tutsi victims

(Interviews with civilians, Bubanza, summers 2014 and 2015; Interview with local journalist, Bujumbura, 20 April 2015).

In the popular imagination of civilians and observers interviewed, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL was portrayed as the "*real guerrilla force*", "*close to the population*" and "*feared by everyone*". Many informants highlighted that the PALIPEHUTU-FNL had a strict code of conduct, which set it part from the CNDD-FDD (Focus group with former FNL combatants, Bubanza, 18 June 2014). When talking to former members of the BAF, the FNL was often depicted as the most persistent rebel force with the most devoted guerrilla fighters (Interview with former member of the intelligence service during the civil war, Courtrai, 25 October 2015). In contrast, the CNDD-FDD was described as a more "*conventional, classical insurgent force*" (Interviews with civilians, Bubanza, summers 2014 and 2015). Thanks to the ISCAM student defectors, the CNDD-FDD was able to build a stronger and more professional fighting force than the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. This was, for example, also reflected in the fact that the FDD, unlike the FNL, systematically attributed military ranks to its combatants, which would later facilitate its integration into the Burundian army (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 4 July 2014).

In sum, this chapter highlighted the protracted political and military struggle of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD. While the first section retraced their common political origins as well as their ultimate political and military competition, the second section investigated in more detail the movements' respective hybrid politico-military structures as well as their politico-military competition during the civil war. This wartime rivalry has been carried over into the accord and post-accord periods, which will be discussed in more detail in the following two chapters.

Chapter VII: Negotiating Peace – Rebel Groups at the Peace Talks Table

"*The Hutus have been liberated so many times
that some of them have come to oppress others*"

(Interview with former President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, Bujumbura, 1 July 2015).

On July 1, 2015, in the midst of Burundi's most recent electoral crisis, I interviewed former President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya. He had served as Burundi's Head of State during the early years of the civil war between 1994 and 1996. The day of the interview marked the 53rd anniversary of Burundi's independence. What is usually a day of joy and celebration became a day mired in violence as the country prepared for the delayed, controversial presidential elections scheduled for July 21, 2015. The government had ordered several police raids in two of the neighborhoods that had become heavily involved in the protests against President Nkurunziza's controversial attempt to seek a third term. While the police was shutting down the neighborhoods to search for weapons, Nkurunziza was watching the traditional military parade from behind a bulletproof glass on a half-empty tribune. Several invited diplomatic delegations had decided to boycott the independence ceremonies.

As I was interviewing President Ntibantunganya on the porch of his villa in Gihosha, a commune situated on the hills of Bujumbura with a stunning view overlooking the Burundian capital and Lake Tanganyika, our conversation was frequently interrupted by the sound of gunshots and grenade explosions. As we were about to launch into a discussion of Burundi's history, he began the conversation by stating:

> […] *in my opinion, everything that we are living right now is also the result of an erroneous management of the relationship between the different Hutu-dominated political movements, which have emerged during Burundi's post-independence history.* […] *The current crisis is rooted in an historical struggle for political leadership about who would emerge as the future leader of the anticipated negotiations surrounding the grand reforms of the state, which would be codified in the Arusha peace accord.* […] *The Hutus have been liberated so many times that some of them have come to oppress others* (Interview with President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, Bujumbura, 1 July 2015).

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Chapters VII and VIII analyze the evolving dynamics of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD's ideational, power and institutional politics at critical junctures, including peace negotiations and post-accord elections. The analysis reveals that both rebel political parties conducted a hybrid, politico-military struggle throughout the accord and post-accord periods. Both rebel groups, including their various splinter groups, eventually integrated the Burundian peace process, and all of them were authorized to transform into political parties.

The analysis proceeds as follows: each section starts with a general introduction of the critical juncture before analyzing its specific impact (in terms of continuities and changes) for the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL as well as their rivalry among each other. Each section concludes with a summary graph of the impact of the specific critical junctures on the rebel political parties' ideational, power and institutional politics.

7.1. 'Pyromaniac Diplomacy': The Arduous Peace Process

In this chapter, I turn my attention to the analysis of the evolution of the peace negotiation process. Despite limited geopolitical interest, Burundi benefitted from an astonishing mediation attention. The country witnessed a series of international and regional negotiation attempts to bring its civil war to an end. Mediation efforts were strengthened in the aftermath of the dreadful events of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide to prevent another tragedy in the African Great Lakes Region (Sculier 2008, 10; Curtis 2013, 80). Numerous actors, including the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and several non-governmental organizations, undertook (sometimes complementary, but most often competitive) mediation attempts, leading Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, former UN Special Representative in Burundi (1993-1995) to coin the term "*pyromaniac diplomacy*" (Ould Abdallah and Smith 1996).

According to Lemarchand, at least 17 international NGOs, working in mediation and conflict resolution, were based in Burundi during the civil war. In addition, several others assisted with the mediation attempts, but they were not based in the country (Lemarchand 2006, 41f). In the following analysis, I focus on the most influential mediation attempts. I do not discuss the UN-brokered negotiations since the United Nations quickly left the terrain to the Organization of African Unity and provided support to the OAU mediation.

Overall, we can distinguish between two major parallel peace processes, commonly referred to as the Arusha and the Rome process. While the Arusha process was African-led, the Rome process was spearheaded by the Italian-based Sant'Egidio Community. Figure 8 provides a summary timeline of the major rounds of the Arusha and the Rome peace process as well as their respective participants.

It was the Arusha process that eventually led to the signing of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement in 2000, which lays out an inter-ethnic power-sharing agreement and a democratic transition process for Burundi. The PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD were initially excluded from the Arusha process leading to the continuation of the civil war. Both movements eventually accepted the Arusha Accord and signed two additional Arusha+ peace negotiation documents to become part of the peace process, the CNDD-FDD in 2003 and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL in 2006/2008.

The different negotiation attempts illustrate several key points. First, they underscore the importance of ripeness, or the need for conflict parties to reach a certain stage to be able to successfully negotiate a peace settlement (Zartman 1989). Second, the existence of various veto players rendered the mediation attempts especially arduous and partly explains the duration of the negotiation process (Cunningham 2006). Third, the analysis of the negotiation

attempts as critical junctures provides the opportunity of not only focusing on the conflict resolution process but of also analyzing the evolving internal and external dynamics of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD. To complement the ripeness literature, I do not simply analyze how changes in the movements and their political and military dynamics create opportunities for or obstacles to conflict resolution. I also investigate the 'other side of the coin' or how mediation attempts (whether successful or not) have contributed to shaping the ideational, power and institutional politics of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD.

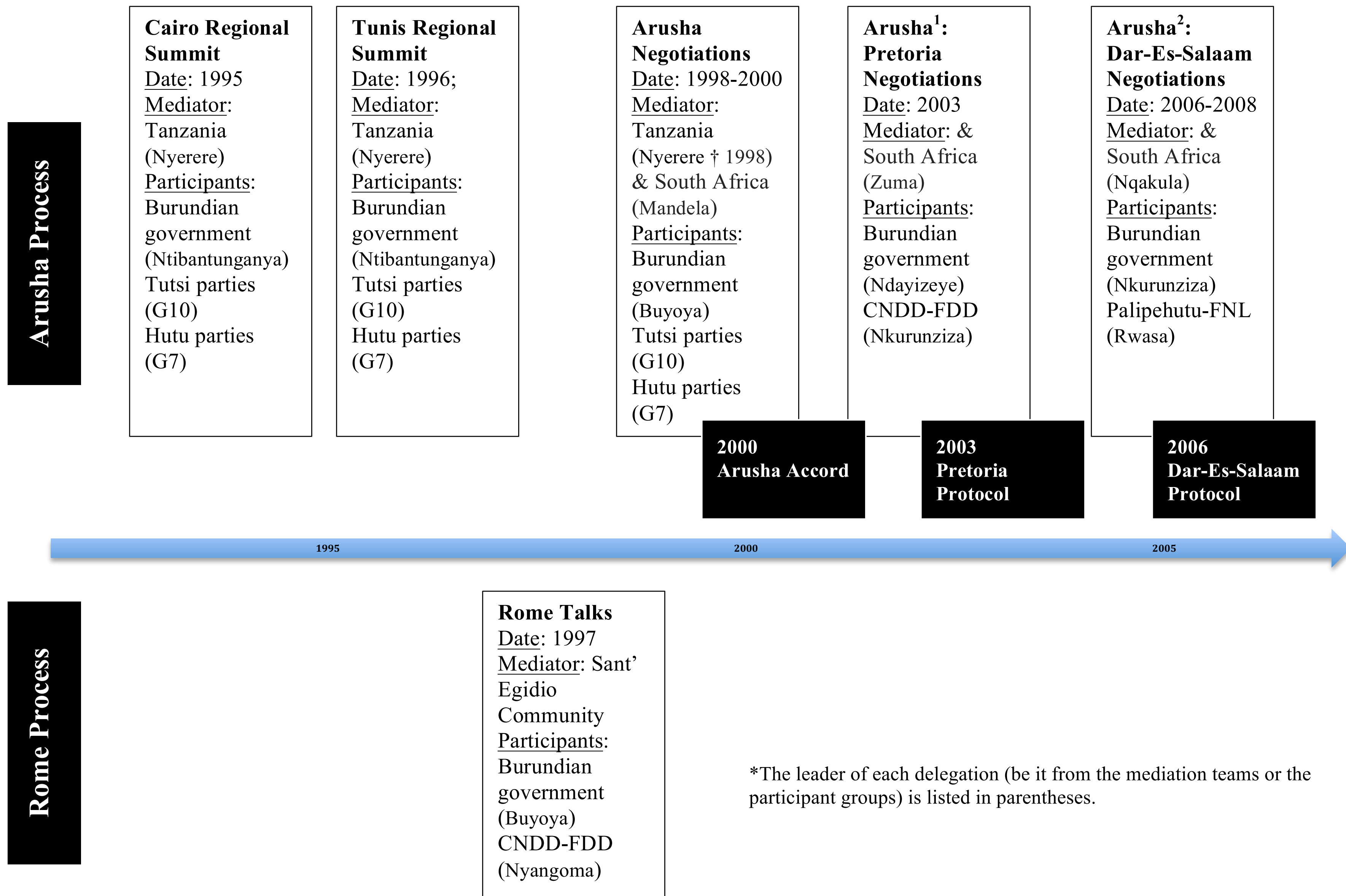

Figure 8: Timeline of major peace negotiations during Burundi's civil war (1993-2008)

The Arusha process started, when in 1995 and 1996, the US-based Carter Center sponsored two regional summits in Cairo and Tunis, which promoted an African mediation for the Burundian conflict. During the summits, Julius Nyerere, the President of Tanzania, was designated as chief regional mediator. Nyerere was determined to launch a negotiation process among Burundi's political elites to restore democratic political order. In his mediation efforts, Nyerere favored a political approach based on peace talks among the major political parties and the political branches of the armed movements.[98] The mediator did not want to reward violence and hoped that consociational power-sharing negotiations among the major political factions, based on an ethnic quota system, would render the armed conflict obsolete (McClintock and Nahimana 2008).[99] Despite this negotiation attempt, what would eventually become the Arusha peace process did not truly take off for another few years.

> *The delay was due to several factors. Increasing violence in Burundi reinforced the mutual demonization of Hutus and Tutsis, making the idea of negotiations very difficult to promote within their respective internal constituencies. Also, in 1996, Major Pierre Buyoya took power in a bloodless coup d'état, leading the region's heads of state to question the legitimacy of President Buyoya as the leader of the Burundian delegation to the peace talks* (McClintock and Nahimana 2008, 77).

At the time of Nyerere's initial negotiation attempts in 1995 and 1996, the Burundian political actors still held extremely distorted perceptions of each other. UPRONA branded FRODEBU and the various Hutu-dominated rebel groups as *génocidaires* given the massacres of Tutsi populations after President Ndadaye's assassination. Several high-ranking FRODEBU

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[98] The participants of the Arusha process included the then government of Burundi as well as two distinct coalitions of UPRONA and the Tutsi parties (commonly referred to as G10) and FRODEBU and the Hutu parties (commonly referred to as G7). In line with the liberal peacebuilding paradigm, all political parties were invited to the negotiation table enjoying equal status. "*Many parties lacked a recognised constituency and had not tested their legitimacy with the disenfranchised Burundi population*" (Daley 2007, 341).

[99] Concurrently, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, then UN Secretary-General, recommended the deployment of 25.000 UN peacekeepers to Burundi, a proposal that was rejected by the UN Security Council, which gave preference to a regionally led peace-keeping initiative. The OAU sent a small observer mission, but a regional peacekeeping force did not materialize until much later (Maundi 2003).

politicians had close ties with the emerging rebel forces, most notably the CNDD-FDD, heightening tensions with the coalition partner UPRONA. Although this was not public knowledge at the time, President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, for example, donated parts of his salary to the CNDD-FDD (Interview with Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, former President, Bujumbura, 1 July 2015). For their part, FRODEBU and the various Hutu-dominated rebel groups perceived UPRONA as nothing more than a mono-ethnic, despotic and putschist force responsible for numerous ethnic and genocidal massacres throughout Burundi's post-independence history and the assassination of "*their*" President. For them, Ndadaye's assassination was just another episode in the decades-long exclusion and elimination of Hutu elites from political power (Sculier 2008, 16).

In light of growing instability and rising inter-ethnic massacres, and following the massacres of Tutsi populations in Teza and Bugendana, Buyoya carried out another coup d'état in 1996 claiming that he wanted to stabilize the escalating security situation. After Buyoya's second accession to power, his regime increased the size of the BAF (whose ranks swelled from 15.000 to 60.000 soldiers, a fourfold increase) to crack down on the Hutu-dominated rebellions (Maundi 2003). The CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL initially increased their support bases inside Burundi as the coup d'état once again confirmed their criticism of the putschist and mono-ethnic military regimes that had governed Burundi for so long. However, very soon, they were confronted with growing challenges to their armed insurrection given the increase in the number of BAF soldiers and Buyoya's reinforced crackdown (ICG 1998a).

In addition, with the beginning of the First Congo War (October 1996 to May 1997) in Eastern Zaire and as rebel leader Laurent-Désiré Kabila[100] launched a full-scale insurgency against President Mobutu Sese Seko, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD were forced to leave and rapidly move their rear bases to Burundi or Tanzania leaving behind much of their equipment (ICG 1998b, 6). The rebellions thus needed to replenish their material resources; in the process, the civilian population paid the heaviest price as the rebellions became more exploitative and the BAF severely punished civilians believed to have provided support to the rebellions (ICG 1998a, 32). This was also the period when the Buyoya II regime stepped up the establishment of the notorious *camps de regroupement* ('relocation camps')[101] for Hutu populations to separate civilians from the rebel groups (Vorrath 2008, 113).

7.2. The Sant'Egidio Peace Talks

Faced with regional sanctions after the coup d'état, President Buyoya decided to negotiate but opted for unilateral and secret talks with the CNDD, the political wing of the CNDD-FDD, which had emerged as the strongest fighting force on the ground. Indeed, regional leaders demanded unconditional peace talks with the political wings of the rebel groups as a necessary precondition for lifting the sanctions (Grauvogel 2014).

Under the auspices of the *Comunitá di Sant'Egidio*, a Rome-based Catholic association, which had just managed to conduct successful peace negotiations that ended the civil war in Mozambique in 1992, the Buyoya regime engaged in secret mediation talks with

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[100] Kabila's insurgent forces, the *Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire* (AFDL), received important support from the governments of Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi.

[101] Nelson Mandela, who would take over as chief negotiator following Julius Nyerere's death, would later compare these relocation camps to the Nazi concentration camps given the atrocious human rights violations that took place in these camps (Krueger and Krueger 2007, 274).

the Nyangoma-led CNDD (excluding all other political factions or armed movements, including the PALIPEHUTU-FNL). Buyoya preferred to rely on an outside mediator perceived as more neutral than the Tanzanian mediation. Indeed, he believed that Tanzania was behind the imposition of regional sanctions and he accused the neighboring country of siding with the rebellions given the insurgents' (more or less accepted) activities in Tanzanian refugee camps (Grauvogel 2014).

For its part, under significant military pressure from the Buyoya regime, the CNDD engaged in the Rome talks in the hope of promoting an image as a constructive partner of peace rather than a negative force harboring *génocidaires*. The movement also wanted the Rome talks, not the Arusha process to become the basis for any future peace accord, "*in part perhaps because they were 50% of the equation in Rome, whereas in Arusha they would be one of several parties to the talks*" (McClintock and Nahimana 2008, 82). Some observers also hypothesize a rapprochement between President Buyoya and then CNDD-FDD leader, Léonard Nyangoma, based on the fact that both hailed from the Southern Province of Bururi.

> *The rapprochement between these two protagonists is maybe also explained by their common inclination to favor a 'Bururi' dynamic, the Southern province that they are both coming from. They wanted to counteract the hostility that the regional actors, under the auspices of Nyerere, displayed against a regime that had too long been confiscated by the South, but also divide the other political groups sympathetic to the peace process but who did not have a military branch to militarily promote their rights* (Sculier 2008, 16).

The Rome talks came to a sudden end when the CNDD-FDD found out that Buyoya had shared the content of the secret mediation attempt with the regional heads of state in a (successful) bid to get the regional sanctions (at least partially) lifted (Nijimbere 2009, 2). In retrospect, it is hard to determine Buyoya's exact interests. While some observers believe that he engaged in the Rome talks out of pure self-interest to end the regional embargo, others

highlight his genuine interest in peace given the great political risk that he took by engaging in talks with a group branded as *génocidaires* (ICG 1998a, 22). After word of the Rome talks got out, Buyoya faced severe criticism from the Tutsi community, who accused his regime of treason.[102]

7.2.1. CNDD-FDD & Sant'Egidio

The Sant'Egidio peace talks constitute an important critical juncture for the CNDD-FDD because the negotiations triggered key internal dynamics, which would permanently come to shape the movement. The peace negotiations laid bare and hardened internal divisions among civilian soft-liners and military hard-liners. The Rome talks also signaled a peak in the dissatisfaction with Nyangoma's political leadership, which had become extremely controversial among a growing number of combatants in the field, and, in many ways, the talks sealed his fate leading to his ousting in 1998.

> *Since July 1997, the rebel movement has been showing signs of growing conflict between factions. CNDD's participation in the Rome negotiations in May 1997 and Arusha in August 1997 gave rise to divisions within the opposition movement* (ICG 1998a, 32).

Frustrations with Nyangoma's leadership surfaced on several fronts. Increasing regional tensions emerged. Born and raised in the traditional privileged Southern province of Bururi, Nyangoma is said to have been primarily a regionalist rather than an ethnicist. "*For him* [Nyangoma]*, a Tutsi from Bururi* [his own home region] *was more trustworthy than a Hutu from Ngozi*" (Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 21 June 2014). Many CNDD-FDD members from other regions felt increasingly uncomfortable with

[102] This criticism culminated in the split of UPRONA, with one faction, led by Pierre Buyoya, favoring negotiations and the other faction, led by Charles Mukasi, opposing any negotiations with the "*racist killers*".

Nyangoma's regional outlook, which was often reflected in the fact that he would, in keeping with the practices of Burundi's Tutsi authoritarian leaders, favor CNDD-FDD members from his own home region (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 27 March 2015).

Further, the CNDD-FDD members split among risk-averse soft-liners, who supported Nyangoma and favored political negotiations and quick access to political power, and risk-taking hard-liners who preferred to continue the armed struggle with the ultimate objective of militarily overthrowing the regime. This division coincided roughly with the civilian and military wings of the movement and it was prompted, in part, by events related to the (mis-) management of funds, discussed below.

Even though the CNDD-FDD's armed struggle had deep political roots, the armed resistance also became an important source of enrichment for the leadership, thus underscoring the interdependence of greed and grievance to understand civil war dynamics (Berdal and Keen 1997; Zahar 2001; Keen 2012). Nyangoma and other members from the CNDD's Political Bureau were accused of selling ammunition for their own enrichment (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 15 July 2014; Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 23 October 2013). In addition, many combatants considered that Nyangoma used large portions of the movement's funds for diplomatic purposes instead of purchasing and supplying ammunition to the combatants (Sculier 2008, 16). As a consequence, in late 1997, the FDD fighters lacked military supplies and lost over 400 combatants during a confrontation with the Burundian army in the Province of Makamba (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 15 July 2014). Several combatants expressed their frustration over the military costs related to corruption (Focus group with former CNDD-FDD combatants, Bubanza, 18 June 2014). Nyangoma also became known for

exploiting coffee producers in the North of Burundi, who contributed to the armed struggle on the understanding that they would be reimbursed, a promise Nyangoma allegedly never kept (Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 25 September 2013).

In addition to privileging the route of military victory and fostering a spirit of revenge among the combatants, the hard-liners were encouraged to take more risks by developments in neighboring Zaire, where the rebel movement of Laurent Désiré Kabila had succeeded in overthrowing the Mobutu regime in May 1997 following the First Congo War. In July 1998, things came to a head, when the military wing of the FDD effectively declared its independence from the political wing of the CNDD, culminating in Nyangoma's removal from his leadership position (FDD 1998). The military wing had become increasingly frustrated and thought that the political wing, especially as embodied in the person of Nyangoma, was selling out the movement and the liberation cause during the Rome talks.

> *The FDD militants* […] *felt that the CNDD were willing to give too many things away in the pursuit of political power, and they felt there had been far too many deaths in the name of justice for Ndadaye to let that happen* (Jones 2013, 190).

After Nyangoma's ouster, the CNDD-FDD would be transformed into an integrated politico-military movement under the leadership of Ndayikengurukiye, Nyangoma's former chief of staff. According to most informants, Hussein Radjabu was responsible for planning the ousting of Nyangoma. While Ndayikengurukiye became the new General Coordinator of the movement, it was Radjabu, who assumed the post of Secretary-General, a highly strategic position to navigate between the political and military members of the movement. Pierre Nkurunziza, who would subsequently become CNDD-FDD leader and President of Burundi, became Radjabu's Deputy and Adolphe Nshirimana was appointed as the CNDD-FDD's

military chief of staff. Nyangoma remained at them helm of the 'original' CNDD, a minor force, which would swiftly integrate the upcoming Arusha peace negotiations.

In sum, the Rome talks culminated in a split among risk-averse soft-liners (favoring political negotiations) and risk-taking hard-liners (favoring military victory). In the process, the risk-taking hard-liners became the most important and influential group inside the CNDD-FDD. Nyangoma's overthrow marked the CNDD-FDD's transformation from a movement with separate political and military branches, in which the military wing was subordinated to the political wing, into an integrated politico-military movement, in which the political leadership was subordinated to the military leadership. This was most notably reflected in the systematic replacement of the formerly exclusively civilian political commissioners, responsible for sensitizing the local populations to the movement's cause, by military members (Interview with former FDD General, Bujumbura, 8 April 2015). In addition, under Nyangoma's leadership, former FRODEBU members dominated the CNDD-FDD's political leadership while the ISCAM students, who had deserted the FAB, made up the majority of the FDD's command structure. Subsequently, former PALIPEHUTU-FNL militants, who had remained with CNDD-FDD, became more influential (Rufyikiri 2016a, 10). This included, most notably, Hussein Radjabu, Pierre Nkurunziza and Adolphe Nshimirimana. Finally, the growing regional tensions that would come to characterize the movement can be traced back to the Rome talks.

7.2.2. PALIPEHUTU-FNL & CNDD-FDD Rivalry During Rome Talks

Given the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's exclusion from the Sant'Egidio sponsored mediation, the Rome talks did not have a direct impact on its internal organizational make-up. However, once the secret negotiations became publicly known, the Rome talks strengthened the

PALIPEHUTU-FNL's conviction that the CNDD-FDD was a "*traitor*", whose members had always collaborated with the Tutsi-dominated authoritarian regimes.

The PALIPEHUTU-FNL was thus reinforced in its belief that it represented the "*real liberator*" of the Burundian population given that, according to its perception, the CNDD-FDD had continuously betrayed the liberation cause (Interview with FNL member, Brussels, 16 October 2015). The Sant'Egidio brokered peace talks were followed by intensifying violence between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD in mid to late 1997 resulting in the death of hundreds of victims (ICG 1998a, 32).

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>PALIPEHUTU-FNL</th><th>CNDD-FDD</th></tr>
<tr><td>Ideational politics</td><td>- Reinforcement of ethnicist reading of the conflict
- Strengthened belief that PALIPEHUTU-FNL is the “real” and “truthful” liberation force and that CNDD-FDD has betrayed the liberation cause by negotiating with the Buyoya regime in Rome</td><td>- Increasing regional tensions among CNDD-FDD’s combatants due to Nyangoma’s favoritism towards CNDD-FDD members from his home region and his negotiations with the Buyoya regime in Rome</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Power politics</td><td>- N/A</td><td>- Growing divisions among risk-averse soft-liners and risk-taking hard-liners
- Split between CNDD (under the leadership of Nyangoma) and CNDD-FDD (under the leadership of Ndayikengurukiye) with the latter becoming the most important fighting force
- Ascent of former PALIPEHUTU-FNL militants inside CNDD-FDD sidelining former FRODEBU militants</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">- Once word of the Rome talks got out, intensified competition between PALIPEHUTU-FNL and CNDD-FDD over support of local population
- Increased attacks between PALIPEHUTU-FNL and CNDD-FDD</td></tr>
<tr><td>Institutional politics</td><td>- N/A</td><td>- Change from armed resistance movement with separate political and military wing to integrated politico-military movement
- Militarization of internal organization
- Replacement of civilian commissioners with military commissioners</td></tr>
</table>

Table 8: Impact of Sant’Egidio Peace Talks on CNDD-FDD & PALIPEHUTU-FNL

7.3. The Arusha Peace Talks

Regional heads of state, particularly President Nyerere, did not welcome the intervention of the Sant'Egidio community, a Western actor, in the Burundian conflict. In their opinion, this contradicted the notion that the peace process was intended to be African-owned and that it should embody the spirit of an African Renaissance dedicated to finding an "*African solution to an African problem*" (Maundi 2003, 339). Following the abrupt end of the Rome talks, President Nyerere revived the Arusha process continuing his vision of only negotiating with the main (unarmed) political forces of the country.

The decision of only engaging with the political actors resulted in the exclusion of the rebels' military branches, who became key veto players in the negotiation process (Cunningham 2006). In the process, some rebel groups started to split into their respective political and military factions. Faced with an increasing number of factions, Nyerere decided to exclude all splinter movements from the Arusha peace process fearing that negotiations would otherwise become unmanageable (McClintock and Nahimana 2008, 78).

Ultimately, he would invite three rebel groups' political wings to join the political parties at Arusha, including the Nyangoma-led CNDD, the Karatasi-led PALIPEHUTU and the Karumba-led FROLINA. This meant the effective exclusion of the two major Hutu-dominated rebel groups that controlled most of the combatants on the ground, namely the Ndayikengurukije-led CNDD-FDD and the Kabura-led PALIPEHUTU-FNL.

Following the death of President Julius Nyerere in October 1999, Nelson Mandela, then President of South Africa, (reluctantly) took over as the regional mediator. In light of increasing PALIPEHUTU-FNL and CNDD-FDD attacks, Mandela opted to try to include the two rebel factions into the Arusha process and began to hold secret talks with them. Despite

secret negotiations with the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD, Mandela was not able to convince the two rebel groups to join the Arusha peace process. During the consultations, both rebel movements critiqued Arusha's ethnic power-sharing formula[103] and advocated for the complete dismantlement of the FAB. In addition, both rebel groups demanded the closure of the notorious *camps de regroupement*, which had been established under the Buyoya II regime to separate the civilian populations from the rebel groups, as a precondition to any peace accord. For the rebel groups, the relocation camps, which Mandela had compared to Nazi concentration camps, incarnated the decades-long Hutu oppression and persecution (Krueger and Krueger 2007).

Notwithstanding the refusal by the two major Hutu rebel groups of the terms of the Arusha Accord, Mandela wanted to conclude the peace talks as soon as possible in the belief that a peace agreement would develop its own dynamic (McClintock and Nahimana 2008, 79). He thus pushed for the Arusha Accord's signing persuaded that subsequent cease-fire negotiations would ultimately bring both rebel groups on board. Mandela delegated this task to Jacob Zuma, then Deputy President of South Africa. Under intense pressure, or because, as one interviewee put it "*Nobody says no to Mandela*" (Interview with FRODEBU participant in the Arusha negotiations, Bujumbura, 15 July 2014), the political factions signed the Arusha Peace Agreement on 28 August 2000. Using what is often referred to as "*Madiba magic*", Mandela managed to rush 20 heads of state, including US President Bill Clinton, to attend the signing ceremony in Arusha increasing the pressure on the negotiating parties. In light of the

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[103] As a reminder (as discussed in subsection 5.4.4.), the Arusha Accord prescribes an ethnic quota system for Burundi's political and military institutions – giving the Tutsi minority 40 percent of posts in government and the National Assembly as well as 50 percent in the Senate, whereas the Hutu majority occupies 60 and 50 percent respectively, as well as dividing posts in the national army equally among Tutsi and Hutu.

exclusion of the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, experts have referred to Arusha as a "*peace agreement without a ceasefire*" (Daley 2007, 336).

The African Union tried to establish a small multinational force to protect and support Burundian politicians, several of whom returned from exile to participate in the transitional government stipulated in the Arusha Accord. Given the ongoing civil war, South Africa, which had developed a particular interest in seeing the peace process succeed,[104] was the only country willing to contribute. The South Africa Protection Support Detachment (SAPSD) consisted of 700 troops and was deployed in October 2001 (Boshoff and Vrey 2006; Curtis 2013, 83).

7.3.1. CNDD-FDD & Arusha

The Arusha peace talks constitute an important critical juncture for the CNDD-FDD. The negotiations reinforced several internal dynamics that had been laid bare by the Rome talks, including, most importantly, hardened regional and civil-military tensions. Officially, the CNDD-FDD expressed its willingness to entertain political negotiations pointing to the fact that the movement constituted the most important political and military force in the Burundian conflict. However, internally, the CNDD-FDD denounced the Arusha talks as nothing more than "*a greedy division of power rather than a framework for democratic elections*" and stressed that "*peace could come only if the existing Tutsi army was replaced with a truly national, multiethnic force*" (Krueger and Krueger 2007, 279).

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[104] South Africa perceived the success of the peace process as a symbol of it leadership role in Africa. In addition, it interpreted the pacification of Burundi as an important piece of the puzzle in the efforts to stabilize the African Great Lakes Region, especially the DRC, in order to be able to economically invest in the region.

Meanwhile regional alliances shifted. President Laurent-Désiré Kabila alienated himself from his former allies Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi, who now backed Congolese rebels seeking to overthrow him in what would become the Second Congo War (August 1998 to July 2003). The CNDD-FDD entered into a secret deal with Kabila to help him fight these Congolese rebels: in exchange, Kabila offered the CNDD-FDD renewed access to its former rear bases in Eastern DRC and he helped the movement secure support, especially ammunition, from his new allies, Angola and Zimbabwe. In addition, the CNDD-FDD was free to engage in arms trafficking with certain foreign rebel groups, such as the *Forces démocratiques de liberation du Rwanda* or *Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda* (FDLR)[105], something that Kabila tolerated because the CNDD-FDD and the FDLR assisted him in combating rebellions, such as the Rwanda-sponsored *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie* or *Rally for Congolese Democracy* (RCD).

At the time, it is estimated that the CNDD-FDD counted between 10.000 and 20.000 fighters, out of which about 6.000 were directly fighting for Kabila (AfricaConfidential 1999, 2). Several informants recounted fierce battles in Eastern DRC, including battles around the towns of Pepa and Lubumbashi in Katanga Province in 1998, when the CNDD-FDD helped Kabila to fight Rwandan forces and prevent them from taking Lubumbashi.

> *It was even the CNDD-FDD, which helped to rescue Kabila son, the current Congolese President, from the hands of the Rwandans* […] *We not only helped to rescue his son, but also to keep the Rwandans from taking Lubumbashi, the country's second largest city* […] *The Rwandans were extremely sophisticated and we only had limited equipment. These were, indeed, David against Goliath style battles,* […] *and David won* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 15 July 2015).

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[105] The FDLR designate the primary remnants of Rwandan Hutu rebels, especially the *Interahamwe* ('those who work together'), who participated in the 1994 genocide. Many Hutu rebels and their families fled to then Zaire in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide, where some of them formed the FDLR promising to return to Rwanda to overthrow the RPF regime.

With the FDD fighting on two different fronts, inside Burundi and in Eastern DRC, Ndayikengurukiye created two military chief of staff positions, one for Burundi, which continued to be held by General Adolphe Nshimirimana, and one for DRC, which was given to General Prime Ngowenubusa (Interview with former FDD General, Bujumbura, 8 April 2015). In the process, Ndayikengurukiye relocated his leadership team to Lubumbashi in Eastern DRC. Because it was militarily and economically boosted by its new alliance with Kabila, many observers question whether the CNDD-FDD had a genuine interest in participating in the Arusha negotiations at the time (Sculier 2008, 24; Nijimbere 2009, 2). Strengthened in their position due to Kabila's support, the risk-taking hard-liners remained the most influential decision-makers in the rebel movement (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 25 July 2014).

Even though the CNDD-FDD was strengthened through its alliance with Kabila, the movement was not able to control the corruption growing inside. In addition, popular support was slowly declining; the population had become increasingly drained as the primary provider of food and shelter inside Burundi. These and other challenges led the Political Bureau to convene a meeting in March 2001 in Lubumbashi to adopt a code of conduct, commonly called the Lubumbashi Principles. First, the CNDD-FDD officially called for a better control of the movement's funds. Second, FDD officers were ordered to avoid any exploitation and mistreatment of the Burundian population to ensure its continued support. Third, the CNDD-FDD debated its political vision for the future of Burundi. With the potential organization of elections looming following the signing of the Arusha Accord, the CNDD-FDD developed a

political program inspired by UBU's[106] *gusubikanya* ('distributive justice)'. The political program highlighted the promotion of social policies[107] in order to address the historical marginalization of the Bahutu majority population (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 15 July 2015).

During that time, the CNDD-FDD continued to wrestle with internal power struggles. In the process, discontent towards Ndayikengurukiye grew; he had committed the same error as his predecessor Nyangoma by distancing himself from the battlefield. In addition, rumors circulated to the effect that, following the exclusion of the CNDD-FDD from the Arusha Accord, President Buyoya had approached Ndayikengurukiye through his cousin, Augustin Nzodjibwami, then at the helm of FRODEBU's internal wing, to engage in bilateral negotiations. Suspicions surrounding Ndayikengurukiye's real loyalties mounted, coupled with growing regional divisions.

> *The growing regional tensions resulted in intense internal power struggles with combatants from different regions killing each other to an extent that the number of victims from intra-Hutu fighting are probably much higher than from intra-ethnic fighting and clashes with the Tutsi-dominated national army* […] *In addition, rival internal factions planned high-level political assassinations to gain the upper hand* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 1 May 2015).

Following two CNDD-FDD leaders who hailed from the South of Burundi, many CNDD-FDD militants did not want the next leader to come from this region, which had traditionally dominated Burundian politics. The growing regional tensions culminated in the

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[106] As a reminder, the Marxist-inspired UBU was one of the CNDD-FDD's political parent organizations. For a detailed discussion of the CNDD-FDD's political roots, please see sub-section 6.1.1.

[107] This included, most notably, free education until the age of 16 (a highly symbolic policy in light of the 1972 selective genocide targeting Hutu intellectuals and students); free health care for pregnant women, children under five, people suffering from malaria, diabetes, water-related diseases and HIV.

ousting of Ndayikengurukiye, who was subsequently replaced by Pierre Nkurunziza, Burundi's current President.

Nkurunziza was born in 1963 in the Northern Province of Ngozi. Like Rémy Gahutu, he was the son of a Tutsi mother and a Hutu father. In 1972, he lost his father, who had served as a parliamentarian and governor. After graduating from the *Université du Burundi* in 1990 with a degree in physical education, Nkurunziza became an assistant university lecturer and also taught in high schools. A former PALIPEHUTU-FNL supporter, he joined the CNDD-FDD in the aftermath of the university purges, which had taken place at the University of Burundi in 1995.[108] During the purges, Nkurunziza survived a serious mortar injury when the BAF fired shots at his car before torching it. In 1998, he was sentenced to death in absentia by a Burundian court for laying land mines in the capital of Bujumbura. Even though Nkurunziza attended an Anglican school, he states that he became a born-again Christian during the civil war after surviving a near-fatal shooting. For months, Nkurunziza hid in remote swamp areas; he later recounted visions that God had promised him to rule the country (Gahimbare 2013).

The various leadership changes illustrate the fragmentation of the CNDD-FDD, a consequence of the context in which the organisation emerged, including the aggregation of various pockets of popular armed resistance, civil-military cleavages, regional tensions, and problems with corruption. This however changed, when Nkurunziza, nicknamed *Umuhuza* ('the unifier'), took charge. His commitment to stay close to the troops helped to foster

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[108] Ethnic tensions heightened at the University of Burundi throughout 1994 and 1995. The growing divisions culminated in June and July 1995 in a series of massacres of Hutu students by Tutsi militia members, such as the *Sans Échec* or the *Sans Défaite*. In the aftermath of the massacres, many Hutu students left: some of them continued their studies abroad, others, like Pierre Nkurunziza, joined the CNDD-FDD in the Kibira Forest. For a detailed personal account of the June 1995 university massacres, please see Alain Aimé Nyamitwe's testimony. Nyamitwe, who is Burundi's current Minister of Foreign Affairs, is considered one of the strongmen of the current CNDD-FDD regime (Nyamitwe 2006).

internal cohesion among the CNDD-FDD's militants (Nindorera 2010, 17). In the meantime, following in the footsteps of the CNDD-Nyangoma, the CNDD-Ndayikengurukiye integrated the Arusha peace process. Both factions subsequently transformed into political parties, respectively the CNDD and the Kaze-FDD.[109]

In sum, during the Arusha peace negotiations, the split among risk-averse soft-liners and risk-taking hard-liners persisted. The risk-taking hard-liners were able to keep the upper hand given the economic and military boost provided by the alliance with Kabila. Consequently, the CNDD-FDD refused to integrate the Arusha peace process in the hope of achieving an outright military victory. Still internal divisions widened, notably over the issue of growing internal corruption. This led the CNDD-FDD to adopt the Lubumbashi Principles to reaffirm its commitment to basic guiding principles, including the effective prevention of corruption. Regional tensions culminated in the overthrow of Ndayikengurukiye.[110] The Northerner Nkurunziza replaced the Southerner Ndayikengurukiye. Nicknamed 'Pita, the Unifier', Nkurunziza strengthened the movement's internal cohesion. His accession to power marked the definite take-over of the CNDD-FDD's main decision-making structures by former PALIPEHUTU-FNL militants (Rufyikiri 2016a, 13).

7.3.2. PALIPEHUTU-FNL & Arusha

The Arusha peace talks sparked several important internal dynamics inside the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. The negotiations included the political factions of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, the Karatasi-led PALIPEHUTU and the Karumba-led FROLINA. However, Arusha

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[109] During the subsequent DDR process, Nyangoma's military branch demobilized 2.180 combatants, while Ndayikengurukiye's faction only registered 613 fighters into the demobilization process (Interview with staff member of Burundi's Ministry of Defense, Bujumbura, 1 July 2015).

[110] As was the case of Nyangoma's ousting, Radjabu is said to have plotted it.

excluded the PALIPEHUTU-FNL led by Cossan Kabura, who controlled most of the FNL combatants on the ground. Given the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's radical, ethnicist ideational project, Kabura categorically rejected any negotiations with the Burundian government, especially with its Tutsi elements. With regards to the Arusha Accords's extensive power-sharing formula, the movement demanded the reopening of negotiations so that "*Hutu representation in the institutions as a whole be identical with the demographic weight of its community, which amounts to 86% of all administrative and political posts*" (ICG 2000, 34).

The movement's alliance with the *Interahamwe* ('those who work together') in the run-up to and during the Rwandan genocide as well as its later alliance with the FDLR in Eastern DRC had also seriously discredited the PALIPEHUTU-FNL in the eyes of peace mediators (ICG 2000, 30). According to PALIPEHUTU-FNL militants, it was the CNDD-FDD, which had described the PALIPEHUTU-FNL as a radical, ethnicist fighting force during contacts with international mediators (despite the CNDD-FDD's own dubious connections to the FDLR as discussed in the previous sub-section) (Interview with FNL member, Brussels, 16 October 2015).[111]

However, Kabura's position towards negotiations changed after the signing of the Arusha Accord when Burundi's political parties announced preparations for the political transition and elections despite the continued civil war. This led the PALIPEHUTU-FNL leadership to ask itself if it had not missed an important political opportunity. When the new negotiator Jacob Zuma approached Kabura, he accepted secret negotiations without a proper

[111] According to a secret list requested by the Rwandan government after the CNDD-FDD's election as Burundi's ruling party in 2005, there are at least 700 Burundians, who participated in the Rwandan genocide, including several high-ranking personalities of the current CNDD-FDD regime (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 4 July 2015).

mandate from the FNL's militants. Alain Mugabarabona, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's spokesperson based in the Netherlands, was appointed to lead the negotiation team (Boshoff, Vrey, and Rautenbach 2010, 21).

Kabura's negotiation attempt culminated in an internal split among the risk-taking hard-liners and the risk-averse soft-liners. In the process, Agathon Rwasa, then Commander of the Western Region,[112] ousted Kabura in October 2000. As had happened with the CNDD-FDD's Nyangoma, Kabura was accused of privileging quick access to political power instead of staying truthful to the liberation cause. In addition, Kabura, who lived in Dar-es-Salaam and collected money from the diaspora in DRC and Kenya for his own enrichment, had become alienated from the battlefield (Interview with FNL member, Bujumbura, 17 July 2014).

The PALIPEHUTU-FNL's new leader, Agathon Rwasa, was born in 1964 in Kiremba in the Northern Province of Ngozi. He attended primary and secondary school in Ngozi and Muramvya provinces. He studied psychology and education at the *Université du Burundi* in Bujumbura, but was not able to finish his degree. In 1988, he was forced to flee Burundi due to the inter-ethnic killings in Ntega and Marangara, two localities neighboring his home commune. He found refuge in Tanzania, where he joined the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. He soon rose inside the rebel movement's political and military ranks and was known as one of the most skilled military leader.

Rwasa's take-over marked an important shift in the movement's ideational project. The new leader became known for the promotion of *isezerano* (meaning 'divine promise'),

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[112] The Western region combined Bujumbura Mairie, Bujumbura Rural, Cibitoke and Bubanza.

referring to the messianic belief that the PALIPEHUTU-FNL under his leadership was supposed to conquer Burundi by military victory.

> *He brought the Bible into the armed struggle* […] *He said never again any negotiations. God has promised us the country: we will take power after our blood has been revenged. Nothing will come from talks or elections, everything will from our devotion to God and our prayers* (Interview with FNL member, Bujumbura, 9 October 2013).

Rwasa installed a hierarchical leadership style with decisions, be they big or small, having to be approved by him. In addition, he was instrumental in building the movement's internal cohesion. During interviews with PALIPEHUTU-FNL militants, Rwasa was regularly described as a "*historic*" and "*charismatic*" leader (Focus group with former FNL combatants, Bujumbura, 4 July 2014). He promoted the adoption of an internal code of conduct. Militants were prohibited from consuming alcohol or cigarettes and risked severe punishments, even execution, if they violated the movement's strict rules and regulations. In the process, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL became a very rigorous and disciplined fighting force. Many informants cited this code of conduct as a key element that set the PALIPEHUTU-FNL apart from the CNDD-FDD. As one FNL combatant explained:

> *We learnt to never betray the movement and to always stay faithful to Rwasa. We were very obedient to his leadership.* […] *It was even prohibited to look him in the eyes.* […] *If you would commit one error, you risked being killed* (Interview with FNL member, Bubanza, 2 April 2015).

Data collected in the course of my fieldwork thus confirms Uvin's conclusion. In his research on ex-combatants in Burundi, Uvin finds that ex-FNL soldiers all shared an extremely strong commitment to the liberation cause, anchored in a combination of pro-Hutu ideology, religion and discipline, which distinguished them from the other rebel forces. This also partly accounts for the fact that the PALIPEHUTU-FNL would join the peace process much later than any other rebel faction (Uvin 2007, 5).

In the meantime, the internal power struggle among pro-negotiation soft-liners and anti-negotiation hard-liners continued. A faction led by Mugabarabona, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's spokesperson based in the Netherlands, tried to overthrow Rwasa. The faction issued a statement in which it "*refused the transformation of our party into private property and a religious sect*" and "*rejected every idea to take the Burundian people hostage by refusing to integrate the negotiations to bring back peace, security and stability to our country*" (PALIPEHUTU-FNL 2002). Mugabarabona's splinter group integrated the Arusha peace process.[113] However, given Rwasa's closeness to the troops, he continued to control most of the combatants and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's armed struggle continued. Some observers even suspect the Burundian government to have orchestrated the attempted putsch against Rwasa to weaken the PALIPEHUTU-FNL (Sculier 2008, 20). Mugabarabona's splinter group would follow the example of Nyangoma's and Ndayikengurukiye's CNDD-FDD factions as well as Karatasi's and Karumba's PALIPEHUTU-FNL factions and transform into a political party.[114]

In sum, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL did not join the Arusha peace process primarily because of its radical, ethno-centric ideational project, which led it to reject the inter-ethnic power-sharing agreement that, in its opinion, granted overrepresentation to the Batutsi. However, in the aftermath of the Arusha peace negotiations, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL split among pro-negotiation, risk-averse soft-liners and anti-negotiation, risk-taking hard-liners. Rwasa's take-over of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL marked the introduction of a strong religious underpinning in the rebellion's ideational politics as well as the adoption of a strict code of

[113] During the disarmament of Mugabarabona's faction, only 30 soldiers entered the DDR process depositing 10 weapons (Boshoff, Vrey, and Rautenbach 2010, 25).

[114] The political parties of the CNDD (led by Nyangoma), Kaze-FDD (led by Ndayikengurukiye), Palipe-Agakiza (led by Karatasi), FROLINA (led by Karumba) and FNL-Icanzo (led by Mugabarabona), would remain minor political players and only achieve minuscule electoral results in the subsequent elections.

conduct. Despite the military weakness of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL compared to the CNDD-FDD and the BAF, Rwasa was convinced that he could conquer the country by military force since God had revealed this to him. Consequently, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL would not accept to enter peace negotiations until 2006, much later than any of the other rebel factions.

7.3.3. PALIPEHUTU-FNL & CNDD-FDD Rivalry During Arusha Talks

The Arusha peace negotiations constitute one of the peaks of the civil war, including violence resulting from the political and military competition between the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. As an illustration, the *Armed Conflict Location and Event Data* (ACLED) reports around 500 war-related incidents[115] in 2000 as compared to around 160 in 1999. Given the effective exclusion of the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL from the Arusha peace talks, both movements stepped up attacks throughout 1998, 1999 and 2000, especially prior to each Arusha negotiation round, to ascertain that the real fighting forces were excluded from the discussions. Both rebel groups also increased attacks against one another in order to ascertain their military importance and weaken their competitor.

In addition to increased violence, both, the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, introduced internal codes of conduct to compete over the hearts and minds of the local populations. While the CNDD-FDD adopted the Lubumbashi principles in March 2001, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL introduced rigorous internal regulations when Agathon Rwasa took over the leadership of the movement in February 2001.

In 2000, League ITEKA, a local Burundian human rights organization, criticized the increasing attacks by the rebel groups, noting that raids and killings had started to spread to

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[115] These war-related incidents include, for example, violence against civilians and battles between the rebel groups and the BAF as well as among the rebel groups.

provinces previously unaffected by the civil war, including Rutana and Ruyigi provinces (ITEKA 2000). Through these attacks, the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL aimed to ascertain their importance as key veto players for the Burundian peace process. Human Rights Watch reported that, in late 1999, the CNDD-FDD implemented a scorched earth policy in the Southern and Eastern provinces of Burundi, most notably Bururi, Makamba and Ruyigi, looting and burning houses, schools, health centers and communal offices. The PALIPEHUTU-FNL, for its part, stepped up attacks in its fiefdom of Bujumbura Rural province (HRW 2000). In December 2000, the FNL allegedly attacked a bus operated by the Titanic Express company that was traveling from Kigali to Bujumbura. While the Hutu passengers were released, the Tutsi passengers as well as a British woman, who was traveling with her Burundian Tutsi fiancé, were killed. Although the FNL have continuously denied responsibility, many leading human rights organizations have attributed the Titanic Express massacre to FNL troops led by Agathon Rwasa (Wilson 2006). In March 2001, the FNL managed to occupy the Northern neighborhood of Kinama in the Burundian capital for almost two weeks.

Since the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD did not participate in the negotiations of the Arusha Accord, they are often accused of not having internalized its consociational, inter-ethnic powersharing spirit. Indeed, at the time of the Arusha negotiations, both rebel groups rejected the Arusha spirit as nothing more than a greedy division of political posts among the Burundian political actors, who had, however, no real weight and legitimacy among the local populations. In addition, both rebel groups demanded the complete dismantlement of Burundi's national army, the FAB, given the Tutsi-dominated national army's involvement in continuous massacres of Hutu populations since the country's

independence (Interview with BNUB staff member, Bujumbura, 4 June 2013). The following two interview excerpts with a PALIPEHUTU-FNL and a CNDD-FDD member illustrate their reservations towards Arusha:

> *Back then, we asked ourselves why Mwalimu Julius Nyerere invited these people, who did not have arms.* […] *To say that they should negotiate for everybody, even though they would never be able to end the hostilities given that these people did not make the war. But we, the CNDD-FDD and the FNL, did* […] *Today, we adhere to the Arusha Accord, but with the consciousness that in its content, it does not reflect the political visions of the CNDD-FDD and the FNL* (Interview with FNL member, Bujumbura, 9 October 2013).

> *These people had no mandate from the population or the nation to participate in the negotiations,* […] *and they came up with what we have called the Arusha Accord* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, 17 October 2013)

In the run-up to and the aftermath of the 2015 electoral crisis, this has become a major issue of contention with the CNDD-FDD announcing its intention to revisit Arusha's inter-ethnic power-sharing formula, considered by many Burundians as the cornerstone of the country's current social contract (Interview with local journalists, Bujumbura, summer 2015).

	PALIPEHUTU-FNL	CNDD-FDD
Ideational politics	- Ethnic-radical ideology now underpinned by *isezerano* (divine belief in the right to rule the country)	- Political program based on the principle of *gusubikanya* (distributive justice) - Increasing regional tensions with intra-group fighting and killings
Power politics	- Growing divisions among risk-averse soft-liners and risk-taking hard-liners - Resulting in leadership take-over by Rwasa	- Continued domination of risk-taking hard-liners feeling encouraged by the CNDD-FDD's alliance with Kabila - Growing regional divisions resulting in leadership take-over by Nkurunziza - Continued of influence of former PALIPEHUTU-FNL militants
	- Intensified attacks against FAB and among PALIPEHUTU-FNL and CNDD-FDD prior to each Arusha negotiation round	
Institutional politics	- Continuation of politico-integrated movement structures - Introduction of internal code of conducts and discipline to foster internal cohesion and enhanced command and control	

Table 9: Impact of Arusha Peace Talks on CNDD-FDD & PALIPEHUTU-FNL

7.4. The Cease-Fire Negotiations

Despite the initial reluctance of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD to join the Arusha process, both movements eventually accepted the Arusha Accord and engaged in peace talks belatedly as additional parties demanding further concessions concerning their political and military integration. While the CNDD-FDD entered into peace negotiations with in 2002, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL did not enter into negotiations until 2006.

The CNDD-FDD agreed to enter into peace talks with the transitional government established according to the stipulations of the Arusha Accord. While the negotiations with Pierre Buyoya, the first transitional President, were unsuccessful, discussions with Domitien Ndayizeye, the second transitional President, bore fruit (Burihabwa 2014, 24). This was partly due to the fact that Ndayizeye, a Hutu FRODEBU member, was able to foster a relationship of trust between the transitional government and the CNDD-FDD unlike the former Tutsi President Buyoya. The negotiations culminated in the signing of a cease-fire agreement in December 2002. A detailed peace agreement, known as the Pretoria Protocol on Outstanding Political, Defence and Security Power Sharing in Burundi, was subsequently signed on October 8, 2003 under the auspices of the South African government. The Pretoria Protocol laid out the political and military integration of the CNDD-FDD, including, most importantly, its transformation into a political party and the integration of many of its combatants into the country's state institutions.

The PALIPEHUTU-FNL, for its part, remained reluctant to engage in peace talks and favored a military victory at all costs until after the first post-accord elections in 2005. By this time, the CNDD-FDD had already transformed into a political party and won the 2005 elections. While the CNDD-FDD had been able to negotiate important political and military

concessions, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL only received limited concessions. This was partly due to the fact that the rebel leader Agathon Rwasa rushed peace talks in the run-up to the 2010 elections in the hope of winning these elections with a landslide victory, just like the CNDD-FDD had done during the 2005 elections.

After the signing of the cease-fire agreement between the CNDD-FDD and the transitional government in December 2002, the African Union pushed for a regional peacekeeping mission. Despite the ceasefire deal, the truce was broken on an almost daily basis. This culminated in February 2003 in the creation of the African Union Mission to Burundi (AMIB). AMIB, the first full-fledged AU peacekeeping mission, partly built on the South Africa Protection Support Detachment (SAPSD), which had been established in the aftermath of the Arusha Accord. At its height, AMIB counted 3.335 troops, mostly coming from South Africa, Ethiopia and Mozambique. In June 2004, AMIB was converted into the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) and the number of peacekeepers increased to 5.650 troops, with additional troops hailing from Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal (Daley 2007, 346). AMIB, ONUB and the World Bank were charged with assisting the Burundian government with the DDR process.

7.4.1. CNDD-FDD & Pretoria

The Pretoria peace talks represent a major critical juncture for the CNDD-FDD given that the movement officially agreed to end its decade-long armed struggle, accept the Arusha Accord and integrate Burundi's political and military institutions. The peace negotiations were made possible due to realignments among risk-averse soft-liners and risk-taking hard-liners with soft-liners winning the upper hand.

The CNDD-FDD's change of heart was due to several factors. First, regional alliances shifted once more. International and regional pressure had increased to push for a negotiated settlement in neighboring DRC to end the Second Congo War. These mediation efforts culminated in July 1999 in the signing of the Lusaka Agreement. The peace deal called for the disarmament of all local and foreign rebel forces on Congolese territory thereby weakening the alliance between the CNDD-FDD and President Kabila (LCA 1999, Article 3). In the process, the CNDD-FDD lost a key ally, who had helped the movement to procure ammunition and receive military training. This weakened the CNDD-FDD from a military point of view (Interview with former FDD General, Bujumbura, 1 May 2015).

Second, the CNDD-FDD was failing to come to grips with the growing corruption within its ranks. Several informants stated that they thought that the movement could have won the war, had it been able to manage its resources appropriately (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 27 March 2015). Despite continuous attempts to deal with the problem of corruption (as, for instance, called for by the Lubumbashi Principles), the CNDD-FDD leadership was not able to do so, as many of the leaders were themselves involved in these practices (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 26 March 2015). This culminated in discontent among the FDD foot soldiers, who increasingly thought that the leaders were selling out the liberation cause for their own personal enrichment (Focus group with former CNDD-FDD combatants, Bubanza, 18 June 2014).

These developments contributed to a continuing "*mutually hurting stalemate*" (Zartman 2001) between the CNDD-FDD and the BAF rendering the prospect of military victory increasingly difficult (Uvin and Bayer 2013). In the meantime, following the signing of the Arusha Accord, FRODEBU and UPRONA announced the organization of elections

despite the continuing civil war (Daley 2007). The CNDD-FDD anticipated that, given the popular support the its had been able to muster throughout the civil war, the movement could win the upcoming elections. In addition, the CNDD-FDD perceived the electoral rules enshrined in the Arusha Accord, based on a closed list proportional representative system, as beneficial for its political future (Allison 2006). Consequently, the balance of power between risk-averse soft-liners and risk-taking hard-liners shifted in favor of the soft-liners. Many CNDD-FDD members realized that a military victory was increasingly impossible and that negotiations would be the best route to the CNDD-FDD's accession to power through its participation in the upcoming elections (Interview with former FDD General, Bujumbura, 1 May 2015).

In the course of the Pretoria negotiations, the CNDD-FDD secured several political and military integration provisions. Most importantly, it negotiated the authorization to transform into a political party. The CNDD-FDD also obtained the right to become part of the transitional government. In total, the CNDD-FDD received four transitional, ministerial positions. Nkurunziza, the CNDD-FDD's leader, was appointed to lead the *Ministère de la bonne governance* ('Ministry of good governance'), at the time the third highest-ranking position in the state's political institutions.

The CNDD-FDD's political integration would provide the organization with access to the state institutions and its resources, putting it in a suitable position to prepare for the upcoming elections. Militarily, the CNDD-FDD obtained the integration of thousands of its combatants into the new national army, the *Forces nationales de défense* or *National Defense Forces* (FDN), and into the state's security forces, including the national police and the intelligence service. Overall, the Pretoria Accord granted the CNDD-FDD 40 percent of the

integrated general staff and officer corps positions in the FDN. Many combatants commended this provision calling it a key protection mechanism to address the root cause of the Burundian conflict, given that the CNDD-FDD had taken up arms in order to avoid a repeat of the 1972-like tragedy[116] (Focus group with former CNDD-FDD combatants, Bubanza, 18 June 2014).

In sum, in the lead-up to the Pretoria Protocol, the CNDD-FDD's internal balance of power shifted in favor of soft-liners. The changing geopolitical context deprived the CNDD-FDD of its key military ally Kabila. Even though, the CNDD-FDD had long favored the military victory route, the movement feared that it risked loosing the population's support if it continued the armed struggle. This opened the door for the integration of the CNDD-FDD into the Arusha peace process and the negotiation of the movement's political and military integration.

7.4.2. PALIPEHUTU-FNL & Dar-Es-Salaam

The PALIPEHUTU-FNL was the last Burundian rebel group to integrate the Arusha peace process. While the CNDD-FDD had entered into peace negotiations in 2002, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL continued to favor military victory and did not enter into peace talks with the CNDD-FDD regime until 2006. In the run-up to the 2010 elections, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL finally agreed to officially end its armed resistance. However, once the PALIPEHUTU-FNL started to negotiate with the CNDD-FDD government, the negotiation process was extremely challenging given the long-standing competition between the two. In addition, the

[116] From the CNDD-FDD's perspective, the Tutsi-dominated national army was responsible for the 1972 selective genocide, the 1988 massacres in Ntega and Marangara and the assassination of the first democratically elected Hutu President, Melchior Ndadaye, in 1993. The CNDD-FDD had therefore advocated for a full dismantlement of the FAB. Military power-sharing agreement among Batutsi and Bahutu (coupled with granting the former FDD combatants key positions in the army) was the only alternative solution that would allow to counterbalance the Tutsi predominance in the national army.

CNDD-FDD felt empowered by its landslide 2005 electoral victory and its hegemonic position inside the state institutions. This, in turn, reduced the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's leverage to demand concessions.

The PALIPEHUTU-FNL's initial reluctance to join the peace process was due to several factors. First, PALIPEHUTU-FNL militants frequently cited their conviction that the movement was destined to take the country's political reign through military victory. One informant powerfully quoted Rwasa as stating "*Nkurunziza and I did not enter the bush at the same time and we won't leave it at the same time*" (Interview with FNL member, Bubanza, 19 June 2014). Militants, who were suspected of favoring peace talks, were marginalized or physically eliminated (ICG 2007, 9).

> *The FNL delayed the entry into peace negotiations, because its ideology was to fight the Tutsis until victory by force. So, for us there was this revenge spirit [...]. We were promised by God that that PALIPEHUTU-FNL was destined to rule the country. So we continued to fight* (Interview with PALIPEHUTU-FNL combatant, Bujumbura, 31 October 2013).

Second, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL was convinced that the eventual return of thousands of refugees from Tanzania meant that time should ultimately work in its favor. Estimated at around 350.000, the Burundian refugees in Tanzania, where the PALIPEHUTU-FNL had been initially created, strongly supported the movement (ICG 2007, 11).

However, no understanding of the difficulties encountered by the PALIPEHUTU-FNL when it attempted to finally join the Arusha peace process is complete without an analysis of the manner in which the movement reacted to the CNDD-FDD's decision to join Arusha and participate in the 2005 elections. As had happened immediately after the Arusha Accord, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL resorted to excessive violence after the integration of the CNDD-FDD into the peace process. Many observers and ex-combatants point to the inconsistencies in the

PALIPEHUTU-FNL's discourse that promoted the overthrow of the CNDD-FDD regime even though it was a former Hutu dominated rebel movement.

> *Its unswerving dedication to violence as the only way to come to terms with the problem of Tutsi dominance ruled out its participation in the 2005 multiparty elections. Nor did the coming of power of a Hutu president, Pierre Nkurunziza, and a solid Hutu majority in the CNDD-FDD-dominated government prove much of an inducement for the party to accommodate its demands to the new distribution of power* (Lemarchand 2011, 50).

This radical approach culminated in the massacre of about 160 Banyamulenge (Congolese Tutsis refugees) in the refugee camp of Gatumba, a few kilometers outside the Burundian capital in August 2004. Information so far available indicates that the attack was perpetrated by a coalition including ex-*Interahamwe,* Congolese Mai-Mai and PALIPEHUTU-FNL elements. The United Nations reported that it was:

> […] *able to conclude that the available evidence points to a Burundian rebel organization, the* […] *PALIPEHUTU-FNL, the only group to claim responsibility, as having probably participated in the massacre, but as being unlikely to have done so on its own. Evidence of the presence of other groups, largely produced by the testimony of survivors of the attack was credible, but could not be independently confirmed by the United Nations team in its subsequent investigations* (UN 2004, 4).

In the aftermath of the Gatumba massacre, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL was discredited in the eyes of many peace negotiators and branded as a radical, terrorist movement. This was used by the CNDD-FDD to launch a reinforced crackdown on PALIPEHUTU-FNL sympathizers. CNDD-FDD former combatants, together with the transitional government, launched a repressive campaign to defeat the PALIPEHUTU-FNL militarily. Ex-combatants recount that members of the PALIPEHUTU's youth movement, the JPH, became the targets of a veritable manhunt intended to diminish the support of the population for the rebel movement (Focus group with former FNL combatants, Bujumbura, 4 July 2014). In their

perception, by targeting the JPG, the campaign was in fact targeting the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's key political mobilizers.

In light of the continuing civil war and the CNDD-FDD's and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's human rights abuses, regional and international pressure from the African Union and the United Nations mounted to initiate negotiations with the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and to establish sustainable peace in Burundi. In June 2006, the Burundian government and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL signed the Dar-Es-Saalam Agreement of Principles Towards Lasting Peace, Security and Stability in Burundi and, in September 2006, they agreed on a ceasefire agreement. However, it remained extremely difficult to establish trust between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD government. Both parties would soon mutually accuse each other of violating the ceasefire. While the Burundian government accused the PALIPEHUTU-FNL of using their mediation per-diems[117] to invest in arms and supplies, a suspicion confirmed by several interviews with FNL militants (Interview with FNL member, Bujumbura, 17 July 2014), the PALIPEHUTU-FNL alleged that the government was continuing to persecute its militants (Sentamba 2008, 45).

The continued crackdown against PALIPEHUTU-FNL militants made it extremely difficult for the movement to maintain its popular support and to motivate its combatants to continue the armed resistance. In addition, with the approach of the 2010 elections and ongoing refugee returns from Tanzania, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL leadership decided to revive the peace negotiations to lobby for its integration into the state and security institutions.

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[117] During the negotiation rounds, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL participants received generous per-diems provided by the international sponsors to negotiate a peace deal.

Specifically, the prospect of an electoral victory was the carrot that ultimately convinced the last rebel movement Palipehutu-FNL to lay down arms and to register as a political party. In 2005, CNDD-FDD had transformed itself from rebel group to the dominant political party, and the FNL, with the expected support of FRODEBU, was hoping for the same achievement (Vandeginste 2011b, 324f).

The FNL claimed that it counted 26.000 combatants (a number that many experts consider to be exaggerated), out of which about 3.500 were integrated into the security institutions. Another 5.000 were demobilized (ICG 2009). In addition, the FNL obtained 33 (rather low-ranking) political and administrative posts, including a post for Rwasa, who became the head of the *Institut national de sécurité sociale* (INSS).

During interviews, many former FNL combatants criticize Rwasa for having rushed the negotiations, even demobilizing before most of his fellow combatants (Interview with FNL member, Bujumbura, 19 June 2014). Many ex-combatants complain about the limited political concessions obtained. In addition, several former combatants highlighted that they wished that Rwasa had integrated the FDN as a high-ranking officer, preferably as general, to serve as a potential protector for the FNL ex-combatants (especially given their persecution by the CNDD-FDD regime). It is worth noting here that no former high-ranking FNL military leader integrated the army's general staff.

On April 21, 2009, the FNL was officially recognized as a political party. The rebel political party had to abandon its ethnicist name PALIPEHUTU to comply with the 2005 Constitution, a huge symbolic sacrifice for many long-standing PALIPEHUTU-FNL members. According to several interviews with FNL members, the legalization process took more than a year and was not facilitated by the Ministry of Interior, which used numerous demands and excuses to delay the FNL's legal recognition and, by extension, its subsequent electoral campaign (Interview with FNL member, Bujumbura, 9 October 2013).

In sum, the FNL's decision to participate in the 2010 elections marked a crucial turning point in the group's history; the movement abandoned its long-standing conviction that it would win political power through military victory and subscribed (at least rhetorically) to the inter-ethnic power-sharing enshrined in the Arusha Accord (Lemarchand 2011, 50). In contrast to the CNDD-FDD, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL integrated the peace process much later. However, given the changing conflict cleavages following the 2005 elections with intra-Hutu competition becoming predominant, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's ideology lost ground. The prospect of a 2010 electoral victory eventually facilitated the FNL's integration into the peace process. However, the continuing repression against PALIPEHUTU-FNL sympathizers by the CNDD-FDD regime made it unlikely for the FNL to disarm.

	PALIPEHUTU-FNL	CNDD-FDD
Ideational politics	- Armed struggle maintained until 2006/2008 given divine belief in military victory to exact revenge for the long-term Bahutu exclusion and Batutsi domination	- Search for military victory abandoned around 2002/2003 in favor of peace negotiations
Power politics	- Balance of power eventually changing in favor of soft-liners perceiving the continuation of armed conflict as too risky (due to the 2005 electoral victory of the CNDD-FDD and the massive, violent crackdown on PALIPEHUTU-FNL militants)	- Balance of power shifting in favor of soft-liners perceiving the continuation of armed conflict as too risky (due to mutually hurting stalemate and announced elections)
Institutional politics	- Official authorization to formally transform rebel movement into political party - 33 low-ranking administrative positions - SSR (around 3.600 combatants integrated into security institutions) - DDR (around 5.000 combatants demobilized)	- Official authorization to formally transform rebel movement into political party - Four ministerial positions in transitional government - SSR (40 percent of integrated general staff and officer corps) - DDR (around 18.000 combatants demobilized)

Table 10: Impact of Ceasefire Accords on CNDD-FDD & PALIPEHUTU-FNL

7.5. Recap: PALIPEHUTU-FNL & CNDD-FDD at Peace Talks

This chapter analyzed the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD's dynamics during the peace negotiation process. Overall, I identified three critical peace negotiation junctures, including the Rome Talks, the Arusha Talks and the subsequent cease-fire negotiations. The analysis of the interaction between structure and agency helps to unpack the internal dynamics of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD. We need to pay careful attention to the patterns of their ideational, power and institutional politics if we want to understand their behavior during peace negotiations. In this vein, I showed how each critical juncture set up legacies, which are crucial in understanding subsequent developments. Let me highlight a couple of key examples.

With regards to the rivalry between PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD, heightened political frictions between the two groups accompanied the Rome and the Arusha Talks. This culminated in increasing attacks between both organizations with each wanting to assert its importance and to show that any peace accord necessitates its inclusion and endorsement. In addition, in my analysis, I complemented the ripeness literature by showing how mediation attempts contributed to shaping the ideational, power and institutional politics of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD. The Rome Talks are an excellent case in point. The CNDD-FDD accepted for the first time to engage in peace talks with what it perceived as an illegitimate putschist regime, whose army was responsible for the assassination of the first democratically elected Hutu President. In the end, the Rome talks did not yield any concrete result for a possible route to peace. However, the Sant'Egidio talks triggered increased divisions along regional, but also among political and military members, which would come to shape the movement during its subsequent trajectory. With regard to the

rivalry between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD, the Sant'Egidio Talks intensified the competition through the exclusion of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and by convincing the movement that the CNDD-FDD had always betrayed the liberation cause by collaborating with the Tutsi-authoritarian regimes.

At the outset, the integration of both rebel movements into the peace process provided an exceptional window of opportunity to demilitarize Burundian politics. Burundi's DDR program is often cited as one of the most ambitious and successful programs in the history of the United Nations and the World Bank (Interview with World Bank staff member, Washington DC, 21 May 2014). However, upon orders from their military leaders, many PALIPEHUTU-FNL and CNDD-FDD combatants did not return their weapons in a bid to maintain the movements' military capacity (Focus groups with former FNL and CNDD-FDD combatants, Bubanza, 18 June 2014 and 19 June 2014). This reluctance towards the DDR process was due to the long-standing political and military competition between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD with each not trusting the other movement to completely disarm and demilitarize.

In light of the continuing mistrust, both movements left several battalions outside of Burundi. The CNDD-FDD left combat troops in Eastern DRC 'just in 'case' the 2005 elections would not yield the expected result (Reyntjens 2006a, 123). Similarly, the PALPEHUTU-FNL also left battalions in Eastern DRC. For example, Rwasa's right hand, Antoine 'Shuti' Baranyanka, did not demobilize. Instead, he remained in the DRC with some hundred FNL combatants to observe the evolving political situation and to await the 2010 election results (Alfieri 2014; Verweijen 2015). Consequently, a large majority of combatants did not declare or dispose of their weapons.

Name of Party or Armed Movement	Number of Armed Combatants	Number of unarmed combatants	TOTAL
CNDD-FDD	4.901	14.023	18.924
CNDD	171	2.009	2.180
Kaze-FDD	97	516	613
FNL	633	8.500	9.133
FROLINA	130	751	881
Palipe-Agakiza	74	436	510
FNL-Icanzo	30	226	256
TOTAL	**6.036**	**26.461**	**32.497**

Table 11: Statistics for Demobilized Armed & Unarmed Combatants
Source: Ministry of Defense & International Crisis Group

As in many other countries emerging from armed conflict, Burundi's DDR program engaged heavily in the 'demobilization' part, but neglected the 'integration' part (OECD/ADB/UNECA 2009, 126). There were very few professional training programs that were organized for combatants; this further underscored the World Bank's fundamental dilemma of investing millions of dollars in DDR programs to "*reintegrate ex-combatants into poverty*" (Interview with World Bank staff member, Washington DC, 21 May 2014). In addition, the Burundian government was accused of misusing the DDR funds. In 2009, the *Inspection Générale de l'État* or *General State Inspectorate* (IGE), a governmental anti-corruption watchdog, published a scathing report on the financial mismanagement of the DDR program. The IGE documented serious cases of embezzlement by program managers. The Burundian Presidency tried to bury the report to hide the corruption scandal. However, after long pressure form the World Bank, the head of the DDR program was dismissed. After this scandal, the Burundian Presidency took over direct responsibility for overseeing IGE, interpreted by analysts as an attempt to control the institution (CIGI 2010, 8).

Burundi's SSR program, notably the reform of the national army through the installation of an ethnic quota system granting equitable representation to Batutsi and Bahutu, has been perceived as a cornerstone of the country's peace process. Given that the national army had played a key role in the country's recurrent ethno-political crises, its fundamental reform represented one of the key demands of the various rebel factions, including the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD. Despite initial demands of completely dismantling the FAB, both rebel political parties eventually accepted the inter-ethnic power-sharing for the FDN as stipulated in the Arusha Accord formula for the FDN (Wilén 2016).

Chapter VIII: Competing for Votes– Rebel Political Parties at Elections

“*The command structures of the armed rebellion live on.*
They have been formatted like this […].
And they owe all their success to this operating mode.
They are reluctant to change […],
The conversion is extremely difficult […]
and hardly achievable during normal democratic term limits”

(Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, North America, 12 September 2014).

Extract from my field journal, Summer 2015, Bujumbura, Burundi: It's Election Day in Burundi. After several delays, the CNDD-FDD regime has pushed through with the organization of the communal and legislative elections. The major opposition parties have called for a boycott. As we drive through the city center of Bujumbura, the usually busy streets filled with pedestrians, street vendors, buses, motorcycles and bikes are empty. Very few people nervously walk the streets of the capital. It is almost a dead town.

First stop: Ngagara. This was one of the strongholds of the anti-third term protests. There is no one on the streets. Police and military secure the major axes of the neighborhood. Some streets are still full of barricades left from the demonstrations. All the usual places that host polling stations, schools and community centers, are closed. We come across a young man looking to cast his ballot. He has walked through almost the entire neighborhood without finding a single polling station. He climbs in the back seat. After asking a police officer on patrol, we are finally directed to a polling station. Upon our arrival, we see a lot of police and military but almost no civilians, apart from the National Electoral Commission staff. As we wait and observe, a few people timidly show up. Many are military or police staff. There are few civilians. As soon as they have cast their vote, civilians try to wash off the electoral stain from their index finger. They are afraid of possible repercussions if their neighbors know that they have voted. One woman, who has also immediately washed off the electoral stain 'branding' her as a voter, tells us that she voted because she might have to show her voting card tomorrow as proof to keep her employment. The president of the polling station confirms that the National Electoral Commission has decided to open only a couple of stations in Ngagara because of security concerns. So far, the voter turnout has been extremely low.

Second stop: Kamenge. Considered as one of the fiefdoms of the CNDD-FDD in the capital, the neighborhood of Kamenge differs from the rest of the capital. The streets are busier. We see lines of people gathering in front of the polling stations waiting to cast their vote. As we talk to the president of the polling station, he says that the security situation has been very good. However, despite a considerable amount of voters, who have come out to the ballot box, the voter turnout is lower than expected. It seems that the fear of possible attacks has also kept many CNDD-FDD supporters away from the polling stations. We make a few phone calls to people living in the interior of the country. Things are quite different in the hinterland, where the population has massively responded to the electoral rendezvous.

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This excerpt from my field journal captures the mood during the 2015 electoral marathon. The timid voter turnout in the capital and the fears associated with it stand in stark contrast to the euphoria and enthusiasm witnessed during the 2005 and 2010 elections. Despite extremists, who attempted to disrupt the 2005 vote through grenade attacks at polling stations, the population massively and defiantly voted due to enthusiasm felt with the integration of the CNDD-FDD and the silencing of the guns in many parts of the country. People almost anonymously stressed that they did not want to miss this historic moment and were proud of their participation in the first elections since the beginning of the civil war (Lemarchand 2009, 152). In 2010, this enthusiasm was once again felt given the integration of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL into the peace process. The two most important rebel groups had accepted to participate in mainstream politics. So how can this shift between the enthusiasm accompanying the 2005 and 2010 elections and the climate of fear witnessed in the aftermath of the 2010 elections and during the 2015 elections be understood? How did electoral euphoria turn into fear?

8.1. Elections under the Gun: Introducing the Electoral Contests

In this chapter, I turn my attention to the analysis of the evolution of the various electoral contests. Since the beginning of Burundi's post-accord transition, the country has held three election marathons[118] in 2005, 2010 and 2015. The 2005 elections resulted in a landslide victory for the CNDD-FDD, which became the country's ruling party, a position that it managed to consolidate during the subsequent 2010 and 2015 elections. As for the FNL, its late integration meant that, while it did not participate in the 2005 elections, it could participate in the 2010 marathon but it ultimately only waged the 2010 communal elections boycotting the subsequent legislative and presidential elections and intermittently returning to the armed struggle. And while the FNL-Rwasa faction officially boycotted the 2015 elections, it ultimately joined the state institutions after the elections.[119]

The three post-accord elections, analyzed in the following lines as critical junctures, provide key insights into the continuities and changes of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD during the post-accord period. They illustrate several key points. First, Burundi's war-to-peace transition constitutes a missed opportunity with each electoral cycle witnessing an intensifying degree of political and electoral violence underscoring the nexus between war and peace highlighted by the "*no peace, no war*" (Marchal 2002; Richards 2005; Debos 2013) and the "*armed politics*" (Staniland 2015a) paradigms. Second, this missed opportunity is in great part due to the fact that the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL have been deeply

[118] Each election marathon includes the consecutive holding of communal, legislative and presidential elections in the span of several weeks.

[119] In the 2010 elections, the FNL participated as a legally recognized political party. In the 2015 elections, the FNL participated as one legally recognized faction (under the leadership of Jacques Bigirimana, considered to have been co-opted by the CNDD-FDD regime) and one legally unrecognized faction (under the leadership of Agathon Rwasa, as part of an electoral coalition group called *Amizero Y'Abarundi* ('Hope for Burundians').

affected by the authoritarian and civil war legacies. This had shaped the way in which they waged electoral contestation in general as well as electoral competition with one another in particular. Figure 9 provides a summary graph on instances of extrajudicial executions and torture around the 2010 and 2015 elections. These violence patterns have, for a large part, involved militants from the CNDD-FDD and the FNL, which have emerged as the country's most important political competitors. They have continued their political and violent struggle inherited from the civil war throughout the post-accord period, most notably around elections.

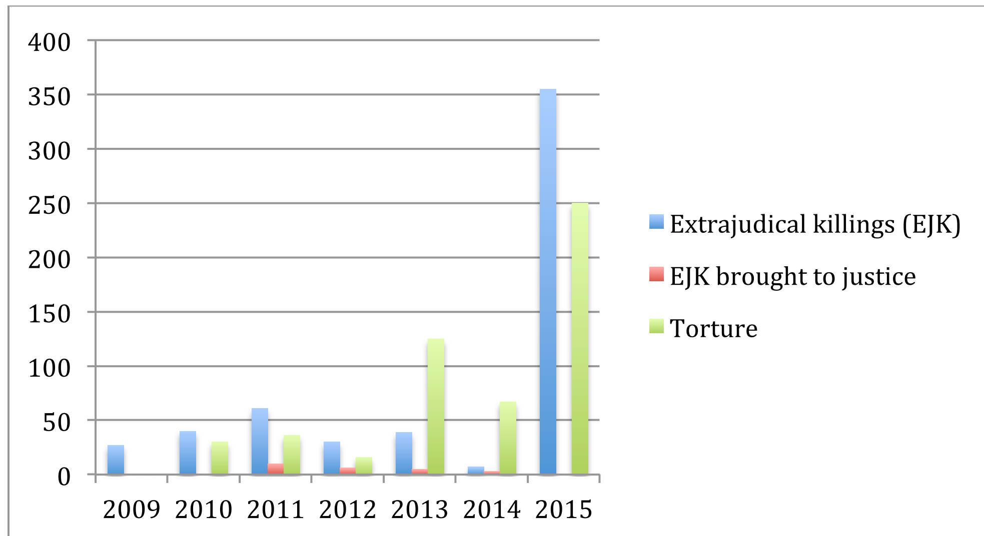

Figure 9: Instances of Extrajudicial Killings & Torture (2009-2015)
Source: Author's own graph based on BNUB Reports & OHCHR Reports[120]

[120] The actual number of victims is generally considered to be much higher, but these are the recorded and verified numbers provided by the United Nations.

Given that the PALIPEHUTU-FNL did not participate in the 2005 elections, I analyze the 2005 elections primarily in terms of their implications for the CNDD-FDD and its competition with the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. I return to the consecutive analysis of the implications for the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL for the 2010 and 2015 elections. I organize the analysis around five key themes: including internal divisions, institutional organization and culture, mobilization strategies, political marginalization of rivals, and the use of violence as a political tool. The themes emerged from the analysis of the wartime period as the most important factors pertaining to the internal development of and the interaction between the two rebel political parties.

8.2. The 2005 Elections

In 2005, Burundi organized its first post-accord elections following the civil war. There was sporadic incidence of violence, particularly related to the fact that the PALIPEHUTU-FNL had not joined the Arusha peace process and continued the armed struggle. However, the elections were overwhelmingly peaceful and considered free and fair by international and local observers (Reyntjens 2006a, 122). For the most part, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL kept its promise of letting the 2005 elections go ahead. Nevertheless, given its long-standing competition with the CNDD-FDD, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL encouraged its militants and sympathizers to vote for FRODEBU (as it had done during the 1993 elections) (ICG 2006, 4). In the run-up to and in the aftermath of the 2005 elections, PALIPEHUTU-FNL militants were persistently persecuted by the CNDD-FDD regime.

The CNDD-FDD emerged from the 2005 electoral marathon a clear winner. The fact that it was not originally part of the Arusha peace negotiation process ultimately worked in its favor and partly explains its 2005 electoral success. Indeed, the Burundian population

perceived the elite-driven negotiations in the distant Arusha with a lot of suspicion, particularly as the per-diem allowances had helped to enrich politicians in the capital. Many politicians had used these allowances to build grandiose hotel constructions in the Kiriri neighborhood, commonly called the "*Arusha District*", atop the hillsides of the capital.[121] In addition, the CNDD-FDD was credited with having brought back relative peace to the country. The population also feared that if the CNDD-FDD would not win the elections, the rebel group risked returning to the bush (ICG 2007, 11).

During the National Assembly election, the CNDD-FDD won 62.6 percent of the votes granting it 64 out of 118 seats. During the subsequent indirect Senate elections, the CNDD-FDD obtained 32 seats, FRODEBU 5 seats, CNDD-Nyangoma 3 seats and UPRONA 2 seats. The remaining 7 seats were reserved for 3 members of the Batwa community and the 4 former Presidents. The new Constitution stipulated a special scenario for the first post-accord presidential election; it provided for the National Assembly and the Senate to indirectly elect the Head of State. This exceptional formula was chosen for security and logistical concerns and to allow one the passage of one mandate until the first direct presidential election in 2010. Pierre Nkurunziza, the CNDD-FDD's last rebel leader, was elected President.

[121] This included staying free of charge in five-star hotels and receiving the equivalent of five months' salaries in one week (Tieku 2012).

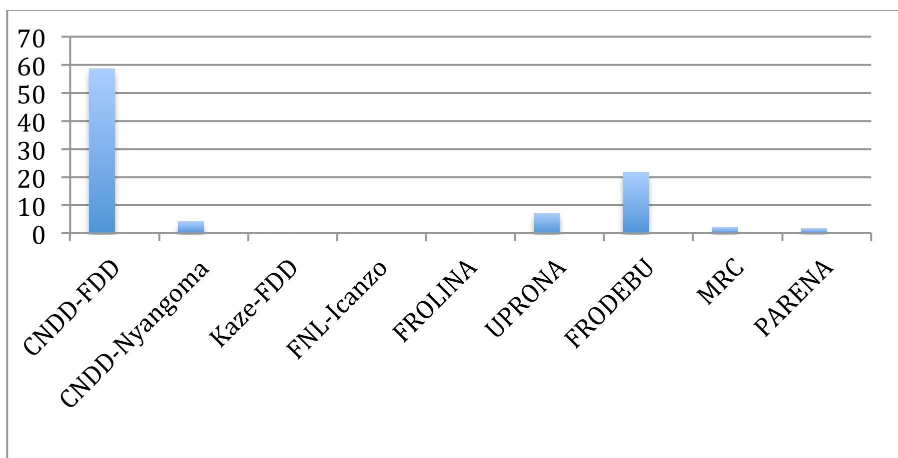

Figure 10: 2005 Legislative Election Results
Source: Author's own graph based on National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) data

The CNDD-FDD's landslide victory positioned the rebel political party as the major political force (Nindorera 2008). As discussed in Chapter V (sub-section 5.4.5.), the 2005 elections marked the shift from a bipolar to a multipolar political constellation with competition among traditionally Hutu-dominated political groups becoming the predominant factor in Burundian politics (Reyntjens 2006b, 16).

8.2.1. CNDD-FDD & 2005 Elections

The 2005 elections constitute a critical juncture for the CNDD-FDD. The rebel political party had the exceptional opportunity to change Burundi's political system and to promote a genuine democratization process as it had promised during its armed resistance. While the 2005 elections were celebrated as an important milestone for Burundi's post-accord transition raising hope for the country's peace and democratization process (Peterson 2006), an in-depth analysis of the political developments around the post-accord founding elections uncovers the inherent difficulties encountered by the CNDD-FDD to transform into a democratic political party. Indeed, the rebel legacies casted a heavy shadow and it was extremely challenging for

the CNDD-FDD to leave these legacies behind. Despite various attempts at reforming the rebel party, military hard-liners were able to impose their continued influence.

In the run-up to the 2005 elections, enthusiasm for Burundi's post-accord transition was widespread. Many Burundians, Bahutu and Batutsi alike, had sympathized with the CNDD-FDD's cause and hoped that the rebel political party would bring genuine change and an end to decades of authoritarianism, exclusion, rebellion and civil war. At first, signs were extremely encouraging. After the signing of the Pretoria Protocol, the CNDD-FDD initiated its formal conversion process and was officially legally recognized as a political party in January 2005. During the official party founding congress in Gitega in August 2004, members formally voted to transform the rebel movement into a political party. In line with its ideational project developed during the armed resistance and outlined in the Lubumbashi Principles, the CNDD-FDD promised to adhere to the general principles of democracy and distributive social justice. During the Gitega Congress, the CNDD-FDD adopted the Gitega Pact. This founding charter consists of 39 resolutions, guided by the overall principle of good governance.[122] The CNDD-FDD campaigned on the proposal to implement several core social policies, which revolved around three main issue areas: (1) Free primary education; (2) Free health care for pregnant women and children under five; and (3) Construction of accommodation facilities for civil servants.

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[122] During my fieldwork, I tried to obtain a written copy of the Gitega Pact. However, given the secrecy policy of the CNDD-FDD, this was not possible. Nevertheless, during interviews, CNDD-FDD members cited several of the articles. For example, Article 19 stipulates that each CNDD-FDD member involved in corruption is to be excluded from the party. Article 29 states that the CNDD-FDD must uphold the principles of good governance based on the respect of the people and the promotion of politicians with a patriotic spirit. To be exemplary, each CNDD-FDD member working for the state must uphold the public interest by combatting against injustice, corruption, torture, etc.

The primary education policy, which abolished school fees, took effect immediately after President Nkrunziza's inauguration.[123] Many CNDD-FDD informants cited the free primary education provision as a huge symbolic gesture given the 1972 selective genocide against Hutu intellectuals, students and pupils. Indeed, in the aftermath of 1972, many Hutu parents were afraid to send their children to school. While the Micombero regime had used genocidal violence to eliminate and marginalize the Hutu majority population, the Bagaza regime implemented a discrimination policy against Bahutu at school to safeguard the privileges of the Tutsi minority and to prevent Hutus from climbing the social ladder. The CNDD-FDD's free primary education policy was therefore intended to close the gap between educated Batutsi and not sufficiently educated Bahutu as well as between urban and rural areas. In addition, the CNDD-FDD wanted to consolidate its popular support in the countryside, the most important electoral support in the country. The construction of accommodation for state employers, for its part, was intended to prevent corruption.

Even though the CNDD-FDD had adopted an inclusive ideational project during its armed struggle, at the time of its official conversion, it still counted only a small number of Batutsi in its ranks. In the run-up to the 2005 elections, the rebel party actively recruited Batutsi to comply with the Constitution's multi-ethnic political party regulations.[124] In addition, many Hutu intellectuals, who had fled Burundi, returned from exile and were integrated into the CNDD-FDD's ranks to help build the party.

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[123] The CNDD-FDD's first state budget for education reserved a great part to primary education, increasing from 37 percent in 2001 to 54 percent in 2008 (Travaglianti 2016).
[124] According to Article 78 of Burundi's 2005 Constitution, the creation of ethnic, religious, gender or regional-based political parties is prohibited.

Internal divisions: The CNDD-FDD witnessed many of the same internal divisions that plagued it during the civil war. These cleavages evolved, most notably, around tensions between Bahutu and Batutsi as well as between civilian and military members. These divisions often intersect with other cleavages, including, for example, regional or religious tensions.

During several interviews, many Batutsi CNDD-FDD members recounted that they were regarded with a lot of suspicion and that they felt that they did not benefit from the same privileges as their Hutu party colleagues. For instance, a currently exiled, former Tutsi party member illustratively stated:

> *I joined the CNDD-FDD as a 'quota Tutsi' about three months before the 2005 elections* […] *I wanted to protect my community.* […] *I was charged with helping the party to develop a political program. Despite general guiding principles, the CNDD-FDD lacked a clear program* […] *But I was monitored every step of the way.* […] *The suspicion was extremely high* (Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Montréal, 12 September 2014).

The CNDD-FDD encountered tremendous challenges in separating its military and political wings (Nindorera 2008, 119). Military members wanted to keep their influence on the ruling party. Many civilian party members, Batutsi and Bahutu alike, recount that the former combatants treated them with resentment. The civil-military divide also partly overlapped with cleavages between members who had stayed in Burundi during the civil war and members, who had lived in exile. One Hutu civilian party member explained:

> *For the civilians, it was difficult to ascertain their place in the party.* […] *Many of us had fled Burundi during the war. We had studied abroad. In contrast, the former combatants had fought the war. They had put their lives on the line – for a decade, every single day. So, they did not want to accept why we should manage the party, even though we had more expertise* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 19 June 2013).

The Gitega Congress had elected Hussein Radjabu as the first political party chairman. During most of the civil war, Radjabu had been in charge of the CNDD-FDD's propaganda

apparatus and collaborated closely with both the military and political wings without ever being a combatant himself (Jones 2013, 203). Radjabu had ambitions to become the party's presidential candidate, but, as a man of Muslim faith,[125] he believed that he could not gather the necessary popular support; instead, he promoted the candidacy of his protégé Pierre Nkurunziza.

Institutional organization and culture: After the 2005 elections, Radjabu maintained an authoritarian leadership to the disappointment of many party members, who had hoped for change given that this had been the most important campaign promise. The former rebel "*big man*"[126] dictated key party decisions without allowing any real internal debate (Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Montreal, 24 October 2013). For example, Radjabu nominated the Political Bureau and other key party positions without consulting party members.[127] Despite the election of Nkurunziza as President, Radjabu took key policy decisions and many considered him as the real power center of the new regime (Nindorera 2008, 121).

Radjabu's centralized governance and his connections with Arab countries (including Sudan, Libya and Saudi Arabia) provoked internal disputes. At first, it was the civilian wing which openly criticized his authoritarian drifts. Out of protest, several civilian party members resigned their posts. High-level examples include Mathias Basabose, a leading CNDD-FDD member and former electoral campaign manager, and Alice Nzomukunda, former Second

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[125] Burundi counts around 10 percent of Muslims among its predominantly Christian population (around 65 percent being Roman Catholics and making up the grand majority).
[126] The term "*big men*" has become a key concept in African politics. It usually refers to patrimonial leaders, who use their informal power positions to advance their own private goals. For a great discussion of the big men phenomenon in African politics, please see (Hydén 2006; Utas 2012).
[127] The Political Bureau comprised 11 members, including the Party President, his Secretary-General, two Assistant Secretary Generals and seven national commissioners (in charge of party life, exterior relations, communication, development, youth/culture, finances and women). The Bureau counted two Tutsi among the seven commissioners.

Vice-President. Interviewed about their resignations, they cited Radjabu's dictatorial leadership, internal party corruption and human rights abuses as their main motivation (Interviews with Mathias Basabose and Alice Nzomukunda, Bujumbura, 22 October 2013).

The growing internal criticism forced Radjabu to convene a party meeting in December 2006, during which the CNDD-FDD members lobbied for the party's renewed commitment to good governance enshrined in the Gitega Charter (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 13 October 2013). However, Radjabu's authoritarian rule did not only irritate the civilian wing of the party; it also bothered the military wing, which demanded more influence on the party's decision-making. As pressure from the military wing increased (Nindorera 2008, 120), Radjabu, who had been responsible for orchestrating the major leadership changes of the rebel group, became himself the victim of such a plot. The man, until then believed to pull the strings of the new regime, was ousted as party chairman in February 2007 during an extraordinary party congress held in Ngozi province (commonly called Ngozi Congress) following the submission of a petition of around 1.400 party members (Burihabwa 2014, 23). He was subsequently imprisoned and, in a speedy trial, sentenced to 13 years on charges of inciting a new rebellion.[128]

Colonel Jérémie Ngendakumana, a former high-ranking FDD military leader who had until then served as Ambassador to Kenya, replaced Radjabu as the new party chairman. The ousting of Radjabu led to an intense crisis during which 22 members loyal to the ousted chairman withdrew from the CNDD-FDD's parliamentary group. A number of Radjabu loyalists left the CNDD-FDD and joined the *Union pour la paix et la démocratie* or *Union for*

[128] In March 2015, Radjabu successfully escaped from prison, interpreted as a sign of weakness of the CNDD-FDD regime in the run-up to the 2015 elections. Radjabu has since then been cited to be involved in the ongoing renewed armed rebellions against the CNDD-FDD regime

Peace and Democracy (UPD-*Zigamibanga*). Among them were key party figures, such as Pascaline Kampayano, who had collected funds for the CNDD-FDD during the civil war by building close ties with the political elite in Kinshasa and who subsequently became the head of the ruling party's women's movement. The crisis led to the inclusion of a new provision in the 2009 electoral code, which stipulates that party defectors lose their seats in the National Assembly, the Senate and the communal councils (Vandeginste 2011b, 328). This was yet, another attempt, to instill internal cohesion and discipline, an objective that had been extremely important to Nkrunziza since he had become the CNDD-FDD's rebel leader.

During the Ngozi Congress, the CNDD-FDD decided to restructure the party. Most importantly, party leaders put in place a *Conseil des Sages* ('Council of the Wise'[129]), which became the party's main decision-making body operating above all other party organs, including the party's chairman. President Nkurunziza chairs the council, an indication of the blurred lines between the state and the party.

The ouster of Radjabu set the stage for the rise of former FDD military leaders, commonly known as the "*generals*"[130], in the ranks of the ruling party. The soft-liners, most importantly the civilian cadres, were not able to win the upper hand. Several of them were left

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[129] The Council of the Wise is composed of 11 members, six "*confirmed*" by the party's national congress and five "*appointed*" by the party's president (Tobolka 2013, 44). During my research, I tried to obtain the members' names over time. Given the CNDD-FDD's secrecy policy, this was not easy. Around 2010, these names included Pierre Nkurunziza, Gervais Rufyikiri, Mohamed Rukara, Alexis Barekebavuge, Leonidas Hatungimana, Manassé Nzobonimpa, Augustin Nsanze, Jérémie Ngendakumana, Bénigne Rurahinda (Parliamentarian and wife of Adolphe Nshirimana), Léonce Ndarubagiye and Déo Busuguru. Around 2015, these names included: Pierre Nkurunziza, Alain Guillaume Bunyoni, Gélase Ndabirabe, Lazare Mvuyekure, Mohamed Rukara Alexis Barekebavuge, August Nsanze, Jérémie Ngendakumana, Bénigne Rurahinda, Léonce Ndarubagiye and Déo Busuguru. However, these lists have to be treated with caution as several informants cited different names.

[130] Four to five generals are generally cited for influencing major CNDD-FDD party decisions, including Adolphe Nshimirimana († 2015), Alain-Guillaume Bunyoni, Evariste Ndayishimiye, Prime Niyongabo, and Gervais Ndirakobuca. Nshimirimana and Bunyoni have subsequently been considered as the closest allies of President Nkurunziza.

(or were forced to leave) the party denouncing the authoritarian leadership. Many observers underline that the CNDD-FDD became increasingly ruled by an opaque, unofficial party structure, in which former military leaders command important political decisions (Nindorera 2008). "*There are party members and there are party owners, it's different*" (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 19 June 2013).

Not only was the party dealing with internal cleavages, it continued to struggle with corruption. During the CNDD-FDD's first mandate, some civilian party members criticized the corruption of a small group of leading CNDD-FDD cadres – often referred to as "*le système FDD*" ('the FDD system') (Kaburahe 2016). Several corruption scandals were also reported by local and international watchdog organizations. Most notably, the Presidency illicitly sold the presidential plane. Even though the presidential jet, a Falcon 50, was estimated at a value of $USD 6.85 million, it was sold to the lowest bidder at $USD 3 million dollars (as opposed to the highest bidder at $USD 5 million) (Rufyikiri 2016b, 9). In an interview, Rufyikiri refers to the Falcon affair as the first symbol or "*acte fondateur*" for the corrupt downward spiral, which manifested itself as soon as the CNDD-FDD took power.

> *I would say, if you allow me the expression, it* [the Falcon affair] *was like an 'act of foundation'. But in parallel, there were other corruption affairs, less mediatized. I know, for example, that the ruling party undertook forced collections from businessmen. For winning a public market, one had to promise something, to give to the party or to specific party decision-makers* (Kaburahe 2016, 22).

In addition, while the CNDD-FDD implemented the free education and health care for pregnant women and children under five policies, the program to build and provide free accommodation for civil servants was never put into place. This further underscores the difficulties of the CNDD-FDD to deal with the challenge of corruption.

For the political opposition, the murder of Ernest Manirumva, the Vice-President of the *Anti-Corruption and Economic Malpractice Observatory* (OLUCOME), a local anti-corruption watchdog, became the tragic symbol of the CNDD-FDD's continued corruption. Before his murder in April 2009, Manirumva had investigated several delicate corruption cases, including the involvement of high-ranking CNDD-FDD officials in illegal arms trade (especially in Eastern Congo). To this date, the perpetrators have not been identified, but the political opposition points to high-ranking CNDD-FDD and national intelligence service officials (HRW 2010b, 84f).

Mobilization strategies: In the run-up to the 2005 elections, the CNDD-FDD was able to take advantage of its extended wartime institutional infrastructure. The party used its "*local shadow administrations*" (Uvin and Bayer 2013) established during the civil war and progressively converted them into party structures. Many ex-combatants left their cantonment sites to integrate these local party structures to campaign for the CNDD-FDD (Focus group with former CNDD-FDD combatants, Bubanza, 18 June 2014). During its electoral campaign, the CNDD-FDD pointed to its history as an armed movement to suggest that it risked returning to the armed struggle if it did not win the elections. This further illustrates the argument that people will vote for the most threatening group in an attempt to prevent them from returning to armed struggle (Wantchekon 1999).

> *The major lesson of the 2005 elections, for both opposition parties and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, was that victory belongs to whoever has enough recently demobilised combatants in the field who are still sufficiently intimidating to encourage the population in the hills to vote for it.* [In 2005] *this was the CNDD-FDD* (ICG 2007, 11).[131]

[131] In the aftermath of the 2000 Arusha Accord and in the run-up to the 2005 elections, FRODEBU was also reported to have established a military wing, the *Rassemblement des militaires et combatants pour la paix au Burundi* or *Rally of soldiers and combatants for peace in Burundi* (Ramico-Pax) (Tindwa 2002).

During its first mandate, the CNDD-FDD extended its presence in the hillsides of Burundi through the extension of its local party structures. Over the next years, the CNDD-FDD would open party headquarters in all administrative sub-sections, including on the hillside, communal, provincial and national levels. Party headquarters would also be established at all levels for the CNDD-FDD's youth and women's movement. The CNDD-FDD invested heavily in the grassroots levels (especially the hill and communal levels), where it nominated the *chefs des dix maisons* ('leaders of ten houses') and the *comités de base* ('grassroots committee' consisting of 3 to 50 people) charged with political mobilization in the hillsides of the country.

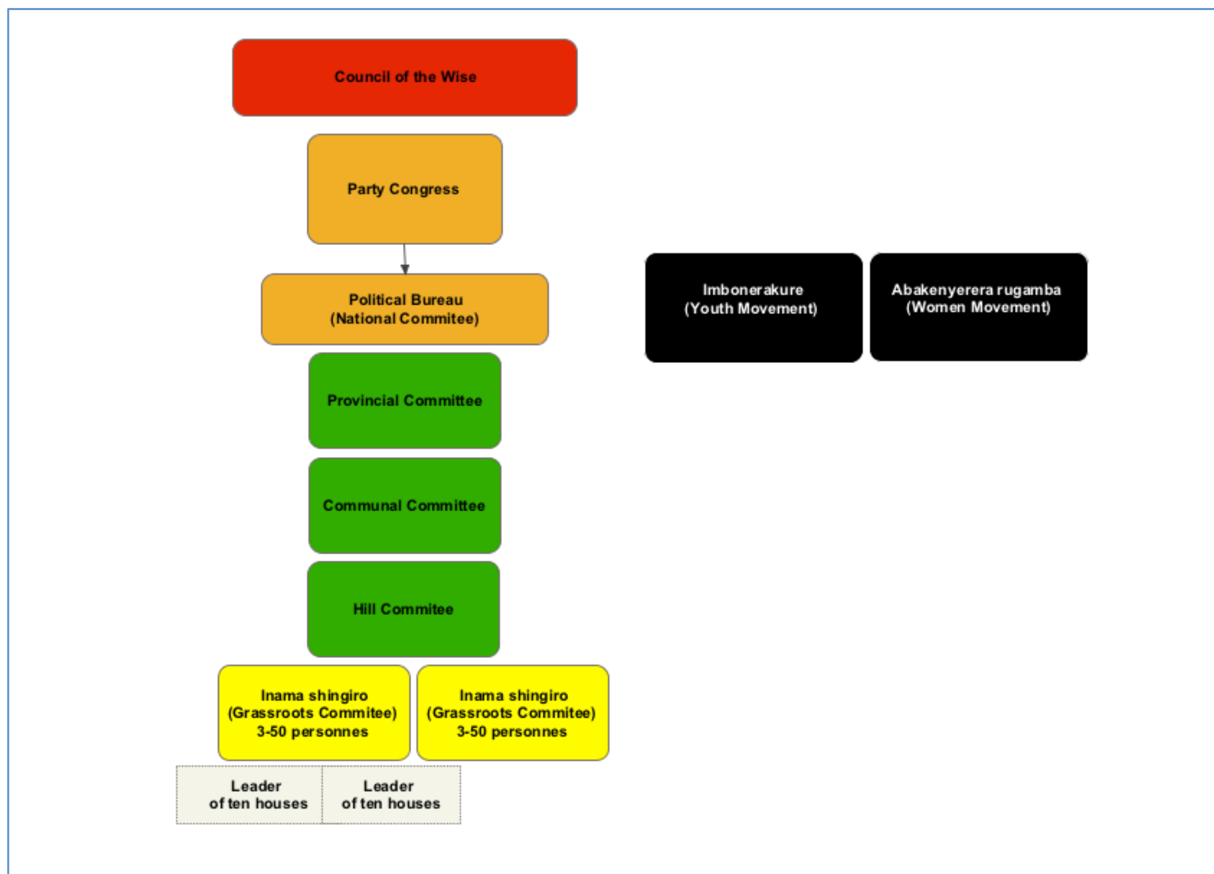

Figure 11: Schematized Organogram of CNDD-FDD (Around 2015)
Source: Author's own graph based on interviews

The CNDD-FDD regime reintroduced the tradition of the *travaux communautaires* ('community work'). This forces all Burundians (18 years and older) to participate in a half-day of mandatory community service on Saturday mornings. The objective is to mobilize the rural population around local development initiatives, such as the building of schools and hospitals (Guichaoua 1991, 553).

Through the mandatory community service and repeated stays in the hillsides, President Nkurunziza has cultivated an image as a Head of State close to his people, who spends a lot of time among the local population, an image that is in stark contrast to that of his authoritarian predecessors. Several CNDD-FDD informants highlighted that 'Pita' knows every singly hill in the land of the thousand hills "*by heart*" and enjoys sitting down with the local population to share a meal (Focus group with former CNDD-FDD combatants, Bubanza, 18 June 2014).

Nkurunziza, a football fanatic, has also become known for his deep religious convictions as a born-again Christian. Several diplomatic informants reported that, when they met with the President, Alexis Barekebavuge, his evangelical pastor and confidant, regularly accompanied him (Interview with international diplomat, Bujumbura, 6 October 2013). One of Nkurunziza's biographers writes:

> *Nkurunziza is an influential member of the Eglise du Rocher* ['Church on the Rock'] *of Bujumbura.* […] *Prayer is his daily bread. His days always begin and end with a thanking prayer to God. He organizes every year two or three grand prayer ceremonies for Burundi in the different provinces of the country. The highest state authorities, the diplomats residing in the country and the population from all regions, everybody participates. Willingly or against their will? Undoubtedly, it is not sure that everybody agrees with the President's faith. Some people just participate to demonstrate allegiance. It is true that Nkurunziza is a demanding man, but on this point, the Burundian believer can only rejoice because, a country like Burundi, where blood has been spilled in abundance, it is better to implore the Good Lord to purify the land and appease the souls. It is therefore fortunate that our leader sets this example* (Gahimbare 2013).

Political marginalization of rivals: Given the strong position that the CNDD-FDD was able to secure during the 2005 elections, the ruling party aimed to systematically marginalize political rivals to ascertain its superior position during its first mandate. The CNDD-FDD closed the political space and persecuted critics within the party and from the opposition. The following selected examples illustrate that this process started right after the CNDD-FDD took power.

In summer 2006, the CNDD-FDD ordered the arrest of prominent opposition figures claiming that the government had been able to thwart an attempted coup d'état that involved fifteen people, including the second transitional President Domitien Ndayizeye and the former Vice President Alphonse Marie Kadege.[132] The government partly based its allegations on the confessions of Mugabarabona, the leader of the splinter group FNL-Icanzo. International Crisis Group reported:

> *Authorities insisted they had sufficient incriminating evidence, including recorded telephone conversations and letters between the conspirators, but that release of this information could damage the prosecution's case. The claims of a coup plot should be viewed with skepticism. Mugabarabona said in a telephone interview from his prison cell* […] *that his confession had been extracted under duress, and that the coup plot had been staged by senior government officials* (ICG 2006, 2).

The CNDD-FDD also resorted to a divide-and-rule strategy, commonly referred to as *nyakurisation* (from the Kirundi word *nyakuri* meaning 'truthful' or 'original'). The term *nyakurisation* denotes the deliberate exploitation of internal divisions among opposition parties to divide them into rival wings, including wings co-opted by the government. Over the next years, the CNDD-FDD would orchestrate several *nyakurisation* plots. The process started

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[132] It is important to note that several of the politicians arrested were accused of involvement in the 1993 coup and in Ndadaye's assassination. This, includes, most notably, former Vice President Kadege. However, there have never been detailed investigations into the 1993 events to assign clear individual responsibilities.

with the creation of FRODEBU-Nyakuri in 2008 in the aftermath of the institutional crisis following the "*Radjabu Affair*". In addition to the defection of the CNDD-FDD Radjabu loyalists, FRODEBU had withdrawn from the government condemning the ruling party's failure to engage in political dialogue and its persecution of PALIPEHUTU-FNL sympathizers. In the process, the ruling party lost its parliamentary majority leading to a months-long paralysis of the National Assembly. The creation of a FRODEBU offshoot[133] close to the government was supposed to prevent another parliamentary paralysis.

Use of violence as political tool: Despite the official renouncement of the armed struggle, the CNDD-FDD did not only maintain its military capacity to resort to violence, but also continued to employ violence as a political tool to intimidate internal and external critics and opponents.

> *One of the major challenges became the economic integration of former combatants. Many former middle-ranking military leaders found themselves as peasants in the hillsides. To calm them down, the CNDD-FDD used the intelligence service, which recruited some of these ex-combatants for a small salary to watch the hillsides and intimidate the population and opposition members* (Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Montreal, 15 September 2014).

Several former combatants recounted the continuation of hidden chains of commands with their former military leaders (Focus group with former CNDD-FDD combatants, Bujumbura, 9 May 2013). As early as 2008, Human Rights Watch reported that the CNDD-FDD was turning parts of its youth movement into a private paramilitary organization (HRW 2009). To this effect, the CNDD-FDD instrumentalized selected members of the

[133] Out of 25 FRODEBU parliamentarians, 12 MPs crossed over to FRODEBU-Nyakuri, which was quickly legalized as a political party in July 2009.

Imbonerakure,[134] who became frequently involved in acts of political violence, often with the lenience or assistance of the country's security institutions, or, at least, with their willingness to look the other way. The CNDD-FDD leadership has dismissed these acts of political violence as isolated incidents. However, the continuous documentation of these kinds of abuses by local and international watchdog organizations suggests an ongoing pattern since, at least, 2008.

In sum, during the founding elections of 2005, the CNDD-FDD officially campaigned for a fundamental transformation of the Burundian political system. The ruling party promised to end decades of authoritarianism, exclusion and civil war by promoting social development policies. However, the CNDD-FDD was soon plagued by the same internal dynamics, which had characterized the movement throughout the civil war, including, most notably, tensions between Bahutu and Batutsi members as well as between civilian and military members. Despite initially promising recruitment campaigns among civilian Batutsi and Bahutu, military members subsequently marginalized many of these civilian cadres in the party's decision-making process. The CNDD-FDD not only maintained its capacity to resort to political violence, but also systematically used political violence to marginalize internal and external opponents through the instrumentalisation of selected members of its youth movement.

8.2.2. PALIPEHUTU-FNL & CNDD-FDD Rivalry During 2005 Elections

From the CNDD-FDD's perspective, the 2005 electoral victory afforded the rebel political party an irrefutable legitimacy as the righteous owner of the liberation mantle, a title also claimed by the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, which continued its armed struggle (please see

[134] The youth movement of the *Imbonerakure* generally comprises all party members between 18 and 35 years old, including many child soldiers and former combatants.

subsection 7.1.3.2. for more details). Even though the CNDD-FDD had officially promised to bring the PALIPEHUTU-FNL to the negotiation table, it launched a repressive crackdown on the group's militants. The national intelligence service, headed by former FDD General Adolphe Nshimirimana, set up several secret detention centers, where PALIPEHUTU-FNL supporters were tortured. Human Rights Watch reported in 2006:

> *In December 2005 and January and February 2006, police, agents of the D.N.* [Documentation Nationale] *and army soldiers again resorted to large-scale arbitrary arrests and detentions of persons denounced as FNL collaborators by former FNL combatants. This is a practice that has been ongoing since the new government took office in August 2005. According to several reports, officials arrested these persons without warrants and held them for more than two weeks without bringing them before a magistrate, both being violations of Burundian law. Previously largely confined to the capital city, the practice of large-scale, arbitrary detentions has been extended to Bujumbura-rural province* (HRW 2006).

It was especially the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's youth members, who were persistently persecuted given their key role as political mobilizers. A former FNL combatant recounted:

> *With the entry of the CNDD-FDD into the state institution, attacks against our positions were intensified. The primary targets were the members of the JPH* [the FNL's youth movement]*, considered more important than the combatants. Our houses were locked down, especially at night until dawn. Even until this day, the pressure continues to force the JPH to join the CNDD-FDD* (Interview with former FNL combatant, Bujumbura, 4 July 2014).

In the summer of 2006, FDN soldiers transported at least 31 civilians from the Mukoni military camp, where the civilians had been detained illegally, to the Ruvubu National Park. All civilians were killed in the park and their bodies subsequently dumped in the Ruvuvu river, which crosses the park. Many of the civilian victims were suspected of supporting the PALIPEHUTU-FNL.

> […] *a group of approximately 30 people were arrested on suspicion of being members of the FNL in May 2006. In August 2006, 19 of their bodies were found in the Ruvuvu river. Some of them were beheaded* (HRW 2006; ISHR 2007).

Three main reasons can be summoned to explain this militaristic approach. First, the CNDD-FDD wanted to assert its strength and superiority as the successful liberator of Burundi before its major political rival, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, would potentially integrate mainstream politics. Second, the CNDD-FDD wanted to avoid any loss of political and military dividends for its supporters. If the PALIPEHUTU-FNL was to be integrated into the peace process, the CNDD-FDD members would have to share certain political and military positions with the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. Third, the CNDD-FDD wanted to distract attention from the internal divisions that beleaguered the ruling party shortly after the 2005 elections.

> *Such abuses are of course part of a long established pattern of violence, but the fact that they occurred so soon after the elections, under Nkurunziza's watch, meant in effect that very little had changed since the advent of the new government* (Lemarchand 2009, 172).

	PALIPEHUTU-FNL	CNDD-FDD
Ideational politics	- Divine belief in military victory to revenge the long-term Bahutu exclusion and Batutsi domination	- 2003 Gitega Pact on Democracy and Good Governance - Commitment to *gusubikanya* ('distributive justice'), reflected in key social policies - Massive recruitment campaign among Batutsi and Bahutu civilians
Power politics	- Balance of power eventually changing in favor of soft-liners who perceive the continuation of the armed struggle as too risky	- Growing tensions among civilian and military members - Progressive rise of generals as key decision-makers
	- Intensified attacks against PALIPEHUTU-FNL political mobilizers by the CNDD-FDD regime	
Institutional politics	- Official authorization to formally transform rebel movement into political party	- Building on war-time grassroots network to establish formal political party structures - Recognition of former combatants' services through their integration into local party structures - Establishment of *Conseil des Sages* as party's highest decision-making organ

Table 12: Impact of 2005 Elections on CNDD-FDD & PALIPEHUTU-FNL

8.3. The 2010 Elections

The 2010 electoral marathon represented the first elections in which the FNL and the CNDD-FDD participated together. They had displaced traditional political parties as the major players, sending the dangerous message that violence is necessary to access Burundian politics (Mehler 2011). The months leading up to the 2010 elections were marked by a climate of high political tensions and latent political violence. According to local and international human rights organizations, pre-electoral violence started in earnest in late 2009 (HRW 2012).

During the 2010 communal elections, which were held before the other electoral contests (legislative and presidential elections), the CNDD-FDD emerged as the clear winner with 64.03 percent of the votes (compared to 14.15 percent for the FNL). This electoral result came as a huge shock for the FNL, which, given that it had abandoned its armed struggle, had expected to do as the CNDD-FDD had done in 2005, and win the 2010 election. The FNL decided to boycott the subsequent legislative and presidential elections together with other major opposition parties over allegations of massive election fraud.[135] During the legislative elections, the CNDD-FDD secured 81 of 118 seats in the National Assembly granting it a clear majority position (just four votes short of being able to change the Constitution). In a subsequent presidential referendum[136] (given that all other candidates had withdrawn), the Barundi directly elected Nkurunziza as President with 91.6 percent support. The electoral

[135] The opposition parties created a coalition platform, called *Alliance des démocrates pour le changement* or *Alliance of Democrats for Change* (ADC-*Ikibiri*). À posteriori, most opposition leaders agree that the electoral boycott was an important error in judgment. Taken together, the members of the ADC-Ikibiri accumulated 34.41 percent of the vote share of the 2010 communal elections.

[136] It is interesting to note that, in subsequent elections, the popular response to the opposition's call for an electoral boycott roughly corresponds to the opposition's electoral results in the communal elections, something that could be interpreted as suggestive of the overall regularity of the elections (Vandeginste 2011b; Palmans 2012, 14).

boycott culminated in rising political violence between the CNDD-FDD and the opposition parties, resulting in the exile of many opposition leaders, who fled the country citing fears for their lives. This included, most notably, Agathon Rwasa, the FNL's leader, who was reported to have returned to the armed struggle.

International and local election observers generally considered the elections free and fair, but recognized that political harassment and violence had accompanied all phases of the electoral cycle (COSOME 2010; UE 2010). Some observers speculate that, by boycotting the legislative and presidential elections, the political opposition was hoping to broker an electoral rerun or a transitional government, as had happened in Kenya or Zimbabwe (Interview with BNUB staff member, Bujumbura, 14 June 2013).

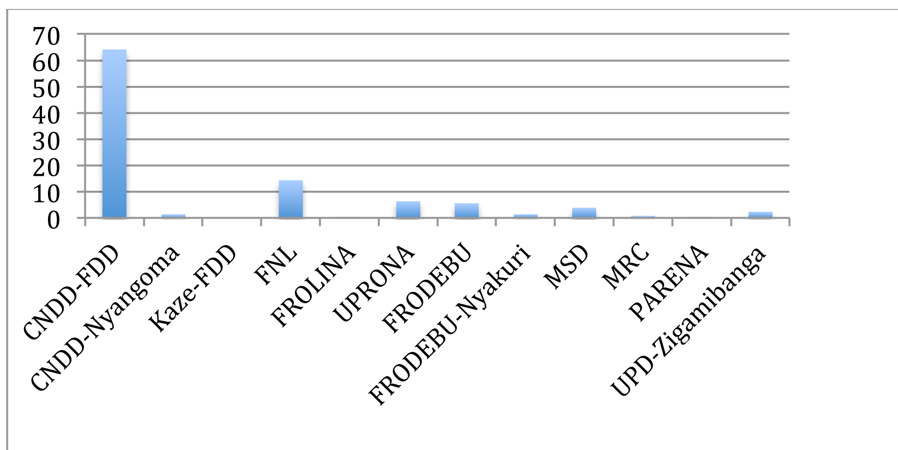

Figure 12: 2010 Communal Election Results
Source: Author's own graph based on National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) data

The CNDD-FDD's renewed victory solidified the ruling party's hegemonic position. The electoral boycott had the unintended consequence of removing a significant portion of the parliamentary opposition leaving the terrain almost entirely to the CNDD-FDD. Given the

absence of a strong intra-parliamentary opposition following the 2010 elections, this watchdog role was taken up by civil society and private, independent media leading to an increased politicization of civil society.

8.3.1. CNDD-FDD & 2010 Elections

The 2010 elections marked another important critical juncture for the CNDD-FDD. The ruling party had an opportunity to reverse the negative trends that it had been criticized for in the aftermath of the 2005 elections. Instead, political violence became more predominant and escalated after the 2010 elections.

The CNDD-FDD built its 2010 electoral campaign around the praise garnered by its social policies in education[137] and health; implemented during the party's first mandate, these had brought significant change to many Barundi, especially in the rural areas. According to the CNDD-FDD, the social policies were key in starting to address the long-standing inequalities between Batutsi and Bahutu. In addition, to respond to the accusations of corruption, the ruling party committed to a zero-tolerance policy towards corruption, presented as the priority issue for the second CNDD-FDD mandate.

Internal divisions: In the run-up to the 2010 elections, the CNDD-FDD experienced increasing internal fragmentation. The intensifying power struggles evolved most importantly around two key questions: First, the debate around the succession of President Nkurunziza intensified. Despite an internal secret poll favoring Gervais Rufyikiri, at the time President of the Senate, and Jérémie Ngendakumana, at the time CNDD-FDD President, Nkurunziza,

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[137] In her analysis of the public education policy, Travaglianti shows that President Nkurunziza extensively campaigned on the implementation of the policy during the 2010 electoral campaign and that voters did, in return, provide increased electoral support when access to public schools had improved in their community (Travaglianti 2016).

supported by former high-ranking FDD generals, imposed his presidential candidature for the 2010 elections. Gervais Rufyikiri, who holds a doctoral degree in Biological, Agricultural and Environmental Engineering from the Catholic University of Louvain, was considered as one of the grand intellectuals of the CNDD-FDD regime. Colonel Jérémie Ngendakumana, for his part, was an important FDD military leader during the civil war. Even though, none of them was eventually able to clinch the nomination, the internal secret poll reflects a certain degree of difference of opinion and the possibility of expressing it as long as this takes place inside the party and behind closed doors (Vandeginste 2010, 5).

Despite the importance of the politico-military divide, none of the CNDD-FDD's internal wings constitute monolithic blocs. Even though the CNDD-FDD had consolidated its power after the 2010 elections, the ruling party experienced a split. This time the critique came from a high-ranking former FDD military leader. Manassé Nzobonimpa, former military commander of the Western region and at the time Secretary-General of the *Conseil des Sages*, accused the CNDD-FDD regime of large-scale human rights abuses, corruption and involvement in illegal arms trafficking. Nzobonimpa pinpointed corruption scandals at the highest level of the state, including the involvement of the CNDD-FDD's Party President Jérémie Ngendakumana.[138] The public criticism dealt a major blow to the CNDD-FDD's regime given that Nkurunziza had officially declared zero-tolerance for corruption as his priority for the second mandate. In March 2011, the party held an extraordinary congress in Bubanza, during which the Council of the Wise was granted the emergency power to expel anybody deemed disloyal to the party (Iwacu 2011). Nzobonimpa was ousted from his role as

[138] Nzobonimpa accused Ngendakumana to have embezzled $USD 13 million together with Mohamed Rukara, then Ombudsman and two ministers. The money had been paid by the Ugandan to the Burundian state in 2007 to settle a debt (Vandeginste 2011a, 18).

Secretary-General of the *Conseil des Sages* and forced to leave the country citing fears for his life. Together with several other CNDD-FDD militants, Nzobonimpa has founded an exiled dissident group called *Abagumyabanga Sans Voix* ('those who guard the secret without voice').

Institutional organization and culture: During a party congress in March 2012, the CNDD-FDD changed its party leadership. For the first time in the party's history, the leadership was given to a civilian member, raising hopes that the days of the influence of the generals was coming to an end. Although the change could, on the surface, be interpreted as a positive development, upon closer examination it underscores the continuation of an informal, opaque governance structure of the CNDD-FDD.

At the Congress, Pascal Nyabenda, a 1972 survivor and a former civilian member, who had represented the rebel movement in Nairobi, replaced Ngendakumana at the helm of the party. The outgoing CNDD-FDD Party President, who had hoped to become the party's presidential nominee, had become known for vocally opposing a renewed candidacy for President Nkurunziza in 2015. Even though Nyabenda was the first civilian member to become leader of the party, most observers saw his appointment as a mere cosmetic gesture (Interview with local journalists, Bujumbura, summer 2013). An anonymous Congress participant reported:

> *At the Congress on 31 March 2012, it was not about electing a new president and his two deputies but approving what had been decided by the presidential camp of the Council of the Wise* […] *Everything was decided in advance even though the composition of the new leadership team was only known to us a few hours before the Congress* […] *He* [the President] *was looking for a flexible man, who would not question him* (Iwacu 2012).

The opacity of the CNDD-FDD governance structure was not only limited to the selection of the party leadership; it also extended to decision-making structures. In interviews,

CNDD-FDD members highlighted that there are democratic elections at the local level. In addition, the base submits drafts for the electoral lists. However, these decisions have to be approved by the party leadership.

> *At the grassroots level, there is rhetorical democracy. We are electing our representatives* […] *However, even though, we officially consult the base, it is the highest party organs, which take the final decisions* […] *We use the term 'political party' but this is just a Western invention. Military orders prevail* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 4 July 2015).

Furthermore, and despite the CNDD-FDD's rhetorical commitment to a zero-tolerance policy towards corruption, many local and international corruption watchdogs reported increasing corruption. According to Transparency International, Burundi ranks among the most corrupt countries in the East African Community as well as worldwide (TI 2012).[139] Apart from a couple of exceptions, ruling party members manage major public companies.[140] The civil service is extremely politicized and, often, requires a CNDD-FDD membership card as a prerequisite (ICG 2012). Young people in Burundi stress that employment opportunities demand "*highly personalized connections with the politically powerful, particularly those in the ruling party*" (Berckmoes 2015, 26). Despite the CNDD-FDD's initial promise to fight against and eradicate decades of exclusion, it installed an exclusionary system shortly after taking power.

Mobilization strategies: Throughout its second mandate in power, the CNDD-FDD extended its implantation in the hillsides. Many former combatants were integrated into local

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[139] This is one of the most important reasons for the reluctance of donors to invest in the country. While the members of the East African Community receive on average $USD 11.20 per inhabitant in direct foreign investment, Burundians receive $USD 0.04 per inhabitant.

[140] In its report on growing corruption in Burundi, International Crisis Group provides a list of the political affiliations of the heads of 16 public companies and their evolution over time. It shows that, in 2006, 13 out of these 16 companies were already in the hands of CNDD-FDD party members. In 2012, this number increased to 14 public companies (ICG 2012, 25).

party structures as a reward for their wartime services and to ensure their presence at the communal and grassroots level. A former CNDD-FDD combatant and current party member explains:

> *We are tightly organized* […] *I am the leader of 10 houses and I am responsible for the political mobilization of these 10 households. The chef of the sector is responsible for 500 houses. He gives us orders. We are teaching the ideology of the party. We talk about the advancements made, especially education and health* […] *No other party is as organized as us and we are very proud of this. This constitutes our main strength* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 2 April 2015).

As already discussed above, mandatory community work became one of the key strategies for mobilizing the local population in the interior of the country. One informant referred to this as the "*secret weapon*" of the CNDD-FDD given that it gives the ruling party regular sustained presence in the interior of the country[141], where the most important electoral support is based (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 10 June 2013). Community work has become a major propaganda tool for the CNDD-FDD regime.

> *In three decades of authoritarian rule, UPRONA did not build more than 20 school, but since 2005, the CNDD-FDD has built thousands of schools around the country* […] *Everyone can see them* […] *You cannot walk more than five kilometers without seeing a school* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 15 June 2013).

Political marginalization of rivals: In the run-up to and in the aftermath of the 2010 elections, the CNDD-FDD continued its strategy of marginalizing major political competitors through the *nyakurisation* strategy. In the process, the FNL became the victim of several *nyakurisation* plots. The divide-and-rule inspired strategy was supposed to weaken the CNDD-FDD's most important political competitor (an aspect discussed in detail in the next sub-section 7.2.2.2.).

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[141] While the community work plays a key role in the hillsides to mobilize the rural population around the CNDD-FDD regime, the larger cities, especially the capital of Bujumbura, a stronghold of the opposition, do not gather much support for this initiative.

The very outspoken local media,[142] which had become a key extra-parliamentary opposition force, faced repeated restrictions of their liberty of expression. Most notably, in 2013, the Burundian Parliament approved a new media law limiting journalists' ability to undertake investigative reporting and weakening the protection of their sources. Reporters without Borders considered the law as setting Burundi's advances in media freedom "*backwards more than 20 years*" (RSF 2013). The CNDD-FDD regime, for its part, has criticized the local private media for siding with the opposition and for being controlled by the old Tutsi elite guard, given that many of its members belong to the Tutsi community.

Use of violence as political tool: The CNDD-FDD continued to resort to selected members of its youth movement, the *Imbonerakure*, to intimidate opposition parties, especially FNL militants. During interviews, informants recounted how former combatants were recruited for what they referred to as "*dirty missions*", including the intimidation, harassment and elimination of political opponents. A former CNDD-FDD combatant and current party member stated:

> *It starts with 'easy' missions. They are used as a test to prove your loyalty to the party. I was asked to stop venders on the road between Bubanza and Bujumbura and to force them to unload their goods.* […] *Just as a test to see if I do as I am told* […] *Some of my friends have been asked to scare people at night and others have been asked even dirtier missions* […] *Luckily, I have not been asked* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bubanza, 10 April 2015).

The mobilization of the *Imbonerakure* for intimidation campaigns triggered the militarization of youth wings from other political parties. For instance, throughout 2012 and 2013, there were many high-profile clashes between CNDD-FDD members and militants from

[142] After the Arusha Accord, the Burundian media benefited from an astonishing freedom of expression commended by many observers as exceptional in the African Great Lakes (Frère 2015).

the *Mouvement pour la solidarité et la démocratie* or *Movement for Solidarity and Democracy* (MSD), a young party founded by former journalist Alexis Sinduhije. This brought back traumatic memories from Burundi's history, in which the mobilization of youth members affiliated with political parties had always occupied a key role in politics. For instance, in 1972 and 1993, it was primarily youth members from political parties that had been involved in the genocidal massacres (Berckmoes 2015)

In sum, the CNDD-FDD's second mandate constituted in many ways a continuation of many of the practices of the first mandate. The 2010 elections consolidated the hegemonic position of the CNDD-FDD.

> *Quite paradoxically, the outcome of the competitive elections – which received the green light from a wide range of observers – may now well enable the CNDD-FDD to consolidate its grip on all spheres of the public sector to such an extent that in 2015 it will be able to organize elections that it cannot lose (a defining characteristic of hegemonic electoral authoritarianism)* (Vandeginste 2011b, 326).

In the run-up to and the aftermath of the 2010 elections, the CNDD-FDD continued to sideline political opposition parties through the *nyakurisation* strategy. In addition, the CNDD-FDD used selected members of the *Imbonerakure* to intimidate the local population and political opponents, most notably the FNL. Due to the growing personalization of the decision-making process and continuing corruption, the CNDD-FDD was characterized by continued fragmentation.

8.3.2. FNL & 2010 Elections

The 2010 elections also represent a key critical juncture for the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. For many observers, the ultimate political integration of the movement, which claims the title of 'mother' of all Hutu-dominated rebel groups that had fought the Burundian government

militarily since 1983, constituted another major milestone for Burundi's war-to-peace transition and raised hopes for the prospects of peace and democratization.

Following the official renouncement of its armed struggle, the FNL, which had to drop its ethnicist name to comply with the multi-ethnic spirit of the Arusha Accord enshrined in the 2005 Constitution, initiated its formal transformation into a political party and prepared itself for the 2010 elections. The movement started a recruitment drive among the Batutsi population, but also among disillusioned members of the CNDD-FDD regime. In contrast to the CNDD-FDD, the FNL did not organize a founding party congress to outline its conversion process and political program.

With the FNL's integration of the political process, the movement changed its political discourse. Instead of advocating for its radical, ethnicist ideational project, which had lost ground in Burundi's new post-accord political configuration, the FNL decided to focus its political program on criticizing the governance record of the CNDD-FDD (Alfieri 2014). In an interview, Agathon Rwasa, the FNL's historic leader reflected critically on the movement and eloquently described this change:

> *That people say we were a Hutu movement with a radical ideology, we cannot escape this criticism.* […] *Maybe this was a necessary evil that was unavoidable at the time, when our movement was created,* […] *but today, we are conscious that it is not an ethnic group that kills but bad governance and we are committed to rebuilding a new Burundi with equitable institutions for all Barundi* (Interview with Agathon Rwasa, Bujumbura, 11 October 2013).

Institutional organization and culture: Given the highly decentralized nature of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL rebel movement, the FNL rebel party was able to implant itself quite easily in its traditional fiefdoms. At the time, international observers speculated that its decentralized and localized nature would make it much easier to transform the FNL into a political party than had been the case for the CNDD-FDD (Interview with former BNUB staff

member, by phone, 7 October 2014). Indeed, the grassroots party base operated to a certain degree autonomously and reports the members' concerns on a regular basis to the Executive Bureau. However, Agathon Rwasa, the long-time leader of the rebel group known for his deep religious convictions, is reported to have continued with his authoritarian leadership style. Every key party decision needs to be approved by the Executive Bureau headed by Rwasa (Interview with FNL militant, Bujumbura, 10 April 2015).

Internal divisions: Just like the CNDD-FDD, the FNL was beleaguered by internal fragmentation after its integration into mainstream politics; divisions revolved mostly over leadership and decision-making procedures. These divisions culminated in several splits in the run-up to and after the 2010 elections. The FNL became the victim of several *nyakurisation* plots orchestrated by the CNDD-FDD regime, which took advantage of the internal disagreements among FNL members. The *nyakurisation* aimed to weaken the newly transformed FNL, considered the most important political competitor of the CNDD-FDD (ICG 2012).

A first split occurred just after the legal recognition of the FNL and before the 2010 elections. In August 2009, the FNL excluded several high-ranking members, including Jacques Kenese, former Secretary-General for External Relations, Pasteur Habimana, former Spokesperson, and Willy Nyotori, Head of the Benelux-Section, for treason and collaboration with the ruling party. The excluded FNL party members had first tried to unsuccessfully oust Rwasa on charges of authoritarian leadership. They, most notably, criticized the fact that no FNL founding congress had been organized to define the program of the party and organize leadership elections. This resulted in the creation of an FNL offshoot called FNL-*Nyakuri-Iragi rya Gahutu Rémy*. The FNL splinter group was swiftly legalized as a political party in

January 2010. Rwasa responded to the split by organizing a party congress in November 2009 to formally elect (basically confirm) the FNL leadership that he had nominated.

Immediately after the 2010 elections, the FNL went through another internal split. FNL militants criticised Rwasa for the fact that he had decided to boycott the elections without a proper mandate from the FNL membership base. With a score of 14.15 percent in the communal elections (possibly increasing during the legislative elections), the FNL could have played an important opposition role in Burundi's political system. In addition, FNL members were thus deprived of accessing political positions and state resources. This left certain FNL leaders and militants disillusioned with Rwasa's leadership. In July 2010, the CNDD-FDD tried to benefit from the internal crisis by offering several FNL leaders political positions in exchange for changing the party's leadership (HRW 2012). In August 2010, an FNL dissident wing, supported by the CNDD-FDD-led government, held an extraordinary party congress (commonly called Kwiraro Congress) in violation of internal party rules effectively removing Rwasa from the FNL's presidency. However, most observers agree that the majority of FNL militants continued to support Rwasa. Rwasa's ousting was considered as another motivating reason for the former rebel leader to return to armed struggle (Alfieri 2014).

The CNDD-FDD regime smoothly recognized the new party leadership sealing the FNL's renewed split into two splinter branches, one faction legally recognized by the government (under the leadership of, first Emmanuel Miburo, and then Jacques Bigirimana) and another faction (under the leadership of Agathon Rwasa) that the government did not recognize. Many accuse the FNL-Bigirimana wing of being co-opted by the government and of organizing party meetings with the support of the *Imbonerakure* (Interview with local journalist, Bujumbura, 20 June 2015). Indeed, its main leaders occupy public positions: for

instance, Jacques Bigirimana, was first Commercial Director and then Director of the National Tea Office (OTB); Emmanuel Miburo, for his part, is Director of the National Peat Office (ONATOUR). In contrast, FNL militants loyal to Rwasa are systematically kept from organizing party meetings by the CNDD-FDD regime arguing that Rwasa has no legal standing anymore.

Mobilization strategies: The ousting of Rwasa represented a serious setback for the FNL's newly legalized political party structures. Subsequently, militants of Rwasa's FNL faction were systematically harassed by the CNDD-FDD regime. While Rwasa went underground, his militants inside Burundi were persecuted. They had to operate clandestinely to protect themselves from persecution. Many FNL informants that I interviewed during my fieldwork had been on the constant run in the aftermath of the 2010 elections. In his micro-level account of the FNL's political presence in the commune of Kanyosha in Bujumbura Rural province, the movement's traditional fiefdom, Van Acker eloquently reveals that:

> *Since joining the political mainstream in 2009, the FNL had several offices in different zones of Kanyosha. By mid-2012, however, there was almost no sign of Rwasa's party in the public sphere. Infrastructure closed down and public meetings or other overt political activities came to a halt. Remarkably, the CNDD-FDD, which had proven to enjoy only limited popular legitimacy (if we judge from the 2010 ballots in Kanyosha), was the only party to have its flag raised in the commune's administrative centre. Some of the FNL's most prominent and powerful members were either killed or arrested, or had moved. Whereas the party's public presence had been dealt a serious blow, our exploration of the informal dynamics of power and public authority that occurred in the commune indicates that the FNL is still strongly embedded in the region and, against all odds, continues to leave its mark on local social and political life* (Van Acker 2016, 22)

Use of violence as political tool: The 2010 electoral boycott culminated in the rise of political violence and a series of reprisal killings between the CNDD-FDD and the FNL. A resident in the capital described the situation to Human Rights Watch as follows: "*We are powerless. There are reprisal attacks. One night, a CNDD-FDD is killed, the next night an*

FNL is killed" (HRW 2012, 17). The violence started by targeting predominantly low-ranking FNL militants (often involved in political mobilization at the grassroots level) and later shifted to high-ranking FNL members. Local human rights organizations denounced a government plan, dubbed "*Safisha*" (Kiswahili, meaning 'to cleanse') to physically eliminate FNL militants. It is estimated that around 800 FNL militants were killed between August 2010 and December 2012 (Interview with APRODH representatives, Bujumbura, 3 July 2014).

The increasing persecution of FNL militants after the 2010 elections led to renewed politisation and militarization of the movement. Rwasa went underground and reportedly fled to Eastern DRC.[143] According to the UN Group of Experts on the DRC, he tried to revive the FNL's armed branch that had been maintained there under the leadership of 'Shuti' (UNExperts 2012). It is estimated that Rwasa remobilized around 700 of his most experienced combatants within the DRC alone.

> *They established bases in both Uvira and Fizi territory, collaborating with numerous Mai Mai groups* […] *The expansion into Fizi allowed the group to increase its involvement in trade networks with Tanzania, which functions as a crucial logistical hub and a source of recruits from among the refugee camps. However, the group also re-recruits numerous demobilized ex-FNL and some ex-FDD fighters from Burundi, and has been joined by ex-FNL defectors from the Burundian Army (FDN). This group includes a certain major Aloys Nzabampema, who became the second in command* (Verweijen 2015).

Around 400 FNL ex-combatants, who were integrated into the country's security institutions after the FNL's renouncement of the armed struggle, deserted from the police and the army (Interview with former BNUB staff, by phone, 7 October 2014). Some of them were

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[143] Rwasa himself denies any accusations of remobilization. Today, he maintains that he never left Burundi but remained hidden among his supporters inside the country (Interview with Agathon Rwasa, Bujumbura, 11 October 2013).

re-recruited in Eastern DRC, others were found dead becoming victims of CNDD-FDD persecution.

However, given the limited number of remobilized FNL militants, Rwasa did not feel that he had enough capabilities to launch a strong military force against the Burundian national army, and he reassessed the situation, reconsidering the possibility of reentering Burundian politics. These tensions culminated in a split between a pro-Rwasa and a pro-Nzabampema wing. In August 2013, Rwasa returned to Burundi and reentered the political game to prepare for the 2015 elections.[144] When Rwasa returned to Burundi, he was excluded from the FNL.

In sum, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL officially abandoned its radical, ethnicist ideational project and now builds its programmatic outlook on issues related to good governance. However, the FNL's leadership continues to be fundamentally shaped by the divine belief in its destiny to rule the country, reflected in Rwasa's decision to return to the armed struggle. Following the 2010 electoral boycott, FNL militants resorted to two different types of violence. They revived the armed struggle, carrying out attacks from the Eastern DC into Burundi. They also continued to get involved in tit-for-tat attacks with CNDD-FDD members inside Burundi.

In the aftermath of the 2010 elections, the FNL critically took stock of what had happened. In an internal party memorandum, several party leaders highlighted the enduring importance of *isezerano* for the ideational politics of the party blaming it, in part, for the lack of proactivity of party members.

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[144] This return was part of a months-long mediation process, brokered by the United Nations, to bring the most important exiled opposition figures back to Burundi to prepare the 2015 elections. This included Agathon Rwasa, the FNL leader, but also Alexis Sinduhije, the MSD leader. Both politicians had been accused by the UN Group of Experts of trying to launch a renewed armed rebellion in Eastern DRC after the 2010 elections (UNExperts 2012).

Blind trust in the theory of « ISEZERANO » or in revelations or divine visions. […] *The* [FNL] *activists, for the most part, basked themselves in the law of the least effort while winning elections demands hard work to gain the most supporters possible even in the case of « visions, « revelations » or « ISEZERANO » for those who do believe in it. This had the effect that the FNL's opponents found the playing field free in some places* […]. *This also curbed certain members in their enthusiasm for the party's* […] *sensibilisation campaign believing that everything was decided beforehand* (FNL internal political party pamphlet written in the aftermath of the 2010 elections).

8.3.3. FNL & CNDD-FDD Rivalry During the 2010 Electoral Violence

The long-standing political and military competition between the FNL and the CNDD-FDD has been carried over from the civil war to the post-accord period. Violence between the two movements overshadowed the 2010 electoral contest. In their quantitative analysis of electoral violence patterns during the 2010 elections, D'Aoust, Sterck and Colombo show that the more a municipality was polarized by the presence of former CNDD-FDD and PALIPEHUTU-FNL combatants, the more likely it was that electoral violence occurred. In addition, municipalities that had been severely exposed to violence during the civil war were more likely to experience electoral violence in 2010. In contrast, ethnic polarization did not have a significant impact on violence patterns during the 2010 elections (Colombo, D'Aoust, and Sterck 2014).

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>PALIPEHUTU-FNL</th><th>CNDD-FDD</th></tr>
<tr><td>Ideational politics</td><td>- Official abandonment of radical, ethnicist ideational project
- New ideational politics built on good governance
- Continued belief in isezerano (‘divine belief in destiny to rule the country’), but also critical self-reflection on isezerano for lack of efforts to mobilize population and to campaign hard to win elections
- Massive recruitment campaign among civilian Batutsi and disillusioned CNDD-FDD members</td><td>- Official reiteration of Gitega Pact on Democracy and Good Governance
- Official commitment to zero-tolerance policy towards corruption</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Power politics</td><td>- Several internal splits around 2010 elections
- First split (run-up to 2010 elections): FNL-Nyakuri-Iragi rya Gahutu Rémy vs. FNL
- Second split (aftermath of 2010 elections: FNL-Bigirimana (legally recognized) vs. FNL-Rwasa (legally unrecognized)
- Intermittent return of FNL-Rwasa to armed struggle to challenge CNDD-FDD regime</td><td>- Growing internal divisions around two key questions: Third mandate and growing corruption scandals
- Continued rise of generals as key decision-makers
- Continued marginalization of civilian members</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">- Escalation of violence between CNDD-FDD and FNL militants after 2010 elections
- Municipalities with strong presence of CNDD-FDD and PALIPEHUTU-FNL ex-combatants more likely to experience electoral violence</td></tr>
<tr><td>Institutional politics</td><td>- Formal party structures built on grassroots network established during civil war in the run-up to 2010 elections
- FNL-Rwasa’s return to informal, clandestine politics in the aftermath of the 2010 elections</td><td>- Conseil des Sages with emergency power to expel any ‘disloyal’ party member</td></tr>
</table>

Table 13: Impact of 2010 Elections on CNDD-FDD & PALIPEHUTU-FNL

8.4. The 2015 Elections

Increasing political tensions and rising political violence characterized yet again the 2015 elections culminating in an intense political crisis, which is still unfolding. The immediate trigger was the CNDD-FDD's decision to nominate incumbent President Nkurunziza for a contentious third presidential term. An ambiguity between the 2000 Arusha Accord and the 2005 Constitution sparked a fierce debate about the 'third mandate question'. Third mandate opponents point to Article 7, Paragraph 3, of the Arusha Accord, which states that the President "*shall be elected for a term of five years, renewable only once. No one may serve more than two presidential terms*". Third mandate supporters point to an ambiguity in the Constitution. Article 96 states that "*the President of the Republic is elected by universal direct suffrage for a mandate of five years renewable one time*". Since Nkurunziza was elected during the first post-Arusha elections in 2005 by Parliament, the camp argues that he was legally allowed to run one more time, as this would technically only constitute his 'second' presidential term by universal direct suffrage.

In the lead-up to the 2015 elections, hundreds of Burundian civil society groups launched a massive campaign, baptized *Halte au troisième mandat* ('Stop the Third Mandate'), to promote the enforcement of the presidential term limit. They announced that they would take to the streets if the CNDD-FDD decided to re-nominate Nkurunziza. Political opposition parties and several high-ranking CNDD-FDD members supported the anti-third term campaign. Nevertheless, on April 25, 2016, the CNDD-FDD organized a party congress in the capital of Bujumbura announcing the renewed candidacy of President Nkurunziza. This resulted in months of political instability, including the violent repression of popular demonstrations against the third mandate with thousands of people fleeing Burundi, a failed

military coup, several high-level political assassinations as well as increasing attacks by armed opposition elements. Following the failed military coup, several private radio stations were destroyed or shut down making access to information difficult. The violent purge that followed the failed putsch suffocated the popular demonstrations (Jones and Wittig 2016). In addition, it contributed to a split inside the FDN triggering several high-level military defections and raising fears of an internal explosion of the national army, considered a corner stone of Burundi's current social contract.[145] Since the violent repression of the third-term protests, several rebel groups have announced their armed resistance against the CNDD-FDD regime.[146]

On June 29, 2015 and July 21, 2015, Burundi organized controversial legislative and presidential elections, which were delayed several times due to national, regional and international pressure to find a solution to the electoral crisis. The majority of political opposition forces, including the FNL-Rwasa faction, officially called for a boycott of all electoral rounds. Despite this official boycott, during the legislative elections, the political opposition received a vote share of 24.51 percent compared to 60.28 percent for the CNDD-FDD. To the surprise of many observers, Rwasa ultimately agreed to join the state institutions. During the presidential elections, Nkurunziza was reelected Head of State with 69.41 percent of the votes.

Several national, regional and international actors withdrew their election observers ahead of the vote (including the EU and the AU) or released statements after the legislative

[145] However, so far, the FDN has largely maintained its internal cohesion (Wilén 2016).
[146] The armed opposition is extremely divided and comprises several groups. Sa far, none of these movements seems to have a significant military force to be able to pose a severe challenge to the CNDD-FDD regime. For a great summary of the different rebel factions, please see (Vandeginste 2016, 59f).

and presidential elections highlighting that the climate was not conducive for an inclusive and credible electoral process (including the East African Community and the United Nations' Electoral Observation Mission, MENUB[147]). In contrast, several neighboring countries, including Kenya, Tanzania and DRC, complimented the CNDD-FDD regime for organizing the elections despite difficult conditions, thus highlighting disagreements among key external stakeholders regarding the management of the electoral crisis.

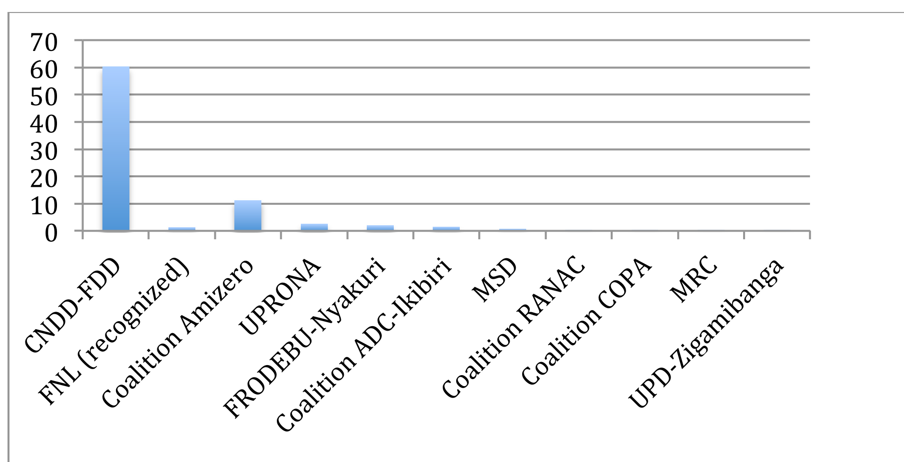

Figure 13: 2015 Legislative Election Results
Source: Author's own graph based on National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) data

As of September 2016, the UN had confirmed 564 cases of extrajudicial executions and the flight of around 300.000 people to neighboring countries between April 26, 2015 and August 30, 2016. Local sources put the number much higher, counting, at least, around 1000 victims (Interview with local journalist in exile, by phone, 10 October 2016). While the 2010

[147] MENUB started working in January 2015. Throughout 2014, the Burundian government had been lobbying for ending the mandate of the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB), but eventually agreed to the deployment of a UN electoral mission to report on the electoral process in the country. BNUB has been operating from 2011 to 2014 and had replaced the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), which for, its part, had been present in the country from 2006 to 2011.

elections were predominantly characterized by tit-for-tat killings between CNDD-FDD and FNL members, the 2015 elections involved violence against a broader sway of political opponents, especially those opposed to a renewed Nkurunziza candidacy.

Even though, the current crisis finds its immediate trigger in the 'third mandate question', it has much deeper causes, rooted in the growing disillusionment with the governance and human rights record of the CNDD-FDD regime. Indeed, in the run-up to the 2015 elections, Burundi witnessed several small- and large-scale demonstrations, including against rising living conditions or the imprisonment of local human rights defenders and journalists. These protests can be interpreted as key "*precursors*" to what would become the anti-third term protests in the run-up to the 2015 elections (Van Acker 2015, 4).

Even though the major cleavages had become fundamentally political following the end of the civil war, reflected in the competition between previously Hutu-dominated groups, as early as February 2014, the political opposition warned in a letter to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon of impending "*politico-ethnic genocide*" in Burundi and started to lobby for international intervention. The opposition subsequently compared the CNDD-FDD regime to the Rwandan regime under President Habyrimana and the *Imbonerakure* to the *Interahamwe*, who had perpetrated the 1994 Rwandan Genocide. As for the ruling party, during the 2015 electoral crisis, high-ranking CNDD-FDD officials have repeatedly suggested that the popular demonstrations against the third term only took place in certain neighborhoods of the capital, implicitly referring to traditionally Tutsi-dominated neighborhoods. This reflected a shift in the language, which has become more politicized and ethnicised, leading to the respective radicalization of the government and the opposition camp. Despite the political roots of the

current crisis, this shift has led several international organizations, including the United Nations, to warn of the risk of renewed ethnic violence (UNHCR 2016).

8.4.1. CNDD-FDD & 2015 Elections

After the 2010 elections, it took protracted UN-brokered negotiations to convince the exiled opposition leaders to return to Burundi to prepare the 2015 elections. At first, hopes were high, since most opposition members acknowledged that they had committed an important error in judgment when they decided to boycott the 2010 elections and thus missed the opportunity to establish a strong intra-parliamentary opposition to provide a counterweight to the CNDD-FDD. When the United Nations managed to bring the opposition leaders back, enthusiasm and hope were high that genuine democratic elections could take place in 2015.

With the approach of the 2015 elections, the CNDD-FDD built its campaign strategy yet again on its key achievements, including most importantly in the health and education sectors, but also in the land reform policy sector.[148] The CNDD-FDD continued its strategy to systematically shrink the political space and marginalize political revivals. The third mandate question emerged as the most important topic and divided, not only Burundian society in general, but also the CNDD-FDD leadership. Since the current crisis is still unfolding, only time will reveal the full extent of divisions and their impact for the CNDD-FDD.

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[148] The land reform policy revolves around the controversial question of returning land to the Hutu refugees, who fled Burundi during the successive political crises since the country's independence. While the CNDD-FDD regime has increasingly promoted returning the land in its entirety to the refugees, in a bid to promote its image as the liberator of the country, this has been increasingly criticized by opposition parties given that the refugee land was, in the meantime, redistributed by the Tutsi authoritarian regimes to people who stayed in the country, Batutsi and Bahutu alike. This has left many tracts of land with two property claimants (underscoring the necessity for a more nuanced policy). For a detailed discussion of the controversies surrounding the land reform policy, please see (Wittig Forthcoming).

Internal divisions: In the run-up to the 2015 elections, many CNDD-FDD informants highlighted that there was genuine interest among militants, including many ex-FDD generals (except for Adolphe Nshimirimana and Guillaume Bunyoni), to promote democratic alternation through the nomination of a new presidential candidate. Some founding leaders stated that alternation between leaders at the helm, in particular, and playing by the rules of the democratic game, in general, had even been one of the core commitments that had been made by the CNDD-FDD in the bush (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 9 April, 2015; Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 20 April, 2015).

In the meantime, growing public accusations regarding the militarization and corruption of the FDD system heightened tensions inside the ruling party. In November 2014, President Pierre Nkurunziza unexpectedly ousted two of his key strongmen from their prominent positions. Adolphe Nshimirimana, at the time chief of intelligence, and Allain-Guillaume Bunyoni, at the time Director of the civilian presidential cabinet, lost their posts. Internal discontent had grown against these two strongmen considered to be at the core of the 'FDD system', a system accused of having used the last decade in power to enrich a small elite of CNDD-FDD leaders instead of bringing genuine change to Burundi (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 4 July 2015). Another former FDD General, Godefroid Niyombare, who had previously served as military chief of staff and Burundi's Ambassador to Kenya, would replace Nshimirimana. However, Niyombare would be ousted only three months later for opposing Nkurunziza's decision to seek a third term. Many observers stated that the palace revolution against Nshimirimana and Bunyoni constituted a mere cosmetic change so that Nkurunziza could distance himself from corruption and appear 'clean' before the elections. In fact, not only would the two key strongmen keep their influence on the party,

but the reshuffle would also serve Nkurunziza by demonstrating his willingness to reward some of the party member who had become frustrated with the 'FDD system' (Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 10 March 2015; Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 2 July 2015).

Tensions inside the CNDD-FDD came to a head when several CNDD-FDD members started to publicly speak out, advocating against President Nkurunziza's third term and in favor of democratic alternation. Richard Nimbesha, then Senator of Bubanza, was the first to break the ice in January 2015. It is not coincidental that a founding member and representative from Bubanza, the traditional fiefdom of the CNDD-FDD, was among the first to speak up. Many founding members, especially former FRODEBU supporters, had become increasingly disillusioned with the FDD system. In addition, CNDD-FDD members from Bubanza had long advocated for more influence inside the ruling party given that the bulk of the CNDD-FDD's supporters and combatants came from this region (Interview with Richard Nimbesha, Bujumbura, 9 April 2015).

In February 2015, General Niyombare was part of a team that drafted an internal intelligence memo warning President Nkurunziza of the potential violent consequences if he were to seek another presidential term. The memo was subsequently leaked culminating in Niyombare's ousting as chief of intelligence. He was replaced by former FDD-General Étienne Ntakarutimana, a close confident of President Nkurunziza. Several high-ranking CNDD-FDD members subsequently drafted a public petition asking Nkurunziza to step down. At its peak, the petition counted more than one hundred names, reflecting to a large extent the traditional regional and civil-military divisions inside the CNDD-FDD. CNDD-FDD members

opposed to the third mandate would commonly be referred to as *frondeurs* ('trouble-makers') by the CNDD-FDD regime and, subsequently, by national and international media.

The *frondeurs* regrouped a variety of CNDD-FDD members: radical and moderate militants; members disillusioned members with the ruling party's governance record; and frustrated members who either thought that they did not get enough political privileges, had lost their political advantages, or did not figure on the 2015 electoral lists. However, the large majority of *frondeurs* were civilians (Nindorera 2015, 7). This included, most notably, Onésime Nduwimana, at the time CNDD-FDD Spokesperson, Gervais Rufyikiri, then Second Vice President, as well as Pie Ntavyohanyuma, at the time National Assembly Speaker. Every *frondeur* was subsequently excluded from the ruling party and most of them went into hiding and eventually exile, as their security guards were withdrawn and they received continuous death threats.

Institutional organization and culture: The public critique by the *frondeurs* was not appreciated inside the ruling party. Nkurunziza loyalists highlighted that the *frondeurs* should not have taken the third-term debate into the public sphere. In a bid to intimidate and prevent any potential future critical voices and divisions, Gélase Ndabirabe, the new CNDD-FDD Spokesperson, declared on national public radio that "*if we would still be in the bush, they* [the *frondeurs*] *would have been 'treated' by the weapons*" (Kaburahe 2015).

Despite internal criticism, CNDD-FDD members 'approved' President Nkuruniziza's renewed candidacy during a party congress in April 2015. While some CNDD-FDD members had hoped that the Congress would feature a critical discussion of the presidential nomination, the key FDD generals are reported to have imposed Nkurunziza's candidacy. A CNDD-FDD informant who participated in the Congress explained:

There were many party members that were hoping for a contrary opinion of the Congress. But, the Congress has no power. It's the President and his close associates, who decide. There were many youngsters working for the Generals, who were monitoring all of our gestures (Interview with CNDD-FDD party member, Bujumbura, 4 July 2014).

According to the informant, the imposition of Nkurunziza's nomination is rooted in corruption. Reportedly, there were also worries that, had the CNDD-FDD opened up the presidential nomination to other candidates, this would have risked to tear the party apart because several party members had been hoping to take their shot at the presidential nomination. Another CNDD-FDD informant echoed this hypothesis and stated:

Unfortunately, you are white […] *But if you were Murundi and you would ask the Abagumyabanga* ['those who guard the secret' referring to CNDD-FDD militants] *one by one, there are many people that are opposed to the third mandate.* […] *Actually, before, several former rebel leaders wanted to replace Nkurunziza.* […] *But party members recount the buying off of peoples' consciousness. Some sources claim that he* [President Nkurunziza] *gave everybody supporting him a bonus of BIF 200 millions* [around $USD 120.000]. *The loyalists, including most importantly Adolphe started to hold meetings in their fiefdoms to 'convince' people to support the President* (Interview with CNDD-FDD party member, Bujumbura, 2 July 2015).

After the CNDD-FDD once again consolidated its position during the 2015 elections, the ruling party organized a party congress in Gitega to change its party leadership in September 2016. The civilian party President Pascal Nyabenda left his party function. The position of President was abandoned and replaced by a Secretary-General supervised by the *Conseil des Sages* headed by President Nkurunziza. The Secretary-General position was entrusted to former FDD General Evariste Ndayishimiye. For many observers, this change in leadership illustrates the ultimate take-over of the military hard-liners (Ngendakumana 2016).

Mobilization strategies: In the lead-up to the 2015 April Congress, the CNDD-FDD organized several demonstrations in the capital, a stronghold of the opposition, commonly called "*marches pour la paix*" ('marches for peace'), in a bid to display the party's strength

and its control of the situation. The demonstrations mobilized thousands of CNDD-FDD members from the countryside, who were transported from the interior of the country, to come to the capital and express their support for Nkurunziza. During one of these rallies, Pascal Nyabenda, at the time CNDD-FDD President, stated:

> *There are members, who decided to disclose on certain media issues that they should have expressed within the party bodies. Worse, their statements and facts do not differ in any way from the behavior of* abakeba ['enemies' and here also referring to frondeurs] *We have punished them in proportion to the cumbersome nature of their denunciation. The party remains united and we thank the party leaders at the base, who have remained faithful to us* (Ngendakumana 2015).

The organization of these types of ruling party marches has continued since Nkurunziza's reelection. Throughout 2016, the CNDD-FDD repeatedly organized marches for peace to assert its strength. Theses rallies are often combined with mandatory community work. Most notably, the CNDD-FDD has also used these marches to protest against several decisions put forward by the international community to intervene in the crisis following the 2015 elections.[149]

Political marginalization of rivals: In the run-up to the 2015 elections, the CNDD-FDD continued its *nyakurisation* strategy. This time, the target was UPRONA, the former single Tutsi-dominated ruling party, which had long been spared from *nyakurisation* (given its role as a junior coalition partner helping to fulfill the Arusha inter-ethnic power-sharing requirements). During the second mandate, UPRONA had become more critical of the CNDD-

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[149] This included, for example, the organization of party rallies throughout Burundi protesting against the AU's proposal to deploy a 5000-strong regional protection force, baptized African Prevention and Protection Mission in Burundi (MAPROBU). During the demonstrations, CNDD-FDD party members held signs, which read that MAPROBU would be treated as an invasion force. The PSC proposal was made one week after the Burundian armed opposition attacked three military camps in December 2015. Burundi's security institutions responded with a retaliatory operation in the contestation neighborhoods resulting in the killing of more than 80 people, including many civilians. Several eyewitnesses stated that the victims were disproportionately of Tutsi origin (Jones 2015).

FDD, especially about its land policies and its attempt to force a constitutional amendment. Indeed, in March 2014, the CNDD-FDD had introduced a draft law to amend the 2005 Constitution. The draft included delicate changes to Burundi's power-sharing arrangements, including, most importantly the modification of required majorities to adopt laws or other measures.[150] In addition, the draft was intended to remove the presidential term limit to legally pave the way for Nkurunziza to run for a third term. However, the constitutional amendment failed by only one vote, cast by an UPRONA member, who the CNDD-FDD was thought to have been able to co-opt (Ndabashinze 2014). After the parliamentary rejection of the constitutional amendment, the CNDD-FDD leadership changed its tactic and argued that the ambiguity in the Constitution allowed President Nkurunziza to run for another presidential term.

Members of civil society organizations, especially human rights defenders, increasingly endured threats and imprisonment for denouncing human rights violations by the ruling party. The most symbolic example was the case of Pierre-Claver Mbonimpa, President of the Association for the Protection of Human Rights and Incarcerated Persons (APRODH), who was imprisoned between May and October 2014 after having denounced the training of *Imbonerakure* on Congolese soil. Bob Rugurika, the Director of the *Radio Publique Africaine* (RPA), a private popular radio station decried by the CNDD-FDD as being close to the opposition, was imprisoned for several weeks in January 2015 after revealing the involvement of Nshimirimana in the brutal rape and assassination of three Italian nuns in the neighborhood

[150] In accordance with the Arusha Accord, Burundi's Constitution generally requires qualified majorities to create the broadest possible political support for legal or institutional changes. The proposed amendment reduced the number of required deputies present or represented in the National Assembly to pass laws from 75 percent to an absolute majority. In addition, the proposal removed the ethnic balance mechanism at the Vice-Ministerial level maintaining a requirement only for the Ministerial level.

of Kamenge in September 2014.[151] Many observers interpreted Rugurika's imprisonment as an indication that Nshimirimana, who had by then been 'ousted' as chief of intelligence, continued to exert influence, proof they added that the palace revolution had just been a "*farce*" (Interviews with CNDD-FDD members, Bujumbura, April 2015). When Rugurika was released from prison, his liberation was celebrated by hundreds of people in the streets who admired his courage for daring to 'speak truth to power' (Nshimirimana et al. 2015).

Use of violence as political tool: Throughout 2014, the CNDD-FDD was accused of arming and training members of its youth movement, the *Imbonerakure*, to intimidate the electorate ahead of the 2015 elections. In a leaked cable, in April 2014, the United Nations reported in April 2014 that it had gathered intelligence on the distribution of arms to members of the *Imbonerakure* in the Southern Province of Bururi (BNUB 2014). Soon after, Burundian and Congolese civil society organizations accused the CNDD-FDD of training members of the *Imbonerakure* on Congolese soil. During several interviews with informants, Adolphe Nshimirimana, then chief of intelligence, was identified as the person in charge of organizing the military trainings around the town of Kiliba-Ondes, just a few kilometers from the Burundo-Congolese border. CNDD-FDD members also stated that young party members had left Burundi for Eastern DRC.

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[151] According to Rugurika's investigations, the three Italian nuns wanted to publicly denounce the paramilitary training of the *Imbonerakure* in Eastern DRC, where the nuns and other missionaries had been asked by high-ranking CNDD-FDD military members to assist in medically treating *Imbonerakure* members injured during these trainings and in the course of attacks against FNL remnants in South Kivu. Rugurika had tracked down and interviewed two assassins involved in the killing of the nuns, who claimed that General Nshimirimana had hired them for $USD 55.000 to do the job. This put into question the official government narrative, which had accused a local, mentally ill inhabitant of the Kamenge neighborhood to be responsible of the rape and the assassinations.

The reason why they left was the continuation of the CNDD-FDD's Safisha ['to cleanse'] *Program, which started in the Kibira forest* […] *after the 2010 elections. People disappeared and corpses were found here and there* […] *The objective was to eliminate intruders, like FNL-Rwasa and MSD-Sinduhije and other opposition members. And then they send people to Congo for military training.* […] *I think that they are even helping Kabila to combat Mai Mai* (Interview with CNDD-FDD party member, Bubanza, 18 June 2014).

The UN Group of Experts on the DRC subsequently confirmed these accusations. According to one of their reports (UNExperts 2015), members of the *Imbonerakure* trained near Kiliba Ondes throughout 2014. They wore Burundian army uniforms making them indistinguishable from the Burundian army (present on Congolese soil to fight remnants of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL that had never abandoned the armed struggle). It is very difficult to know how many *Imbonerakure* members were trained in this context. The most credible estimates indicate around one hundred people. The paramilitary training in Eastern DRC ended with the expulsion of all Burundian forces from Congolese soil in October 2014 following international pressure, especially from the United Nations.

During the 2015 electoral crisis, some of these *Imbonerakure* members participated alongside police forces in the repression of the anti-third term demonstrations during the 2015 electoral crisis. At the same time, several *Imbonerakure* also became the victim of attacks by demonstrators either because of their involvement in the repression or simply because they are known to be members of the ruling party in the neighborhood.[152] Overall, it is important to note that the repression remained restricted and controlled; a possible indication that the CNDD-FDD did not want to let the violence spiral out of control and to potentially risk an international intervention.

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[152] In total, the *Imbonerakure* counted six of their members to have become victims of the anti-third term protests (RFI 2016).

> *We are playing with fire and we know it.* […] *We need to send a strong message to our opponents. But this message must be adequately dosed* (Interview with Burundian researcher, who had interviewed one of the former FDD Generals in charge of the state repression, Washington DC, 15 May 2016).

After the 2015 elections, CNDD-FDD members have become involved in a series of targeted assassinations. Adolphe Nshimirimana, a Hutu, former head of national intelligence and strongman of the CNDD-FDD regime, was assassinated in August 2015. A few days later, Jean Bikomagu, a Tutsi and the former Chief of Staff of the FAB, was shot dead in what was interpreted as a tit-for-tat political killing.[153] This has heightened fears that the ethnic cleavage – which had disappeared and been replaced with intra-Hutu competition – might be reactivated, triggering fears of renewed ethnic violence. For several months, dozens of police and intelligence officers, as well as opposition and civil society members, were targeted as part of this wave of violence.[154]

In the course of several interviews with *Imbonerakure*, informants revealed their frustration[155] with the national and international portrayal of the youth movement as a notorious militia. Many *Imbonerakure* members have never been involved in political violence or have rejected calls to become involved. This frustration increased during the 2015 electoral

[153] While Nshimirimana symbolizes the Hutu armed rebellion, Bikomagu embodies the Tutsi-dominated national army.

[154] Not all such acts of violence can be attributed to ethnic tensions as the violence involves the regime on the one side and a broad swath of opposition forces on the other. Only time will provide us with more information on the exact circumstances of these politically motivated assassinations. For a summary list of these tit-for-tat attacks, please see (Nantulya 2016; Vandeginste 2016).

[155] This frustration raises at least two key questions. First, to what extent did the demonization of the *Imbonerakure* contribute to their radicalization? Second, how could moderate forces be supported in a substantial manner?

crisis when the *Imbonerakure* were frequently compared to the Rwandan *Interahamwe*[156]. As one CNDD-FDD informant put it:

> *The criticism of the international community is exaggerated. There are, at least, two different groups of Imbonerakure. First and foremost, there are the ordinary youth members of the party. Second, there are certain elements that have been manipulated and armed by the national intelligence service. But this is a small minority compared to the thousands of Imbonerakure, who are ordinary youth party members, all over the country* (Interview with CNDD-FDD members, Bujumbura, 10 July 2015).

The radical paramilitary members seem, so far, in a minority position. They are often recruited among former FDD, but also FNL militants, willing to sign up for "*dirty missions*" to make cash in an impoverished environment like Burundi (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bubanza, 10 April 2015). The lack of job opportunities is paramount in accounting for their recruitment.

In sum, the ruling CNDD-FDD has developed a very sophisticated formal political party organization, reaching from the grassroots to the national level. The history of the CNDD-FDD, from its foundation as a rebel group to its transformation into a rebel political party, illustrates the enduring legacies of the movement. Despite several attempts by civilian leaders to genuinely reform the rebel political party, hardline military party members have won the upper hand and have progressively sidelined civilians. Today's organizational structure builds on the wartime parallel administrative structures and underscores the embeddedness of the rebel political party in Burundian society, especially in the hillsides of the country. However, it is extremely difficult to determine to what extent there is genuine

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[156] There have been numerous accusations that the FDLR have infiltrated Burundi, including the national police, to support the CNDD-FDD regime. It is, however, very hard to verify these accusations and to determine the extent of this infiltration. The use of the term *Interahamwe* is in and of itself misleading and underscores the ongoing politicization of political discourse. The term *Interahamwe* refers directly to the people involved in the 1994 genocide. However, today, the FDLR is made up of many new members, who have not necessarily been directly involved in the 1994 genocide.

support for the current CNDD-FDD regime and to what extent this support is bolstered through intimidation, repression and violence. The CNDD-FDD leadership has continuously resorted to selected members of its youth movement to intimate and eliminate political opponents.

8.4.2. FNL & 2015 Elections

With the approach of the 2015 elections and Rwasa's return to Burundi in 2013, the FNL prepared itself for the 2015 elections hoping that it could benefit from the continuing human rights violations of the CNDD-FDD regime to win the 2015 elections and fulfill its decades-long objective of accessing executive power.

Internal divisions: Since the split of the FNL into a legally recognized and a legally unrecognized branch in the aftermath of the 2010 elections, it has been extremely challenging for the FNL-Rwasa branch to operate on the political scene. In the run-up to the 2015 elections, the FNL-Bigirimana branch was able to organize several meetings with FNL militants throughout the country. Given the illegal status of the FNL-Rwasa, this branch did not benefit from the same possibilities. Attempts to unite the two FNL branches in the run-up to the 2015 elections were not successful.

Institutional organization and culture: Despite Rwasa's official ousting from the FNL Presidency, he continued to hold meetings under the radar to keep the party informally alive (Van Acker 2016). Given the movement's decades-long history of operating clandestinely, the FNL-Rwasa continued to be able to mobilize its informal networks to communicate with its militants.

Mobilization strategies: Even though, the FNL-Rwasa is not legally recognized anymore, Burundi's Constitution (Article 81) permits the group to form political coalitions

during the electoral periods. In the run-up to the 2015 elections, the unrecognized FNL branch, led by Agathon Rwasa, partnered with the unrecognized UPRONA branch, led by Charles Nditije, culminating in the creation of the *Coalition Amizero Y'Abarundi* ('Hope for Burundians'). Both, the FNL-Rwasa and UPRONA-Nditije had become victims of the *nyakurisation* strategy. Given the FNL's historic ethno-centric, radical ideational project, the coalition with the successor party of the former Tutsi-dominated single party, was considered a historic move and a masterpiece of political strategy at the time of its foundation in November 2014. However, just as in the run-up to the 2010 elections, it was extremely difficult for opposition political parties to hold party rallies.

During the anti-third mandate protests, Rwasa remained publicly timid about officially advocating for FNL militants to join the demonstrations. While Rwasa indirectly supported the protests by sending selected FNL militants to reinforce them, he did not fully mobilize his support base, which, according to observers, would have resulted in a higher mobilization force (Interview with FNL member, Bujumbura, 1 May 2015; Interview with local journalist, Bujumbura, 20 June 2015).

Despite his official call for an electoral boycott, Rwasa ultimately announced to integrate the state institutions. Together with 19 of his supporters, he took up legislative seats in the National Assembly and the Senate. Rwasa was subsequently elected as the National Assembly's Second Vice-President. This effectively ended the *Coalition Amizero Y'Abarundi*, since the UPRONA-Nditije faction maintained its electoral boycott together with the other key opposition parties.

There were mixed reactions to Rwasa's decision to integrate the state institutions. While some (especially members of the political opposition and some of his supporters) have

called him a traitor, others have defended his decision, interpreting it as a bid to protect his militants in light of their persecution following the 2010 elections. There are also some voices, which speculate that Rwasa wanted to exact revenge against certain opposition members, who had convinced him to join the electoral boycott in 2010 even though the FNL represented the second largest political force in the country. As an FNL member close to Rwasa explained:

> *A return to war has become obsolete for us. We needed to find, at least, a minimum of political space to express our views.* […] *This became increasingly difficult for Rwasa. The elections were over. Rwasa has no party. He was confined to stay home.* […] *The CNDD-FDD was smart. It rigged the elections, but reserved 20 percent for the opposition to tell the international community that it was integrating opposition members. This was their calculation and we benefitted from this calculation to integrate the state institutions. So, that Rwasa could, at least, circulate, and to prevent the CNDD-FDD from accusing us of launching a new rebellion, which could have ushered into renewed oppression of our militants* (Interview with FNL member, Brussels, 13 October 2015).

After integrating the state institutions, Rwasa has tried to cast himself as a key political opponent of the CNDD-FDD regime. However, he is walking a delicate line between criticizing the CNDD-FDD regime and restricting his criticisms to prevent renewed repression from the CNDD-FDD against his militants.

Use of violence as political tool: Since the FNL's political integration of the state institutions, clashes between CNDD-FDD and FNL militants have been limited in comparison with the aftermath of the 2010 elections. Nevertheless, FNL militants continue to be involved in targeted arrests, persecution, torture and and tit-for-tat political killings. Just like violence patterns surrounding the 2005 and 2010 elections, this is especially the case of FNL youth movement members, considered critical for the FNL's political grassroots mobilization.

In sum, the FNL-Rwasa faction has established itself as the country's major political opposition force. The history of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, from its foundation as an underground political party, through its transformation into an armed rebellion, to its

conversion into a recognized and then unrecognized rebel political party, illustrates that, just, like the CNDD-FDD, the FNL has continuously been shaped by its rebel legacies which have posed an enduring challenge. It's been especially challenging for the FNL to overcome its authoritarian leadership reflected in the key role that Rwasa continues to play in its decision-making. Key decisions, such as the electoral boycott of 2010, have not been subject to an intra-party consultation process. Today's organizational structures build on wartime informal networks and the group's continuous experience with having had to operate clandestinely. This constitutes a major feature of the FNL's self-identity; the rebel party projects itself as a group that has always been persecuted to cast itself as a legitimate major opposition force destined to challenge the Burundian government and ultimately take power. The FNL continues to be embedded in Burundian society, especially in its fiefdom of Bujumbura rural. It has intermittently reconsidered the armed option, but Rwasa's recent integration into the state institutions signals a potential major shift in this regard. Only time will tell how his role as a political opponent will shape the FNL's future political and violent engagement.

	PALIPEHUTU-FNL	CNDD-FDD
Ideational politics	- Critique of governance record of CNDD-FDD	- Increasingly ethnicised discourse - Anti-imperial, anti-Western discourse
Power politics	- Certain disillusionment with Rwasa's decision not to join the anti-third term protests by some militants - Increasing generational divide	- Continuation of internal divisions around two key questions: Third mandate and growing corruption scandals - Continuation of progressive rise of generals as key decision-makers - Continuation of marginalization of civilian, political members
	- Continued violence between FNL and CNDD-FDD combatants, but less intense than during the 2010 elections given Rwasa's integration into state institutions	
Institutional politics	- Split into recognized and unrecognized FNL wings	- Militarization of institutional culture

Table 14: Impact of 2015 Elections on CNDD-FDD & PALIPEHUTU-FNL

8.5. Recap: FNL & CNDD-FDD Legacies

In the preceding three chapters, I have analyzed the twin trajectories of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD by tracing their evolution at critical junctures. This included an investigation into their political roots and their decision to pick up the gun, as well as an analysis of their behavior during peace talks and subsequent post-accord elections. These concluding pages reflect on the trajectories of both rebel parties, the impact of the legacies of the past on their behavior at key moments in their histories, and the (in) ability of agents, particularly party leaders, to exercise agency in light of the weight of the structures.

8.5.1. FNL: A History of Missed Opportunities

Source: Website of FNL

The PALIPEHUTU-FNL's historical trajectory illustrates the movement's commitment to military victory as a means of overthrowing the regime. The group was not only the first social protest movement to pick up the gun against the Burundian state, but also the last one to officially renounce its armed struggle. In the process, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL missed several political opportunities to participate fully in mainstream Burundian politics (Sentamba 2010).

In the run-up to the 1993 elections, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL stood fast by its radical ethnicized ideational project; as a result, the movement became marginalized at a time when Burundi entered a period of trying to transcend ethnic cleavages.

> […] *history took an ironic turn as the success of Palipehutu also become its downfall. With the democracy reforms, the ethno-nationalist discourse of PALPEHUTU lost ground to that of the more moderate Frodebu that envisioned a democratic, pluralistic (non-ethnic) Burundi* (Turner 2010).

The PALIPEHUTU-FNL's decision to join the peace process belatedly was another missed opportunity. By the time of its engagement in peace talks in 2006, its major political rival, the CNDD-FDD, had not only transformed into a political party; it had won the first post-accord elections in 2005. Relative peace had returned to most of the country except for several traditional PALIPEHUTU-FNL fiefdoms, in which the historic rebel movement continued its armed resistance. The CNDD-FDD regime benefitted from its hegemonic position and control of the security institutions to launch a repressive crackdown against PALIPEHUTU-FNL militants. By the time the FNL was legally recognized as a political party in 2009, the CNDD-FDD regime used its control of the state institutions to marginalize the FNL by benefiting from internal divisions in its midst and inducing a first split in the rebel political party.

In 2010, the FNL boycotted the first elections in which it participated alongside the CNDD-FDD. The decision to boycott prompted another repressive crackdown on FNL militants (HRW 2010) and the division of the rebel political party into two wings: one recognized by the Ministry of Interior and whose leaders are said to have been co-opted by the ruling party; and another one, unrecognized, which continues to be led by the FNL's historic leader, Agathon Rwasa. For several years, the FNL-Rwasa had to return to clandestinity. Rwasa tried to remobilize his combatants, but eventually returned to the Burundian political scene to prepare the 2015 elections.

To understand the reason why the PALIPEHUTU-FNL missed so many opportunities and integrated so late into the peace process, we must go back to its radical, ideational project, which revolves around an essentialist, ethnicist and mythico-religious reading of the Burundian conflict. Not only does the movement consider itself the legitimate guardian of the

armed struggle, Rwasa's firm belief that he is destined to rule the country has also contributed to the FNL's uncompromising attitude. After the 2003 integration of the CNDD-FDD into the state institutions and its 2005 electoral victory, the FNL continued to promote the importance of conquering the whole country by arms and to fight against the influence of the Tutsi. Although the party chose to boycott the 2010 elections, the FNL's official political integration marked an important shift in its ideational project, which currently centers on governance issues. With the recent integration of the FNL in the state institutions in the aftermath of the 2015 elections, we might be witnessing a first step towards reversing these missed opportunities. Given the poor governance record and escalating violence under the current CNDD-FDD regime, Rwasa remains one of the rare presidential competitors believed to be able to rally enough popular support to present a challenge to the current ruling party. However, only time will tell to what extent Rwasa will be able to cast himself as an agent of change and free himself and his party from the legacies of the past.

Another important factor to determine the future path of the FNL resides in the willingness of individual combatants to resume the armed struggle. Today, many former FNL combatants decry the discrimination that they face in programs to support the demobilized or when looking for job opportunities. As one former FNL combatant put it: "*We are treated as if we have fought the wrong war, as if we are not supposed to develop ourselves*" (Interview with FNL member, Bujumbura Rural, 18 June 2014). The historical competition between the FNL and the CNDD-FDD has moved into an additional terrain, that of accessing the state's resources and availing themselves of social and economic opportunities. As the literature on horizontal inequalities suggests (Stewart 2008), in the long run, this unequal treatment risks creating renewed grievances and discontent. Given these difficulties, several ex-combatants

stated that they would be willing to join a new rebellion if the opportunity presented itself (Focus group with FNL members, Bujumbura Rural, 18 June 2014). At the same time, others regret their time in the bush, given that they have not seen any peace dividends, access to which remains limited to a small number of former leaders (Focus group with FNL members, Bujumbura Rural, 20 June 2014).

8.5.2. CNDD-FDD: The Road to Hegemonic Dominance

Source: Website of CNDD-FDD

The CNDD-FDD has established itself as Burundi's hegemonic ruling party. Despite the CNDD-FDD's rhetorical commitment to democracy and demilitarization, the establishment of a formal party structure did not translate into internal democratization and demilitarization. Indeed, shortly after gaining power in 2005, and rather than availing itself of the opportunity to effect a clear break with its own past and the past of the country, the CNDD-FDD resorted to authoritarian practices.

Beleaguered by many of the internal divisions which had characterized its evolution as a rebel group, the party witnessed rising regional and civil-military tensions as well as continued, even growing, corruption. Civilian party members criticized the preeminent role of former military commanders inside the party and the regime. In their opinion, the demilitarization and conversion of the movement required military leaders to be integrated into the national army or demobilized/integrated into civilian life (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 9 April 2015). *En revanche*, former military leaders wanted to maintain their influence on the party. In interviews, they highlighted that they deserved to do so given that they had sacrificed their life for the liberation. In the power struggle between civilian soft-liners and military hard-liners, the military hard-liners were able to win the upper hand.

Even though the CNDD-FDD has introduced grassroots democratic structures, the authoritarian structures inherited from the armed struggle continue to characterize the party's internal decision-making. Current and former members recount physical threats and fear of repression when questioning the official party line. To deal with internal divisions, the ruling party has imposed a strict party line, using a combination of intimidation and clientelistic networks and ties. "*There is one party line and everyone has to follow*" (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 24 May 2014). The CNDD-FDD has also developed mechanisms to enforce party discipline and reduce the risk of internal dissidence. For example, party members and parliamentarians are obliged to vote by show of hands to ensure control over voting decisions. In addition, the CNDD-FDD voted a law that stipulates that, if a party member is excluded from the CNDD-FDD, she automatically loses her parliamentary seat in the National Assembly (Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 24 October 2013).

Thirteen years after integrating the Arusha process, the CNDD-FDD continues to celebrate its history as an armed movement. Omnipresent around the country, the CNDD-FDD flag captures the origins of the party. A black eagle rises in the middle of the tricolored red-green-white flag. The vigilant animal represents the watchful CNDD-FDD's militants. He holds a manioc leaf, the main food supply of combatants in the bush, in his left paw. In his right paw, a sword symbolizes a physical or moral weapon to defend the nation. Once a year, during the month of November, the CNDD-FDD organizes a week of celebrations dedicated to its ex-combatants. Commemorative gatherings recall the difficult struggle and living

conditions that the CNDD-FDD's combatants had to endure during the civil war.[157] The memory of the armed struggle constitutes an important element in the discourse of the CNDD-FDD militants, who often stress that this distinguishes the party from others.

> *We have a different vision of what it means when we talk about the 'power of the people'. For former rebels, the 'power of the people', they know what they are talking about unlike other parties, who have not fought the war.* […] *We have a special relationship with the people, because we have evolved together.* […] *In misery, we have shared our meals. The population took care of us, nursed us, fed us. We have an affinity with the population, which does not exist between the population and other political parties.* (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 17 October 2013).

The impact that legacies of the past have had on the CNDD-FDD is cogently illustrated by the long shadow cast by the traumatic events of the 1972 *ikiza*. A large majority of the current party leadership are orphans of 1972, including most importantly President Nkurunziza himself. During interviews, informants stressed the importance of 1972 for their personal engagement in the armed struggle. They recounted the horrific events surrounding 1972 and the stories of the family members that they lost. But the 1972 events have not only affected the commitment of CNDD-FDD militants; they have also contributed to framing current violence. When asked about accusations of political violence perpetrated by the CNDD-FDD regime, most informants highlighted that these are only isolated incidents and that nothing compares to the horrors that they had to endure during the selective genocide of 1972 (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 20 June 2015; Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Montreal, 30 July 2016).

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[157] This includes for example the production and screening of an hour-long documentary on the CNDD-FDD's history and life in the bush, which can be accessed on youtube [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCPlwpYcm-4].

Chapter IX: Conclusion – A ‘Farewell to Arms’ or An ‘Armed Peace’?

“*Peace and democracy are limping.* […]
We say that there is peace,
but people are still being killed.
We say that there is democracy,
but people are still being persecuted for saying the ‘wrong’ things”’

(Interview with former FNL member, Bubanza, 11 October 2013).

Burundi was long cited as a success story of international liberal peacebuilding among policy-makers, diplomats and academics alike. However, the enthusiasm for Burundi's post-peace accord transition has long neglected the fact that the CNDD-FDD has increasingly turned to authoritarian practices and violence as a tool to ensure its political hegemony. In addition, the long-standing political and violent competition between the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL has spilled over from the civil war to the post-accord period. This can, to a large extent, be explained by the fact that the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL have been profoundly shaped by Burundi's authoritarian past, by the conditions in which both rebel parties came into being, and by the legacies of the civil war. As the ongoing political crisis (still unfolding as of the moment of writing this dissertation) has highlighted, Burundi's post-accord transition remains extremely fragile.

After the intricate African-led Arusha peace negotiations, Burundi experts described a "*need for success*" inside the regional and international communities, resulting in the marketing of Burundi as a role model for liberal peacebuilding efforts (Grauvogel 2016, 7). This has had the unintended consequence that the international community has largely ignored negative trends, which manifested as early as 2005. The international community juggled between recognizing these adverse tendencies, while, at the same time, wanting to give time to Burundi's political actors in light of the many challenges faced by conflict-ridden societies (Interview with staff member of UN Peacebuilding Support Office, New York, 25 January 2014). As highlighted by Curtis, international peacebuilders also systematically privileged relative stability over criticism of governance issues. As long as Burundi remained fairly stable, they were reluctant to 'rock the boat':

> *At key junctures, international peacebuilders turned a blind eye to governance abuses, human rights violations, and militarism, when confronted with the messy and contested politics of transition, as long as Burundi remained generally stable* (Curtis 2013, 75).

The international community's interest in portraying Burundi as a success story reduced the international community's leverage towards the CNDD-FDD regime given that international actors had become trapped in their success narrative[158] (Grauvogel 2016, 7-10). This background inspired the study of Burundi as an "*illustrative*" and "*crucial*" case study (Levy 2008; Gerring 2007). If a long-celebrated success story, like Burundi, does not fit in this success narrative, it is crucial for researchers and practitioners alike to have a detailed understanding of this case and its implications for other cases.

This conclusion proceeds in six main parts. First, I situate my study within the existing rebel-to-party transformation literature. Second, I summarize my key conceptual contributions. I specifically highlight the manner in which my research challenges several of the fundamental assumptions that have characterized the emerging rebel-to-party transformation literature, a subfield with 'feet of clay'. Third, I outline my theoretical contributions. I particularly reflect on the advantages of the analytical framework that I developed to study rebel political parties, a framework that focuses on the interplay between ideational, power, and institutional politics at critical junctures. Fourth, I highlight the importance of integrating the rebel-to-party transformation literature into the study of authoritarianism more broadly. Fifth, I critically reflect on the appropriateness of the provision of rebel-to-party transformation, which features

[158] When the United Nations started to overtly criticize the government during the 2010 elections in light of the increased documentation of extrajudicial killings, the relationship between the Burundian government and the UN worsened. Intricate international mediation efforts followed to ensure that the government would not end its cooperation with the UN (Interview with diplomat involved in peacebuilding efforts in Burundi, New York, 25 January 2014).

as a peacebuilding tool of choice in many of today's peace accords. Last, but not least, I sketch out avenues for future research.

9.1. State of the Art: My Study within Existing Literature

Over the last years, the topic of the transformation of rebel groups into political parties has emerged as an important research agenda in the conflict resolution and democratization scholarship. Qualitative scholars have undertaken numerous case studies on rebel-to-party conversions spanning Europe, South America, Africa and Asia (De Zeeuw 2008; Ishiyama 2016; Sindre and Söderstrôm 2016). In addition, quantitative scholars have started to build datasets to further illuminate specific aspects of the rebel-to-party conversion phenomenon (Söderberg Kovacs and Hatz 2016; Manning and Smith 2016).

Many qualitative case studies have provided in-depth analyses of African countries, where the rebel-to-party transformation phenomenon has been particularly prominent. Among these, Burundi has also figured as a recurring topic of interest. As discussed in Chapter II, Nindorera and Jones were pioneers in analyzing conditions for the formal rebel-to-party transformation of the CNDD-FDD (Nindorera 2008; Jones 2013). Their work revealed some of the challenges encountered by the CNDD-FDD, such as the difficulty of disentangling its military from its political branch. Most recently, Rufyikiri has provided an insider view of the CNDD-FDD's history from the perspective of a former sympathizer and subsequent high-ranking ruling party member (Rufyikiri 2016a). Alfieri, for her part, contributed a case study on the socio-political history of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. Most notably, she set the stage for questioning the rigid distinction between rebel groups and political parties by framing the PALIPEHUTU-FNL's armed resistance as a long-term struggle for legal recognition (Alfieri 2014). Last but not least, Van Acker conducted a micro-level investigation into the politics of

legitimacy and public authority developed by the PALIPEHUTU-FNL in its traditional fiefdom of Bujumbura rural (Van Acker 2016).

Building and expanding on these studies, I provide the first comprehensive comparison of the twin trajectories of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD. Until now, qualitative studies on rebel-to-party transformation processes had either focused on single case studies or on inter-country comparisons. My research breaks new ground by providing an in-depth, within-country comparison of the Burundian experience with rebel-to-party conversion. I trace the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD's pathways by identifying critical junctures, including key foundational, peace negotiation and electoral decision moments. In the process, I map out the common political origins of both groups, rooted in (several of the same) clandestine political parties and set against decades-long exclusion of Burundi's Hutu majority by the country's Tutsi-dominated authoritarian regimes. Previous research on the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL had neither systematically traced these common roots nor analyzed the reasons for the subsequent divorce between these organizations. By adopting a *longue durée* approach, I interrogate their shared origins in opposing Burundi's authoritarian regimes and their successive separate evolution.

Despite common grievances, an initial attempt at unification and several subsequent bids at collaboration, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD ultimately engaged in an intense political and violent struggle to claim the title of legitimate representative of the liberation cause. Through the systematic paired comparison, I retrace their political and military competition, first as rival rebel groups and then as competing ruling and opposition parties. This helps me to illuminate the manner in which their competition influenced their internal dynamics as well as their relationship with each other. Recent quantitative research on

Burundi's electoral violence has shown that communities with a high number of FNL and FDD ex-combatants were more prone to electoral violence than other localities during the 2010 elections. This marks a shift in Burundi's conflict cleavages from an ethnic-based Bahutu vs. Batutsi cleavage to a political conflict within the Hutu ethnic group (Colombo, D'Aoust, and Sterck 2014). My qualitative comparative analysis of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD provides an in-depth investigation into the roots, dynamics and evolution of this intra-Hutu power struggle. I also show the extent to which ideational, power and institutional politics structure each of the two rebel political parties and how this affected their ability to seize the opportunities that emerged at critical junctures. I establish the role of ideational and power politics not only within but, crucially, between both movements to understand their decisions at key moments in Burundi's history.

9.2. Conceptual Recap: A Research Program with 'Feet of Clay'

In this dissertation, I draw on the "*no peace, no war*" (Richards 2005) and "*armed politics*" (Staniland 2015a) paradigms to propose a novel conceptual framework in order to deconstruct some of the underlying assumptions of the rebel-to-party transformation research program.

Students of rebel-to-party transformation generally accept or implicitly assume two problematic distinctions: the difference between war and peace as well as the difference between the resort to violence and 'normal' non-violent means. While this dissertation is not the first piece of research to challenge these assumptions, I draw on the "*no peace, no war*" (Richards 2005) and "*armed politics*" (Staniland 2015a) paradigms to show that not only do these distinctions not apply to Burundi's history and to the rebel-to-party conversions of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD, but also that accepting them leads researchers to over-simplify the war-to-peace transition processes and to overlook some of the characteristics

of the political actors involved, notably rebel groups and political parties. I show that both, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD, have engaged in a combination of political and violent struggle throughout their histories. It is through the amalgamation of political and violent strategies that both groups have competed for the support of the local populations. In the process, politics and violence have become intrinsically intertwined in their struggle for the liberation mantle. To refer back to the title of Chapter III, in cases like Burundi, we cannot speak about rebel groups during the war and political parties thereafter; instead, there were political rebels and rebel politicians. By framing my conceptual chapter in this way, I aim to flesh out the intricate relationship between the use of politics and violence as complementary political tools during and beyond civil war. In this vein, I join scholars of "*no war, no peace*" (Richards 2005) and "*armed politics*" (Staniland 2015a) in advocating for the importance of integrating civil war studies in a broader field of studies on contentious politics. The aim of this integrated research field is precisely to examine the different forms, violent or non-violent or a mixture of both, that such politics might take (Goodwin 2012, 3).

Second, while existing research suggests that the transformation of rebel groups into political parties ought to stem out political violence, the formal integration of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD into party politics did not bring political violence to an end. The early rebel-to-party conversion literature set a high expectation that providing violent rebel groups with legitimate channels to express their political grievances would lead to their full transformation into peaceful democratic political parties (Zartman 1995a, 337f; Stedman, Rothchild, and Cousens 2002, 3; Lyons 2005, 6). In contrast, cases like Burundi illustrate the importance of taking hybrid outcomes seriously. Since the CNDD-FDD's accession to power, the ruling party has used violence to ensure its political dominance. In

parallel, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL has resorted to violence to challenge the CNDD-FDD's accession to power and subsequent authoritarian shift. Latent political violence, including between the CNDD-FDD and the FNL, has replaced open armed conflict, but frequently escalates, especially around election times, as illustrated by the events of 2010 and 2015.

The Burundian case study puts into question the expectation that rebel groups rooted in political organizations, such as the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD, are more easily converted into political parties. Even though both have strong roots in political organizations, it has been extremely difficult for the two rebel political parties to disentangle their political and military branches. While one may have understood their desire to maintain a capacity to resort to violence given the history of Burundi where Tutsi domination was achieved through control of the national army, nevertheless, both the CNDD-FDD and the FNL have resorted to violence not simply for their own preemptive protection but to eliminate rivals or compete for political control. The instrumentalization of selected *Imbonerakure* members for paramilitary missions stems from the CNDD-FDD's willingness to use violence against political opponents to consolidate its political hegemony. Similarly, the FNL did not adhere to the 2010 election results and reconsidered the armed option, when the movement did not win the elections as expected.

As the CNDD-FDD and the FNL continue their wartime political and violent competition for rightful rule of the country, the study of Burundi's rebel-to-party conversion demonstrates that the fragmentation and competition among several armed resistance movements can fundamentally shape post-accord party politics and modes of violence. In recognition of this reality, I have therefore proposed to conceptualize rebel political parties as "*hybrid politico-military movements*" (Berti 2013). The concept of hybridity allows me to

retrace the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD's political and violent strategies throughout their historical trajectories to flesh out the ways in which they used violent and non-violent means to accomplish their goals. During the war, both rebel groups experimented with different organizational make-ups, including an initial separation between their political and their military branches and a subsequent integrated politico-military structure. The choice of merging both branches primarily stemmed from military imperatives with the combatants criticizing political leaders for not supplying them with enough equipment. In addition, I show how both rebel groups competed politically (through, for instance, the dissemination of rumors) and militarily (through, for example, increased battles in fiefdoms claimed by both groups) for the support of the local populations. This intricate relationship between politics and violence has continued after the official renouncement of hostilities by both groups.

9.3. Theoretical Recap: Rebel Parties at Critical Junctures

This dissertation demonstrates the importance of shifting the study of rebel-to-party transformations from an outcome (as reflected in the linear conceptualization inherent in the term 'rebel-to-party transformation') to a process-oriented approach. The comparison of the trajectories of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD called for a more complex and nuanced analysis, without which I would not have been able to understand continuities and changes in the historical trajectories of rebel political parties. I wanted to interrogate their shared origins in opposing Burundi's authoritarian regimes, and to chart the way in which they parted ways and ultimately fought and competed with each other in war and peace.

In this dissertation, I developed such a process-oriented approach by studying the trajectories of rebel political parties through "*systematic historical process analysis*" (Hall 2006). The operationalization of this process tracing was undertaken in two main steps. First, I

adapted the concept of critical junctures to the study of rebel political parties' pathways. Second, I provided an analytical lens to systematically trace continuities and changes with regards to the evolution of their ideational, power and institutional politics. Below, I summarize these two points in turn.

Overall, I identified three major, overarching types of critical junctures representing key decision points for rebel political parties: (1) why the movements under study decided to engage in armed struggle in the first place (discussed in Chapter VI), (2) how they behaved during peace negotiations (Chapter VII), and (3) how they waged electoral contests (Chapter VIII). The choice of these three critical junctures was not fortuitous. It was consistent with my conceptual approach which drew on the 'no peace no war' approach to interrogate the usual distinctions between pre-conflict, conflict, and post-conflict stages. I was thus able to bridge the analysis of rebel political parties from their genesis – in the case of Burundi by retracing their parent organizations – to their wartime transformation into rebel groups, and their post-war attempt to 'convert' into political party successors.

Critical junctures constitutes key decision moments, during which political actors have a tremendous power of agency in that the structures weaken sufficiently to allow them to affect outcomes in a significant way. Whether they are able to leverage this power of agency depends on the specific political configurations of agency and structure during these periods, commonly referred to as the agent-structure problem in political science (Giddens 1979). In this dissertation, I traced the impact of the legacies of one critical juncture on rebel political parties' behavior at the next critical juncture. Put differently, I analyzed the extent to which the armed struggle and its legacies cast their shadow at each critical juncture.

The selected critical junctures are by no means fixed. Future research might build on this selection, question my choices, or identify other critical junctures. For example, I decided to focus on peace negotiations and elections as critical junctures. Where most of the literature on rebels in peace talks focuses on the ripeness and decision of rebels to engage (or not) with peace processes, I have also shed light on the manner in which mediation attempts can induce internal changes in rebel groups.

Adopting such an approach allows us to explore feedback loops between rebel groups' internal dynamics and international mediation efforts. The CNDD-FDD at the Sant'Egidio talks constitutes an excellent example. The Rome talks sharpened civil-military and regional tensions and competition, which would fundamentally come to shape the movement. Likewise, the exclusion of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL from these negotiations strengthened the rebel group's conviction that the CNDD-FDD had always betrayed the liberation cause by collaborating with the Tutsi-dominated authoritarian regimes. This would come to shape the relations between the two movements leading to increased military clashes in the aftermath of Sant'Egidio.

Likewise, I have used elections as key moments to analyze the strategies used by rebel political parties during the post-accord period. Specifically, I have analyzed how the armed struggle and the historical rivalry between the CNDD-FDD and the FNL affected the way in which they behaved during electoral contests. Instead of witnessing a gradual move from violent to political strategies, as expected by the literature, I repeatedly found that rebel political parties continued to use a mix of both, in line with the expectations of the 'armed politics' approach.

By choosing to structure my analysis around peace talks and elections, I also chose not to focus the lens of my analysis on key moments of internal change within rebel parties, such as the ousting of leaders or the adoption of new rules and codes of conduct. These alternative critical junctures could become the subject of future research.

Analytically, I brought together three streams of literature to trace the evolution of rebel political parties by studying their ideas, power struggles and institutions over time. None of these conceptual lenses are new. Ideas, power and institutions have long featured in the study of rebel groups and their political party successors. Each has provided a lens through which academics have sought to study and understand the behaviour of rebel movements and political parties. However, my research provides a framework that brings these three dimensions systematically together. Rather than develop an overarching theoretical causal model, I wanted to develop an analysis of the interaction between ideational, power and institutional politics. I leave it to others to refine this analytical framework and to develop causal hypotheses about the specific nature of the interaction between ideas, power and politics in the behaviour of rebel parties. I also leave it to future research to specify the conditions in which one of these takes precedence over others. My research has simply addressed these interactions empirically in the specific case of Burundi.

The empirical analysis revealed several key points. First, as highlighted by identity politics scholars, it is crucial to conceive of ideational politics in a broad manner to allow for the inclusion of a large number of identity attributes. Until now, civil war scholars have often narrowly focused on the key role of ethnicity thereby neglecting other ideational dimensions. This is partly explained by the end of the Cold War. In the aftermath of the fall of the Iron Curtain, we witnessed increasing scholarly attention focusing on ethnic-based conflicts.

However, most conflicts display a much broader sway of ideational grievances. In the case of Burundi, the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, instrumentalized several identity attributes, including most importantly ethnicity, tribe, religion and region. The analysis of the intersection and evolution of these ideational categories is crucial. In addition, I join recent research, which has highlighted the importance of taking the ideology of rebel groups seriously (Gutiérrez Sanín and Wood 2014; Staniland 2015b). The power of ideas is especially important when analyzing the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. The group developed a radical, ethno-centric interpretation of the Burundian conflict, given its foundation in the aftermath of the 1972 selective genocide against Hutu intellectuals. This ethno-centric reading is rooted in a mythico-historical reinterpretation of Burundi's history, casting the Bahutu ethnic group as an innocent victim of historical Tutsi domination (that the writings of the group's founding leader, Rémy Gahutu, even trace back to the pre-colonial period) (Malkki 1995). Under the leadership of Rwasa, a religious element was added to this ideology, based on a 'messianic' promise of the right to overtake the country by military force. Understanding the role of ideas is crucial to account for FNL's late decision to engage in peace negotiations. With its integration into mainstream politics in 2009, we saw a shift in its historical ethnicist ideology. After four decades, the FNL officially renounced these beliefs and adapted to the changing conflict cleavages in Burundi by focusing on governance issues. In practice, this historic break from past ideological legacies was not fully complete. The FNL's self-critique on its performance during the 2010 elections partly blamed *isezerano* ('divine promise') for the fact that the rebel political party did not campaign as much for electoral votes as it should have. In contrast, given its roots in Marxist-inspired political parties, the CNDD-FDD developed a more moderate and inclusive ideology based on an understanding of the Burundian conflict as

a class-based conflict. Consequently, the CNDD-FDD integrated Batutsi into its ranks, particularly in political positions. But, here again the reality was more complicated. The CNDD-FDD reserved high-ranking military positions for its Hutu members. It was also implicated in many Tutsi massacres throughout the civil war. However, the ideational divergence between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD is crucial in understanding their parting ways and the different trajectories that they pursued.

Second, building on the literature on democratic transitions and its adaptation to the study of conflict-resolution (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Przeworski 1991; Chinchilla 2004), I analyze the evolving internal power struggles between risk-averse soft-liners and risk-taking hard-liners. My analysis confirms the crucial role of the internal balance of power in understanding rebel groups' engagement in peace negotiations. In addition, I extend the analysis of internal power struggles to the behavior of rebel political parties during the post-accord period. During the civil war period, the CNDD-FDD's internal balance of power was paramount to understand the failure of the Rome Talks and the rebel group's refusal to integrate the Arusha peace talks. It was only when internal dynamics shifted in favor of risk-averse soft-liners that the CNDD-FDD decided to engage in cease-fire negotiations. During the post-accord period, I showed that, at several critical junctures, the CNDD-FDD had the opportunity to change its mode of engagement in Burundian politics and to implement genuine democratization as promised by the movement when it first took up arms. The soft-liners wanted to take over and reform the rebel political party. Instead, the CNDD-FDD has witnessed continued militarization. The legacies of the past contributed to the balance of power regularly shifting in favor of hard-liners, which rendered genuine reform of the ruling party extremely difficult.

Third, civil war does not only destroy institutions; it equally builds new ones, which shape post-accord party politics. Formal and informal wartime practices and institutions carry over into the post-accord period. For example, the wartime administrative structures and networks of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD shaped their respective official political party structures, which were used to campaign in subsequent elections. The FNL-Rwasa's long-standing experience with clandestinity was crucial in helping the rebel political party to survive, when Rwasa went into hiding in the aftermath of the 2010 elections. Likewise, wartime leadership practices, which favored military logics, continued in the post-accord period. Leadership changes were frequently undertaken in a non-democratic manner and in violation of party regulations. The CNDD-FDD's "*Radjabu Affair*" constitutes an illustrative example. Hussein Radjabu, the CNDD-FDD's rebel strongman, who is reported to have plotted the major leadership reversals during the civil war, became himself the victim of such a plot when, in 2007, civilian and military members coalesced to remove him because of his growing and controversial influence on the rebel party's internal decision-making.

The development of a systematic historical analytical framework to study the behavior of rebel political parties by focusing on their ideational, power and institutional politics at critical junctures constitutes the major theoretical contribution of my research to the rebel-to-party transformation literature. This analytical framework can fruitfully be adapted to the analysis of other contexts, in which rebel groups have become political parties.

9.4. Twinning the Legacies: Rebellion and Authoritarian Contexts

Burundi's ambitious rebel-to-party transformation project has not been able to address underlying political patterns that have emerged from decades of authoritarian rule, rebellion, repression, democratization attempts, and civil war. The FNL and the CNDD-FDD continue to

display many of the same repertoires of politics and violence that marked their histories as rebel groups fighting the Burundian government as well as each other. Both continue to operate according to what experts and popular opinion have come to refer to as "*réflexe du maquis"*, a "*bush mentality*" inherited from the armed struggle. However, as much as they were established to politically challenge and ultimately fight against Burundi's authoritarian regimes, the two parties are also deeply affected by the legacy of authoritarianism.

As highlighted in Chapter V, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD's militants were socialized under Tutsi-dominated authoritarian regimes and they have reproduced several of the practices of their former nemesis, UPRONA's former one-party rule. While this was not the primary subject of this dissertation, the similarities that emerged during my research are so salient that they deserve to be mentioned in this conclusion. This further justifies my call for better integration of the study of rebel legacies into an investigation of the broader authoritarian legacies in countries emerging from armed conflict.

Built during the armed rebellion, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD's shadow administration structures, reached from the hillsides to the communal, provincial, and national level, thereby mimicking the administrative boundaries of UPRONA's regime. Their clandestine political party structures were inspired by UPRONA. Like the former single ruling party, they built a youth and a women's movement and they installed political mobilizers at the grassroots' level.

Not only did the two rebel movements mimic the structure of the former ruling party, but when it accessed power, the CNDD-FDD behaved in similar ways to the party it had replaced. UPRONA and the CNDD-FDD have developed their power bases around extensive neo-patrimonial networks. Their patronage system, based on a blend of ethnic, tribal and

regional favoritism, is illustrated in the distribution and allocation of key political positions, jobs and financial contracts to party members. UPRONA traditionally favored the Batutsi-Bahima faction from the South, notably from Bururi. Several informants highlighted that, in contrast, the CNDD-FDD advantages Bahutu factions from the North and North East, notably from Ngozi, Kayanza, Cibitoke and Bubanza, but also Batutsi-Banyaruguru, interpreted as a counter-balancing attempt or "*revenge act*" to the traditional favoritism towards the South and the Batutsi-Bahima (Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Montreal, 18 February 2016). However, more systematic research is needed to confirm this proposition.[159]

As Burundi's current ruling party, the CNDD-FDD has not only established clientelist patterns; it has also blurred the lines between the state and the party (Tobolka 2014) During UPRONA's reign, Burundi's Tutsi authoritarian Presidents – Micombero, Buyoya and Bagaza – were simultaneously heads of state and party leaders (Scherrer 2002, 31f). As for the CNDD-FDD, even though the ruling party has its own leader, President Nkurunziza chairs the *Conseil des Sages*, the party's highest decision-making organ, through which he controls key decisions of the CNDD-FDD (Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 1 July 2015).

The CNDD-FDD's inclination towards authoritarianism and heavy one-party dominance echoes Hydén's work on the "*movement legacy*" (Hydén 2011). African countries where anti-colonial or liberation movements have remained politically dominant tend to display strong authoritarian tendencies and little respect for human rights. Scholars of liberation movements against white minority rule in Southern Africa have underlined that, once in power, these organizations display characteristics similar to the authoritarian regimes

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[159] This could be undertaken through the compilation of a list of political actors occupying the highest-ranking positions inside the CNDD-FDD regime featuring their respective regional, ethnic and tribal origins. During my research, I have started to collect this information. This is, however, extremely, sensitive.

against which they took up arms in the first place (Southall 2013; Melber 2015). In addition, African ruling parties rooted in anti-colonial struggles have frequently transformed into hegemonic organizations positing to embody the nation instead of developing a clear political program based on specific policy issues. It would be interesting to further investigate the similarities and differences between anti-colonial liberation movements, such as FRELIMO, SWAPO or ZANU-PF, and rebel opposition movements, such as the CNDD-FDD, which have subsequently become ruling parties.

The CNDD-FDD continued the political inclination of trying to instrumentalize the youth for its political purposes. Youth movements affiliated with political parties have traditionally played a key role in Burundian politics (Berckmoes 2015). UPRONA's youth movement, the *Jeunesse révolutionnaire de Rwagasore* (JRR), and CNDD-FDD's youth league, the *Imbonerakure*, share several interesting similarities regarding their organization, membership and tasks. Both movements are largely made up of disenfranchised, unemployed youth, who serve as assistants to local administration and police, and show their strength by policing the public space in order to intimidate opposition members (Interview with René Lemarchand, Montreal, 16 July 2015).

More broadly, many informants highlighted the extent to which violence has been normalized as a political tool throughout the entire Burundian elite since independence. The trajectories of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD cannot be understood if they are studied in isolation from this historical context. Since independence, high-level political assassinations, often provoking a stream of tit-for-tat political killings, have frequently featured in Burundian politics. Political parties are also quick to 'go to the bush' when they fail to get their way through democratic institutional processes. For example, several of the

parties that boycotted the 2010 elections, including the FNL and the MSD, were subsequently accused of renewed armed rebellion in neighboring Eastern Congo (UNExperts 2012). This underscores the extent to which all political actors in Burundian politics take a short-term, all-or-nothing attitude to politics. This is reinforced by the fact that politics is not a vocation (Weber 2016 [1919]), but a question of economic survival, given that the state apparatus constitutes the main employer. In addition, access to the state provides purpose and power to previously marginalized groups.

My dissertation therefore echoes several of the conclusions of research on the role of state capture, corruption and the movement legacy in African politics (Bayart 1993; Reno 2001; Hydén 2011). Given the lack of economic alternatives, political actors have a vested interest in accessing and staying in power for their own private interests. However, this aspect is seldom fully integrated in research on rebel-to-party conversion. Thematic silos separate streams of research that would tremendously benefit from each other's contributions, as they are intimately linked with each other. While it is extremely important to study the legacies of armed rebellion for party politics in countries emerging from decades of authoritarianism, this investigation has to take into account the broader authoritarian legacies and their impact on armed rebellion as well as on 'normal' mainstream politics. In so doing, we can attain a more nuanced and holistic understanding of cases like Burundi.

9.5. Reconsidering Rebel-to-Party Conversion in Peacebuilding

Rebel-to-party conversion provisions have increasingly featured in post-Cold War peace agreements. Several implicit liberal assumptions are embedded in this peacebuilding tool. Most importantly is the assumption that the Western model of democracy is built on the peaceful political competition among political parties; a model which can be exported, not

only to countries with fundamentally distinct socio-political and economic histories, but also to countries emerging from armed conflict. This model aims to assist these conflict-affected countries to put an end to their cycles of violence. The short timespan that peacebuilders generally work with (because of competing priorities, budget constraints, or quick personnel turnover to name just a few) poses numerous challenges to this model. In Chapter II, I discussed the long timespan that it took in the West for political parties to emerge as the peaceful, democratic actors that we know and vote for today. In addition, and as much recent comparative politics research has already established, it is problematic to make teleological assumptions that claim that most countries will eventually adopt the Western model of democracy, and that this occurs in a linear process.

The empirical comparison between the FNL and the CNDD-FDD illustrates that the transformation of rebel groups into political parties is tremendously challenging, as it not only requires changes to organizational *modi operandi* but also to the mindset of individuals.[160] While several Burundian interlocutors highlighted that this is an extremely complicated process, which is unlikely to be achievable during normal democratic term limits (Interview with former CNDD-FDD member, Montréal, 12 September 2014), others doubted the very possibility of converting former rebel groups into peaceful, democratic political actors given the enduring legacies of the *réflexe du maquis* (Focus group with former ex-combatants, Bubanza, 10 May 2013).

The Burundian case illustrates that "*it is not sufficient for the international community to focus on brokering and implementing ceasefire agreements so that powerful rebel groups*

[160] In addition, rebel political parties do not only need to change their behavior internally, but also with regards to their behavior towards other actors, especially political competitors.

can quickly be registered as political parties and participate in subsequent post-transition elections" (Boutellis 2013). Even though the formal transformation of rebel movements into political parties has become a prominent feature of today's liberal war-to-peace transitions, the enduring legacies of rebellion and authoritarianism pose immense challenges for the conversion process and democratization prospects. These legacies should prompt us to critically rethink the promotion of the conversion provision in peace accords. This critical rethink must, among others, tackle the following key issues.

First, there is the fundamental question of timing and sequencing in conflict resolution and peace processes (Langer and Brown 2016). The sequencing debate has seen many iterations. Initially, research focused on whether peacebuilding should first start by restoring security before turning to the re-establishment of democracy and the resumption of development efforts. Discussions of sequencing also ran through research on liberal peacebuilding with authors wondering whether the consolidation of institutions should precede the organization of elections, with Roland Paris developing what has become known as the "*Institutionalization before Liberalization*" thesis (Paris 2004). The Burundian case highlights an additional dimension: whether having separate peace accords or a single overarching peace agreement makes a difference to the outcome of the peace process.[161] The comparison between the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD raises the question whether the international community did not contribute to the difficulties of Burundi's post-accord transition by dealing with each rebel group separately. The nascent democracy in Burundi was

[161] Another example is the peace process in Sudan sometimes referred to as searching for "*peace by piece*". Simmons and Dixon scrutinize the sequencing approach by the government and the factionalism among the rebel groups resulting in addressing the diverse rebellions individually to the detriment of a comprehensive single agreement (Simmons and Dixon 2006).

threatened from the very beginning, when the CNDD-FDD was able to secure a hegemonic position following the 2005 elections. If the PALIPEHUTU-FNL and the CNDD-FDD had integrated the post-accord political order at the same time, the CNDD-FDD's authoritarian shift might have been mitigated.

Second, there is the fundamental challenge for peace negotiations to address the root causes of conflict in a holistic manner. Mediators are primarily focused on silencing the guns to stop violence. The agreements negotiated between political elites and rebel leaders to this effect have often carved sites of power and influence for the parties while not addressing the root causes that contributed to armed conflict in the first place. Even where agreements have brought about an end to violence and where peacebuilding has generally been considered successful, it is notoriously difficult to address the structural root causes of conflict. The difficulty of tackling land conflicts that created the inequalities at the heart of the El Salvador civil war, in spite of a successful UN-brokered peace accord between the government and the FMLN in 1992, is a case in point (Unruh and Williams 2013). Twenty-five years later, the issue is still pending. In addition, the causes of conflict are in constant evolution and the issues over which people fight can change significantly over time. This makes it even more difficult for mediators to negotiate comprehensive peace agreements. Peacebuilding efforts further run the risk of only addressing front stage or maser cleavage (Kalyvas 2003) conflict drivers thereby neglecting overlooked triggers of conflict. In the case of Burundi, the Arusha peace talks concentrated on the negotiation of an inter-ethnic power-sharing agreement to end the ethnic conflict between Bahutu and Batutsi. In the process, regional peace mediators did not address the intra-Hutu struggle, which had already manifested during the civil war, but was

hidden from attention given the prominent portrayal of the Burundian conflict as an inter-ethnic conflict between Hutu and Tutsi.

Third, there is the fundamental moral question of the risks and benefits of promoting the conversion of rebel groups into political parties in peace accords. As discussed in Chapter II, at first, outside interveners were hopeful that the political integration of rebel groups through their conversion into political parties could render their resort to violence obsolete. However, since then, peacebuilders have acknowledged that the rebel-to-party conversion provision carries advantages and disadvantages, which need to be carefully weighed. As for the merits, policy-makers have highlighted the importance of rebel integration provisions for the successful conclusion of peace negotiations. The political integration of rebels is often necessary to reach peace accords that would otherwise be impossible. This is rooted in the fundamental commitment of redressing past injustices to avoid previous patterns of exclusion. However, it also carries the risk of sending the dangerous message that violence is rewarded and that it is a privileged means of imposing political concessions and benefits (Tull and Mehler 2005). The rebel-to-party conversion provision has become a standardized peacebuilding tool without consideration of how it might succeed or fail in a given context. In light of the rebel and authoritarian legacies studied in this dissertation, it seems that, in the case of Burundi, the evaluation between the risks and benefits seems to fall in favor of the risks. Only a case-by-case analysis of the balance sheet of costs and benefits can establish the verdict for each country, a verdict that may also vary over time.

Finally, if rebel-to-party conversion is indeed promoted by mediators, local, regional and international actors ought to think about the way in which they can mitigate the authoritarian trap in which many rebel political parties seem to fall. Even though national and

international organizations have organized seminars for rebel political parties to promote the principles of *bona fide* multi-party politics, this type of assistance has largely remained ad hoc and has most often been limited to technical workshops. In the long-term, it would be important to find innovative ways to substantially accompany and monitor rebel groups' conversion into political parties. This process would need to strike a fine balance between accompanying the process while ensuring national ownership. In addition, it is important to implement better coordination among different donors who provide such assistance. As discussed, in the case of Burundi, there were several organizations, including the World Bank, USAID, UNDP and the UN Peacebuilding Commission, that worked on accompanying the CNDD-FDD and the FNL's rebel-to-party transformation. However, these donors have often worked disjointedly without sufficiently coordinating their efforts (Interview with Steve McDonald, Washington DC, 10 May 2016).

In addition, an in-depth analysis of the power struggles between soft-liners and hard-liners, as was conducted in this research, could help identify key moments and various ways in which to promote more moderate forces. As the recent events in Burundi tragically illustrate, international donors have frequently put relative stability first, thereby (at times inadvertently, at other times knowingly) allowing the increasing authoritarian shift and resort to political violence by the CNDD-FDD regime and its political competitors. The mitigation strategies could include additional comparisons between patterns of violence during civil war and during post-accord electoral contests. This might help electoral observation missions in developing innovative policies to prevent and diminish electoral violence.

9.6. Future Avenues of Research

This dissertation opens several avenues for future research on rebel political parties and the enduring political legacies of rebellion and authoritarianism for party politics after civil war. First, future research should deepen the analysis of the specific factors and dynamics that facilitate and impede the resort to peaceful versus violent *modi operandi,* and how these patterns evolve over time, during and beyond civil war.

Second, if we want to fully comprehend the interplay between political and violent strategies, we should avoid assessing rebel-to-party transformations in terms of their 'outcome'. Rather than stating that the CNDD-FDD's conversion was "*partial*" (Nindorera 2008) or "*failed*" (Rufyikiri 2016a), we should embrace the hybridity of these movements and analyze the specific historical contexts in which their strategies have emerged and become politically salient. Political parties rooted in armed struggle cannot automatically be compared to political parties as we have come to understand them in the Western world. We should free ourselves from teleological assumptions and pre-existing categories to analyse rebel political parties as research objects in their own right.

Third, and as discussed above, future research could further scrutinize the choice of the most appropriate critical junctures. As mentioned above, this dissertation did not develop a theoretical model with causal hypotheses to account for the interaction of ideas, power and institutions at critical junctures. Instead, I provided an analytical framework, which could become the basis for further theory building. My empirical analysis of Burundi has provided several insights into the conditions under which ideational, power or institutional politics might take precedent. Future research could further specify the interactions between these

three dimensions and the circumstances under which when one or the other becomes more salient.

Fourth, future research might expand the existing rebel-to-party transformation studies on the micro level. For instance, it would be interesting to analyze the functioning of rebel political parties at the local level. So far, we do not have an in-depth understanding of the different ways in which rebel groups and their political party successors compete for the support of local populations at the grassroots level. In the case of the CNDD-FDD, we know that the support of the ruling party in the interior of the country stems from a mixture of endorsement, given that the CNDD-FDD is credited with having brought the civil war and the historical political exclusion of the Bahutu to an end, and of coercion, through the instrumentalization of fear. However, we do not know the exact configuration between sincere support, outright coercion and the different levels in-between; we now even less about how the relationship between these two drivers of support or rejection evolves over time. Such an analysis could be complemented through the study of the different ways in which party members react to, contest, and resist the authoritarian tendencies of rebel political parties. This should include an analysis of how rebel political parties might react and possibly change tactics depending on how the local population responds to them and vice versa.

Fifth, future research could investigate and compare the different pathways from rebellion (Speight and Wittig Forthcoming). Rebel groups do not always convert into political parties via peace accords. Instead, we can identify several different avenues that rebel groups take after the formal end of hostilities. Some are defeated or dissolved. For example, after a very short-lived experience as a rebel political party, the RUF in Sierra Leone was dissolved because the group was not able to garner enough political support to survive as a political

party. Other rebel groups convert into ruling parties by military victory. After winning the civil war, the Rwandan RPF and the Ugandan NRA have become powerful authoritarian political parties, whose supremacy is hypothesized to reduce the potential for post-war democratization (Lyons 2016). Other rebel groups have merged with existing political parties. In Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, the *Forces Nouvelles* (FN) fused with an existing political party, the *Rally of the Republicans* (RDR), after the civil war. At this point, we do not have an in-depth understanding of the factors determining these different pathways.

Finally, the relationship between rebel groups and political parties before, during and after civil war represents an interesting entry point to analyze political configurations and reconfigurations induced by violent conflict. In cases like Burundi, rebel political parties have displaced traditional political parties. In other cases, like Côte d'Ivoire, traditional political parties have remained the principle vehicle linking the state to society. Future research could focus more directly on the implications of these variations for long-term peace and the development of democratic politics. This analysis could be complemented by investigating the interaction between civilian, political and military integration provisions stipulated in peace accords.

In closing, this dissertation grew out of a profound interest in rebel groups, their origins, evolution and ultimate destinations. During the course of my research, I was continuously struck by the fact that rebel groups that have legitimate grievances, and are given the opportunity to change previous patterns of authoritarianism and exclusion through their participation in mainstream politics, often betray their original objectives. Despite their avowed goals to end oppression and injustice, they often develop authoritarian tendencies if they manage to access executive or legislative power after armed conflict. This echoes French

journalist Jacques Mallet du Pan's famous adage that the revolution devours its own children. It is my hope that my research will contribute to a better understanding of the roots of these authoritarian tendencies and inspire additional research so that we can better understand and mitigate authoritarian inclinations and assist people who have had to endure oppression and injustice make positive changes. As Burundi lives through one of the worst political crises since the official end of its civil war, this is essential to contribute to finding an end to the country's cycles of violence.

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List of interviews

1) Interviews with current or former members of CNDD-FDD

Interview with CNDD-FDD member, Bubanza, 18 June 2014/ 27 March 2015

___ CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 2 July 2014/ 4 July 2014

___ CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 1 May 2015/ 14 July 2015

___ former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 6 October 2013

___ former CNDD-FDD combatant, Bubanza, 2 April 2015/ 4 April 2015

___ former CNDD-FDD member, Montréal, 12 September 2014

___ former FDD general, Bujumbura, 8 April 2015

___ former FDD general, Bujumbura, 8 October 2013

___ former CNDD-FDD member, Montreal, 24 October 2013/ 15 September 2014

___ CNDD-FDD member, Montreal, 18 February 2016

___ KAMPAYANO, Pascaline, former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 23 October 2013

___ KARENGA, Ramadhan, CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 24 September 2013

___ KARERA, Denis, CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 3 October 2013

___ KOBAKO, Gaspard, former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 28 March 2015

___ MACUMI, Damien, CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 4 July 2015

___ MPAWENAYO, former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 1 April 2015

___ NDABIRABE, Gélase, CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 17 October 2013

___ NDAYICARIYE, Claver, CNDD-FDD member, 12 July 2013/ 10 October 2013

___ NDIHO, Jérôme, CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 15 July 2014/ 27 March 2015

___ NDUWIMANA, Onésime, former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 27 April 2015

___ NGENDAHAYO, Jean-Marie, former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 11 July 2013

___ NGOWENUBUSA, Prime, former FDD General, Bujumbura, 1 May 2015

___ NIMBESHA, Richard, former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 9 April 2015

___ NKURUNZIZA, Aimé, former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 10 July 2013

___ NTANYUNGU, Festus, former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 16 October 2013

___ NTAVYOHANYUMA, Pie, former CNDD-FDD member, Brussels, 18 October 2015

___ NTIBATINGESO, Sévérin, CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 10 April 2015

___ NYABENDA, Pascal, CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 9 April 2015

___ NYAMITWE, Willy, CNDD-FDD member, Quebec City, 30 July 2016

___ NYANDWI, Anselme, former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 20 March 2015

___ NYANGOMA, Léonard, former CNDD-FDD member, Lille, 25 October 2015

___ NZOMUKUNDA, Alice, former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 24 October 2013

___ RUGIRA, Jean-Marie, former CNDD-FDD senator, Montréal, 8 May 2015

___ SINDAYISAMA, Corneille, former CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 9 April 2015

___ WAGERA, Melchior, CNDD-FDD member, Bujumbura, 6 April 2015

2) Focus groups with former CNDD-FDD combatants

Focus group with former CNDD-FDD combatants, Bujumbura, 16 October 2013

___ former CNDD-FDD combatants (male), Bubanza, 18 June 2014

___ former CNDD-FDD combatants (female), Bubanza, 19 June 2014

___ former CNDD-FDD combatants (male), Bururi, 25 June 2014

___ former CNDD-FDD combatants (female), Bururi, 25 June 2014

3) Interview with current or former members of PALIPEHUTU-FNL or FNL

Interview with FNL member, Bujumbura, 19 June 2014

___ FNL member, Bujumbura, 17 July 2014

___ FNL member, Bujumbura, 2 April 2015

___ FNL member, Bujumbura, 22 June 2015

___ FNL member, Bujumbura, 1 May 2015

___ FNL member, Bujumbura, 28 October 2013

___ FNL member, Bujumbura, 31 October 2013

___ FNL member, Bubanza, 11 October 2013

___ FNL member, Bubanza, 18 June 2014

___ FNL member, Bujumbura Rural, 18 June 2014

___ former FNL member, Courtrai, 13 October 2015

___ former FNL member, Brussels, 16 October 2015

___ former FNL member, Montreal, 30 July 2015

___ former FNL member, Montreal, 10 November 2016

___ BAGAYA, Alfred, FNL member, Courtrai, 13 October 2015

___ BIGIRIMANA, Jacques, FNL member, Bujumbura, 9 October 2013

___ MAGERA, Aimé, FNL member, Brussels/Montreal, 16 October 2015/ 27 January 2015

___ MIBURO, Emmanuel, FNL member, Bujumbura, 17 July 2014

___ HASHAZINGANYE, Jean-Marie Vianney, FNL member, 29 October 2013

___ RWASA, Agathon, FNL member, Bujumbura, 11 October 2013/ 15 April 2015

4) Focus groups with former PALIPEHUTU-FNL combatants

Focus group with former FNL combatants, Bujumbura, 4 July 2014

___ former FNL combatants, Bujumbura, 17 October 2013

___ former FNL combatants (male), Bubanza, 20 June 2014

___ former FNL combatants (female), Bubanza, 22 June 2014

___ former FNL combatants, Makamba, 24 October 2013

5) Interviews with opposition party members

Interview with FRODEBU member, Bujumbura, 6 October 2013

___ FRODEBU-Nyakuri member, Bujumbura, 8 October 2013

___ MSD member, Bujumbura, 18 October 2013

___ UPRONA member, Bujumbura, 20 October 2013

___ UPRONA member, Bujumbura, 20 March 2015

___ NTIBANTUNGANYA, Sylvestre, FRODEBU member, Bujumbura, 1 July 2015

___ AHINGEJEJE, Alfred, Mutwa Member of Parliament, Bujumbura, 5 July 2013

___ KURIKIYE, Martin, UPRONA member, Brussels, 25 October 2015

___ NYAMOYA, François, MSD member, Bujumbura, 4 October 2013

___ SINDUJIYE, Alexis, MSD member, Bujumbura, 20 October 2013

6) Interviews with representatives of civil society and media

Interview with civil society member, Bujumbura, 6 July 2013

___ civil society member, Bujumbura, 10 April 2015

___ civil society member, Bujumbura, 15 April 2015

___ AHITUNGIYE, Floride, Search for Common Ground, Bujumbura, 30 September 2013

___ HAVYRIMANA, Jean-Pierre, civil society member, 20 March 2015

___ KAVUMBAGU, Jean-Claude, Netpress, Bujumbura, 1 October 2013

___ NDAYICARIYE, Pierre-Claver, CENI President, Bujumbura, 26 September 2013

___ NIAGARA, Eric, CEDAC, 3 October 2013

___ NININAHAZWE, Pacifique, civil society member, Bujumbura, 5 July 2013

___ NKENGURUTSE, Hugues, Télérenaissance, Bujumbura, 20 April 2015/ 20 June 2015

___ NSENGIMANA, Eric, civil society member, Bujumbura, 7 October 2013

___ NSENGIMANA, Fabien, former BLTP staff member, Bujumbura, 8 October 2013

___ NTAKARUTIMANA, Sylvère, COSOME, Bujumbura, 30 April 2015

___ RUGURIKA, Bob, RPA, Bujumbura, 09 July 2013/ 24 September 2013

___ SINANKWAKURE, Fabien, APRODH, Bujumbura, 3 July 2014

7) Interview with Burundian academics

Interview with MUNTUNUTWIWE, Jean Salathiel, University of Burundi, 9 July 2013

___ NIMUBONA, Julien, University of Burundi, Bujumbura, 9 July 2013

___ NINDORERA, Willy, independent analyst, Jinja/Bujumbura, 10 June 2013/4 July 2013

___ NIYONIZIGEYE, Pascal, University of Burundi, 10 October 2014

___ SENTAMBA, Elias, researcher, Bujumbura, 24 September 2013

8) Interview with representatives of international community

Interview with international diplomat, Bujumbura, 6 October 2013

___ BNUB staff member, Bujumbura, 04 June 2013/ 7 October 2013

___ BNUB staff member, Bujumbura, 14 June 2013

___ UNDP staff member, Bujumbura, 1 July 2015

___ MENUB staff member, Bujumbura, 10 July 2015

___ staff member of UN Peacebuilding Support Office, New York, 25 January 2014

___ World Bank staff member, Washington DC, 21 May 2014

___ BANAMUHERE, Salomon, Congolese Ambassador, Bujumbura, 05 July 2013

___ BOUTELLIS, Arthur, former BINUB staff member, by phone, 7 October 2014

___ BROMMER, Bruno, German Ambassador, Bujumbura, 4 July 2013/ 15 March 2015

___ CONDE, Cheick Lamine, former BNUB staff member, Bujumbura, 7 October 2013

___ MCDONALD, Steve, Wilson Center Fellow, Washington DC, 10 May 2016

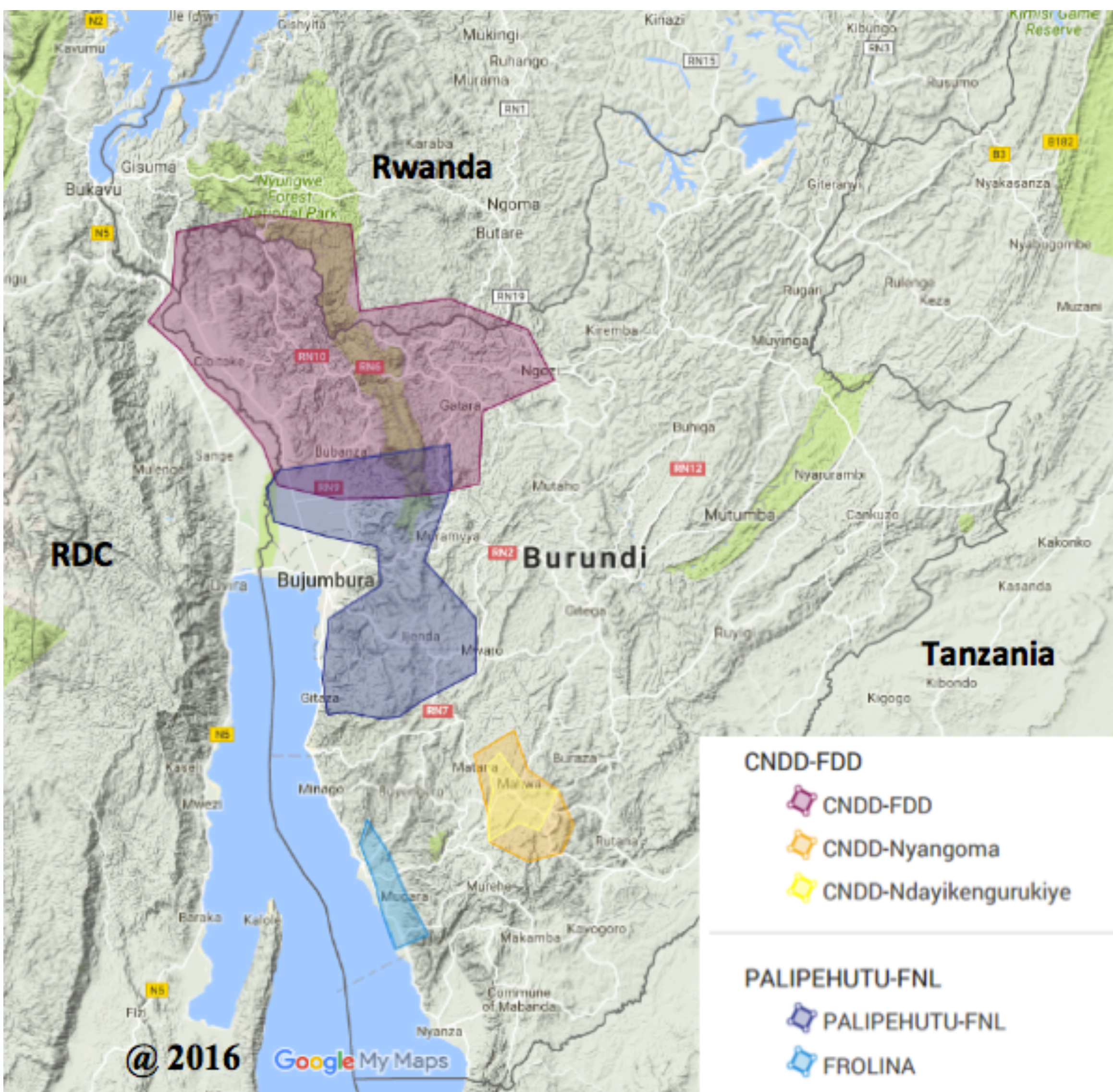
___ NANOUROU, Serge, IFES, 15 July 2014

___ NDAYENGENGE, Raphael, IFES, 10 July 2014

___ PFISTER, Patricia, Swiss Mission, Bujumbura, 18 July 2014

Appendix I: Map of Burundi

Appendix II: Map of Burundian rebel groups' fiefdoms[162]



[162] Please note that this map illustrates the most important zones of influence of the Burundian rebel groups and their respective splinter groups during the height of the civil war (around 1995-2000). Even though the CNDD-FDD and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL were also present in other areas of the country, the demarcated zones designate their most important fiefdoms. The rebel groups were never in full control of distinctive tracts of territory, but instead depended heavily on mobile guerrilla warfare. The graph was created by the author with the GoogleMyMaps tool.