

SUMMARY

Burundi became a German protectorate in August 1884. Prior to the establishment of a protectorate, the territory was ruled by Mwamis (kings) who exercised a kind of quasi-divine system of administration. Conflictual relations were quickly dealt with within this complex structure. During the German and later Belgian colonial administrations, these political structures were redefined and a social class structure based on wealth was created. Forced class division became entrenched in the social fabric of Burundian society and the hierarchical system became even more prominent at independence in July 1962. Successive post-colonial regimes have failed to bridge the social gap. The International Community, through initiatives by the United Nations, the Africa Union, Jimmy Carter, Julius Nyerere and Nelson Mandela have attempted to resolve the political impasse. The dissertation is an attempt to reconstruct the causes of the various crises since 1962 and to reassess whether the various facilitators has succeeded in their tasks.

KEY TERMS

Tutsi, Hutu, Twa, arms proliferation, ethnic superiority, genocide, ethnic cleansing, ethnicity, ethnocide, Burundi, Belgian Colonialism, German Colonialism