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The Limits of Resistance Ideologies? The CNDD-FDD and the Legacies of Governance in Burundi

Why is it that ruling parties with origins as rebel movements fighting against perceived injustices and exclusion often abandon the ideas and visions of state transformation that they had articulated when they were fighting? Using the case of the Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie–Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie (CNDD-FDD) in Burundi, this article shows that rather than experiencing an abrupt ideological change when the CNDD-FDD became a ruling party, there had always been ideological divergence within the movement. Over time, progressive ideas of inclusive state transformation were repeatedly sidelined in favour of a focus on resistance, and then state capture. Paradoxically, then, once it became a ruling party the CNDD-FDD reverted to governance practices that were akin to those that had led it to take up arms in the first place. This is not because of an absence of commitment to progressive ideas among some CNDD-FDD members, but because the internal dynamics of the CNDD-FDD meant that those factions relying on power politics eventually gained the upper hand over those that articulated a more progressive, inclusive vision, due in part to their ability to back their ideas with force.

WHY IS IT THAT SOME RULING PARTIES THAT WERE PREVIOUSLY REBEL movements deviate from the visions of state transformation that they had articulated when they were fighting? Were the groups never truly committed to the visions that they had used to mobilize recruits and

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sustain conflict? Do circumstances change after conflict, so that parties need to change their ideas in order to maintain widespread support from the population? Are there structural constraints that make state transformation impossible for these rebels-turned-ruling parties? This article examines these questions through the case of Burundi, where a former rebel movement, the Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie–Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie (CNDD-FDD – National Council for the Defence of Democracy–Forces for the Defence of Democracy), became a ruling party in 2005 after winning democratic elections following a lengthy civil war and peace process.

As a rebel movement, the CNDD-FDD had articulated a vision of the state based on particular notions of social justice, inclusion, democracy and reform. While there was ideological contestation within the movement and important internal divisions, the CNDD-FDD largely maintained this focus in its rhetoric during the 2005 electoral campaign. By 2015, however, the ruling CNDD-FDD faced protests, domestic – including intra-party – and international criticism, and a constitutional and governance crisis. The CNDD-FDD was widely criticized for widespread corruption, authoritarianism, inequality, intra-party purges and a reliance on violence. After 10 years of governance as a ruling party, the ideas that had animated the movement seemed to have disappeared. For instance, a 2018 CNDD-FDD communiqué did not explicitly reject previous ideas of inclusion, social justice and democracy but emphasized other aspects, such as personal loyalty to the president and unity. It said, 'The CNDD-FDD party is . . . built on an ideology that promotes righteousness and loyalty' (CNDD-FDD 2018: point 9, author's translation).

This article explains the ideological trajectory of the CNDD-FDD and the apparent shift, from a rebel movement focused on social justice and state transformation, to a ruling party where governance is based on coercion, authoritarianism, loyalty and personal opportunism rather than ideological commitment. In doing so, the article contributes to a growing debate about the interplay between ideas and institutions in rebel-to-party transitions. Given the number and diversity of ruling parties that have origins as rebel movements within the Great Lakes region, such as the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in Rwanda, the National Resistance Movement (NRM) in Uganda, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in South Sudan, and

also in other parts of the world, a better understanding of the factors that influence the evolution of resistance ideologies is important.

There are several different arguments about the CNDD-FDD's path to authoritarian governance, each with certain assumptions about the roles of ideas and ideology. Perhaps the most prevalent position is that the CNDD-FDD was a rebel movement without a clear ideology (Nindorera 2012: 20), and thus it is not surprising that as a ruling party the CNDD-FDD relies on coercive authoritarian power. Popular versions of this argument depict the armed movement as an 'uneducated gang of thugs'. More sophisticated versions of this argument emphasize the opportunism and brutal violence that characterized the CNDD-FDD as a rebel movement, which carried on once it became the ruling party (Hirschy and Lafont 2015: 175). The party is plagued by a '*réflexe du maquis*' (reflex of the bush) developed during the armed struggle, which has continued to structure its governance tactics in the post-2005 peacetime (Rufyikiri 2017: 224). This focus echoes the conceptual literature on African rebel groups that depicts such groups as non-ideological (Collier and Hoeffler 2004). While we do not deny the enormous psychological and structural effects of the armed struggle and their continued importance in understanding the inner workings of the CNDD-FDD, we believe that such an analysis is incomplete. As we will show, this reading of the CNDD-FDD underplays the role of ideology and discounts important ideas that animated the movement and mobilized support.

A second argument draws upon the literature of ethnic outbidding (Horowitz 1985; Chandra 2005) to explain why the CNDD-FDD increasingly turned to hardline coercive tactics and moved away from its earlier claims of social justice and democracy. In the Burundian context, several scholars have pointed to the fact that the CNDD-FDD never believed in the Arusha peace process that led to the 2005 elections (see Vandeginste 2017: 9). Even though the CNDD-FDD won those elections, the fact that it had been excluded from the earlier Arusha peace process meant that the party was not committed to the inclusive democratic institutions that had been established by Arusha, with its consociationalist power-sharing framework between the population's Hutu majority and Tutsi minority. Instead, the CNDD-FDD pursued total power by appealing to hardline positions in the party and society. While this analysis is helpful in that it identifies the ultimate dominance of hardline factions within the

party and their disregard for Arusha, it does not show how this dominance came about, nor does it accurately characterize the identity of the hardliners. Electoral victory for the CNDD-FDD did not require the outbidding of its rivals given its extensive popular support across the country. The move to hardline positions was not electorally necessary and there are no indications that it reflected popular sentiment. Furthermore, many of the hardliners within the CNDD-FDD were not (Hutu) ethnic extremists. In fact, their violent purges would primarily target other Hutu parties and individuals perceived as threats to the party's legitimacy as 'liberators', and with whom it was not willing to share the segment of power allocated to the Hutu political elites by Arusha's consociationalist power-sharing mechanisms.

A third argument focuses on the role of international and regional actors, and their failure to continue to shepherd the Arusha peace agreement with an appropriate mixture of carrots and sticks. International and regional actors played a critical facilitation role during the Arusha peace process, but relations between some donors, including the United Nations, and the CNDD-FDD once it became the ruling party were sometimes strained (Curtis 2015; Jackson 2006). Although internationals exerted some leverage over the Burundian government, they did not use this influence effectively at key junctures in the post-conflict period, allowing violence, coercion and militarism to remain central (Curtis 2013; ICG 2012; Leclercq 2018). Furthermore, key regional actors supported the regime at a crucial moment in 2015, contributing to the consolidation of electoral authoritarianism (Bouka 2017). These analyses are correct insofar as they highlight missed opportunities on the part of the donor community and identify the critical role of some regional actors in 2015, but they do not explain the apparent ideological shift within the CNDD-FDD, nor do they identify the multiple tendencies within the CNDD-FDD both as a rebellion and afterwards.

All three of these arguments help us understand some elements of the CNDD-FDD's governance strategies as a ruling party, yet they do not provide a convincing explanation of the CNDD-FDD's shift away from ideas of social justice and inclusion towards an emphasis on personal loyalty to the president and coercive authoritarian control. This article makes two interrelated points. First, we show that as a rebel movement, different visions were articulated by different factions in the CNDD-FDD, yet these different tendencies coalesced

around the idea of resistance against the regime in power. The expressed goal of the resistance struggle was the restoration of democracy in Burundi, but this masked important ideational differences. Most of the CNDD-FDD leaders who were best placed to help usher in new state-building and governance practices that might give meaning to a new democratic project had been sidelined during the rebellion by 'hardliners'. While the definition of 'hardliners' vs 'moderates' is contested (Brocker and Künkler 2013; Sindre 2018), in the Burundian context we take these to mean those with exclusive vs inclusive visions of the state. CNDD-FDD hardliners were mainly members of the armed wing or those with strong ties to the armed wing. Over time their ability to control the use of force succeeded in supplanting leaders with more inclusive state visions.

Second, a progressive vision of the state and a reliance on institutions is more complicated to implement, and more uncertain for key elements of the CNDD-FDD leadership. In the absence of a coherent unified alternative state-building vision and with the marginalization of the more progressive visionaries, the CNDD-FDD fell back on governance practices similar to those of its Burundian predecessors, which served the interests of key CNDD-FDD leaders.

Therefore, it is not the case that there was an abrupt ideological change once the CNDD-FDD became the ruling party in 2005. Rather, there were always different tendencies within the CNDD-FDD which were obscured to some extent through a common focus on resistance. Eventually, hardline factions dominated through their ability to control the use of force, and it was useful for them to mirror some elements of the former regime's pre-war governance tactics.

This article begins by discussing the literature that addresses why some former rebel movements-turned-ruling parties govern in an authoritarian manner and the place of ideology within those accounts. Next, we highlight key features of pre-conflict governance in Burundi both to explain what the CNDD-FDD was resisting in its armed struggle and also to show how these features proved difficult to change, despite the Arusha peace process and the new institutions it engendered. The next three sections focus on the ideas and ideologies articulated by the CNDD-FDD. Relying on the interviews one of the authors held with key CNDD-FDD officials, conducted as part of his PhD research from 2012 to 2016, as well as movement and party manifestos and communiqués and secondary literature on CNDD-FDD ideas and practice, we show that the CNDD-FDD did

have important ideological commitments. The article traces how these ideas were reinterpreted, undermined or ignored by different factions within the CNDD-FDD. We show how ultimately the more transformative CNDD-FDD visions, constrained by their wartime genesis, were sidelined in favour of governance practices that were similar to those of former regimes, with significant implications for earlier ideas of social justice, inclusion and democracy.

AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNANCE, RESISTANCE IDEOLOGIES AND THE POWER OF THE PAST

A number of authors have sought to explain why some former rebel parties rule in an authoritarian manner. Some authors emphasize aspects of rebel governance to help explain post-war outcomes (Ajak 2017; de Zeeuw 2008; Lyons 2016a, 2016b; Mampilly 2011: 240–1; Muriaas et al. 2016). For instance, Ryeko Huang (2016) shows how authoritarianism prevailed in states such as Tajikistan and Chad after their civil wars but not in others such as Nepal and Guatemala, where rebel movements took steps towards democratization after war. She attributes this variation to the extent to which ordinary people become mobilized during war. Thus, for Huang, rebel governance during wartime, in particular the mobilization of ordinary people, explains the persistence or change in structures of state power later. Elisabeth Wood (2008) focuses on variation in the social processes of civil war, which leads to different enduring legacies through the reconfiguration of social networks. For Nic Cheeseman, Michaela Collord and Filip Reyntjens (2018), the experience of civil conflict itself negatively affects the possibility of democracy, since violence weakens political institutions, leads to less cohesive inter-elite relations, and increases the militarization of the political sphere.

Other authors focus on the power of the pre-conflict past and the ways in which former rebels, after conflict, tend to reproduce previous forms of state power that the former rebels had contested in the struggle. Christopher Clapham (1988), for instance, traces lines of continuity between the imperial regime in Ethiopia and the Derg that replaced it. The Derg's Marxist-Leninist ideology, in Clapham's account, was an organizational tool that aimed to forge a powerful, highly centralized state, but this aim was not very different from the

aims of the previous imperial regime. Across a diverse set of cases and historical periods, several authors have shown how political behaviours in pre-conflict periods persist in wartime and afterwards (Guha 1997; Wittig 2016). For instance, Andrea Purdeková, Filip Reyntjens and Nina Wilén (2018) argue that the militarization seen in Rwanda today cannot be reduced to the ruling party's rebel past but must be understood through a longer history of social reconstruction.

William Reno (2011) argues that rebels are produced by their political context, and he says that different types of rebels reflect different state contexts. He links the behaviour and aims of rebels to their particular political context, including the nature of the state that they are resisting. He shows that fragmented states are likely to produce fragmented rebels, while more centralized states such as Uganda and Rwanda produce 'reform rebels', with coherent ideas of state reform. While Reno does not discuss post-conflict governance by former rebels, his work is relevant in that it shows how previous patterns of state authority are important in the production of organizational structures, aims and ideologies of rebels.

The above literature therefore shows how rebel governance, institutions and the experience of conflict may influence post-war governance strategies. It also shows how the pre-conflict political and institutional context is important, in terms of both producing certain types of rebels, as well as shaping the constraints and opportunities faced by rebels during wartime and peacetime.

The role of ideology in these processes of change and continuity is not well understood. Sometimes, rebels articulated a vision of the state during the struggle that is at odds with their later governance practices. Sometimes, former rebel parties adapt their ideological profiles after conflict (Sindre 2019, this issue), and sometimes former rebel parties display ideological continuity that influences governance strategies (Sprenkels 2019, this issue; Wilson 2019). Regarding Burundi, it could be easy to conclude that ideology was never very meaningful for the CNDD-FDD. Many rebel movements, particularly in Africa, are depicted as being devoid of ideology, and instead motivated by economic factors and opportunism (Collier and Hoeffler 2004). If ideology played any kind of role during the struggle, this was a strategic resource, to gain recruits and discourage defectors, rather than an expression of deeply held normative commitments. However, more recent literature contains a useful corrective, showing the multiple ways that ideology and ideas interact

with, and inform, other features of armed groups such as organizational dynamics and behaviour (Sanín and Wood 2014; Staniland 2015; Straus 2015).

In this article, we take the ideas articulated by CNDD-FDD leaders seriously. We show how the rebel movement brought together members with different ideational commitments, united through the idea of resisting an unjust regime. Ideas motivating resistance for political change are often assumed to be progressive – for instance, the oppressed resisting domination (Hollander and Einwohner 2004: 536) – but others have shown that the ideas underlying resistance can come from the right or from the left. And while some authors emphasize a global consciousness underlying resistance, others argue that resistance is more often rooted in everyday material goals (Scott 1985). We show that there were progressive elements within the CNDD-FDD, but that these factions were marginalized at key moments in the movement's history. The hardliners who were less concerned with progressive ideas dominated, due to their ability to control force. This meant that, ultimately, the CNDD-FDD maintained a focus on resistance, rather than putting forward a coherent alternative ideology for state governance. Once it became the ruling party, the CNDD-FDD fell back onto the reproduction and extension of many pre-conflict governance practices, since this was a more secure way to ensure the interests of hardline factions.

POST-COLONIAL GOVERNANCE IN BURUNDI

It is important to explain briefly certain features of pre-conflict governance in Burundi, in order to understand not only the structures that the CNDD-FDD as a rebel movement claimed to be resisting, but also the legacies that have helped shape its behaviour once in office. The patterns of governance of the CNDD-FDD are not perfect reflections of pre-conflict governance in Burundi; there are several important differences. Nonetheless, they have influenced the way in which key CNDD-FDD leaders interpret and justify governance practices.

Since independence in 1962, Burundi experienced waves of political violence, often expressed ethnically, including political assassinations, civil war and genocide (Lemarchand 1996; Nsanze 2003; Reyntjens 1989). The political party Union pour le Progrès National (UPRONA – Union for National Progress) dominated the political

landscape, and eventually Burundi became a one-party state under UPRONA, which lasted until a first opening of political space in the early 1990s.

Several governance features from the period of UPRONA dominance are worth emphasizing. First, governance was exclusionary and authoritarian. Political, economic and military structures were dominated by the minority Tutsi. There were localized Hutu uprisings, most notably in 1965, 1969, 1972 and 1988. The Tutsi-dominated army retaliated with heavy force, reaching a genocidal scale in 1972, which left up to 300,000 dead. Exclusion grew increasingly severe until the late 1980s. While ethnicity was the main axis of exclusion, there were also regional and clan divisions that became politicized. Political space was tightly controlled, including the media.

Second, there were strong ties between the UPRONA party and the military – the Forces Armées Burundaises (FAB – Burundian Armed Forces). From 1966 until 1993, Burundi was de facto ruled through military dictatorship. Changes in power in 1966, 1976 and 1987 were all through military coups d'état, and the three presidents in that period, Michel Micombero (1966–76), Jean-Baptiste Bagaza (1976–87) and Pierre Buyoya (1987–93), were all Tutsi military men from the same Bururi province. Tutsi from Bururi also dominated the military. Thus, the militarization of politics was a key feature of the regime and political violence was a way to secure the interests of the elite (Wilén et al. 2017).

Third, UPRONA ruled through both formal and informal means to ensure social control. For instance, the Jeunesse Nationaliste Rwagasore (JNR – Nationalist Youth Rwagasore), later renamed Jeunesse Révolutionnaire Rwagasore (JRR – Revolutionary Youth Rwagasore) was the youth wing of UPRONA. By 1972 it had become a paramilitary group, claiming to embody the spirit of Burundian nationalism, and involved in the mass killings of Hutu civilians (Batungwanayo 2017: 37; Lemarchand 1996: 28, 62).

Lastly, political and military dominance was reinforced through the economic system. Markets were manipulated to bolster the dominance of a small circle of beneficiaries (Ngaruko and Nkurunziza 2000). Post-colonial governance was marked by widespread corruption and the extraction of rents.

These patterns of governance led to criticism both within and outside the country, but the coercive apparatus of the state was able

to silence much of the opposition until the late 1980s. At that time, faced with internal and external pressures, President Buyoya opened political space in Burundi and held democratic elections in 1993, which were won by the predominantly Hutu party, Front pour la Démocratie au Burundi (FRODEBU – Front for Democracy in Burundi). However, the newly elected President Ndadaye (a Hutu) was assassinated only three months after taking office, which eventually led to the founding of the CNDD-FDD and civil war. Burundi's experience with democracy was thus exceedingly short-lived.

THE IDEOLOGICAL ORIGINS OF THE CNDD-FDD

Although the founding of the CNDD-FDD took place in 1994 after the assassination of President Ndadaye, its intellectual origins can be traced to previous political efforts to contest Tutsi dominance in post-independence Burundi. From the outset, however, the political movements inside the Hutu community were characterized by internal tensions and fragmentation.

The intellectual basis for resistance to Tutsi dominance can be traced to a student movement, Mouvement des Etudiants Progressistes Barundi (MEPROBA – Burundian Progressive Students' Movement), which had been established in the 1960s by Hutu students in Belgium, who had mostly come through academic scholarship programmes. After the 1972 genocide in Burundi, they sought asylum in Belgium. They were influenced by the European leftist academic environment of the 1960s and they adopted Marxist-Leninist ideas. MEPROBA expressed a commitment to scientific socialism and tried to integrate its analysis of the need for Burundian resistance into the broader international 'fight against imperialism', both through its propaganda and through its activities (Chrétien and Dupaquier 2007: 324).

The objectives articulated in the MEPROBA statutes were: (1) to develop a sense of responsibility and cohesion within its members; (2) to defend the rights of its members and the 'people'; (3) to bring the 'people' to understand the realities of Burundi's situation; (4) to inform the national, African and international community on these realities; (5) to denounce and fight the exploitation of one by the other; (6) to call for the rights of all oppressed people; (7) to support all movements which aim to re-establish the rights of a people; and

(8) to cooperate with all movements in their fight against imperialism and neo-colonialism (MEPROBA 1971).

MEPROBA also believed that a military confrontation with the regime in Bujumbura would be inevitable at a certain stage of their political struggle and hence started discussing the creation of an armed movement. Nevertheless, one of its main strategies was to confront the regime directly as an open political opposition movement. In order to spread its message, MEPROBA started publishing a regular bulletin named *La voie du progrès* (*The Path of Progress*). This publication adopted a Marxist lens in its analysis of Burundian and international developments (Ntibazonkiza 1996: 67). MEPROBA would later also publish a bulletin in Kirundi entitled *Kanura* (*Wake Up*) in order to reach the rural population.

By the end of the 1980s, two main ideological approaches to resistance against the regime had emerged out of MEPROBA. A first ideological tradition evolved out of the need to help Hutu refugees from different violent events, most notably the 1972 genocide when thousands fled to neighbouring countries. Resistance to the Burundian regime focused on helping these refugees, and an explicit ethnic interpretation of the situation in Burundi guided their activities. Two movements were created: the Parti pour la Libération du Peuple Hutu (PALIPEHUTU – Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People), created in Mishamo refugee camp in Tanzania by Rémy Gahutu in 1980, and the Front pour la Libération Nationale (FROLINA – National Liberation Front), which was established under the leadership of Joseph Karumba in 1987. Both movements eventually became committed to armed resistance against the power-holders in Bujumbura. The PALIPEHUTU's armed wing, Forces Nationales pour la Libération (FNL – National Liberation Forces), was created in 1983 and FROLINA's Forces Armées Populaires (FAP – People's Armed Forces) was established in 1987. Armed resistance activities by these movements would continue even as the shift towards democratization gained traction in Burundi in the early 1990s (Burihabwa 2017: 96).

The PALIPEHUTU used infiltration tactics to spread its ideology to the rural population inside Burundi. Five main principles formed the basis of the movement's ideology, which was defined as *inkingi zitanu za PALIPEHUTU* (the five pillars of PALIPEHUTU). The first principle, *kwiyemera* ('to be self-conscious'), aimed to have the militants of the new movement assert that they belonged to the Hutu

ethnic group which had sometimes been considered shameful. Proudly adhering to one's origin as a Hutu was seen as essential. Secondly, *kurondera ubumwe* ('to seek unity') was aimed at bringing an end to divisions based on ethnicity or regionalism and at forging a new national identity of unity inside Burundi. Thirdly, *kurondera umuhuza* ('to seek a unifier') referred to seeing the PALIPEHUTU as the entity in which this unity could be realized. The fourth principle, *kurondera indongozi nyakuri* ('to seek a leader'), was based on the assessment that the objectives of the party could only be achieved with the right charismatic leader. The fifth principle, *kurondera umuheto* ('to seek the bow'), referred to the conviction that violent armed struggle was necessary to pressure the government to engage in negotiations. Inside Burundi, the PALIPEHUTU would use an 'each one – teach one' strategy which saw peasants sharing with their fellow peasants the party's ideology that they had learned from the ideologists abroad. They used propaganda brochures – which were often secretly brought into the country by women, as they were less suspected of political activities by the security forces.[1] However, the PALIPEHUTU initially remained marginalized among Hutu and Tutsi intellectuals, due to the explicit reference to ethnicity in its ideology (Burihabwa 2017: 81).

A second ideological approach evolving out of MEPROBA was adopted by a younger generation of Hutu students. Influenced by the same Marxist-Leninist ideas that had motivated MEPROBA, they were initially also based abroad, mainly in Butare, Rwanda. Their claims were made through appeals to justice and equality, without emphasizing ethnicity. By the mid-1980s, these students were returning to Burundi, with new ways of articulating their ideas. Drawing upon an international discourse of democratization that was intensifying as the Cold War was waning, these students repackaged their claims for justice and equality using the language of democracy (Burihabwa 2017: 91). At the same time, Burundian President Pierre Buyoya was coming under pressure from international donors and partners to democratize. President Buyoya eventually opened political space and enabled the political participation of Hutu. This resulted in the official recognition of the political party Sahwanya-FRODEBU in August 1992, led by Melchior Ndadaye, which had been created clandestinely in 1986. One of the individuals that would emerge as one of FRODEBU's most important figures in this phase was the

future founder and first leader of the CNDD and FDD, Léonard Nyangoma.

From July to August 1989, FRODEBU had started publishing two periodicals: *L'Aube de la Démocratie* (*Dawn of Democracy*) in French and *Kanura Burakeye* (*Wake Up, It is Dawn*) in Kirundi. FRODEBU also published two fundamental documents: 'Le Manifeste du FRODEBU' and 'Note de présentation du Parti FRODEBU' in May 1990. This manifesto and note reaffirmed a vision of Burundi shaped by democracy, justice and social and economic prosperity. The party expressed its ideals as 'Democracy, Work, Equality' (Ntibantunganya 1999: 133). It aimed to integrate all Burundians regardless of ethnic background. In September 1991, FRODEBU published the 'Memorandum du FRODEBU sur le Processus et les Procédures de Démocratisation du Burundi' reflecting its views and propositions for Burundi's democratization process. This programme was further elaborated in the '46 propositions pour construire un Burundi nouveau' during the 1993 electoral campaign. By early 1993, FRODEBU had established countrywide sophisticated political structures and had gone from clandestine political movement to main opposition party. Given its liberal social democratic outlook and its rural perspective, the party was quickly able to secure large support (Burihabwa 2017: 96; Reyntjens 1994: 139). Therefore, this second ideological approach maintained a focus on social justice, equality and inclusion, but shifted from a language of socialism to one of democratization.

By the time of the 1993 elections, there were therefore two main ideological positions. The first, expressed through PALIPEHUTU and FROLINA, rested upon a Hutu-centred ethnic interpretation of the conflict and on the importance of armed struggle. The second, expressed by FRODEBU with its social-democratic stance, packaged its claims in a liberal language of democracy and rights. The shift away from an explicitly Marxist-Leninist language reflects the international environment of the late 1980s and early 1990s and shows the adaptability of ideological positions. Nevertheless, leftist claims of economic and social justice were not entirely abandoned and reappeared in later phases of the struggle. Ideology – and ideological contestation – are therefore centrally important in understanding the context in which the CNDD-FDD emerged.

THE CNDD-FDD'S IDEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND ARMED RESISTANCE

The origins of the CNDD-FDD rebellion in Burundi are to be found in the flawed democratic transition of 1993. The election of FRODEBU leader Melchior Ndadaye as president in June 1993 was rapidly derailed by an attempted military coup and the assassination of Ndadaye as well as other important FRODEBU leaders on 21 October 1993. Although the coup ultimately failed, elites within the former ruling party UPRONA and the army continually undermined the new FRODEBU government, leading to what Reyntjens (1995: 15) has called a 'creeping coup'. In response, there was uncoordinated and violent popular resistance from Hutu. This was eventually compounded with armed efforts launched by leaders of the PALIPEHUTU and FROLINA on the one hand, and on the other hand a faction of Ndadaye's FRODEBU party, led by his interior minister Léonard Nyangoma. These efforts resulted in the creation of the Forces pour la Défence de la Démocratie (FDD) as a loose coalition of fighters in March 1994. Several months later, in September 1994, the Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie (CNDD) was officially created. The FDD was integrated as its armed wing (Burihabwa 2017: 133). The fact that the military wing materialized before the political movement foreshadowed some of the later problems faced by the movement.

The CNDD initially aimed to merge the two different ideological traditions that had evolved out of MEPROBA, by bringing together members of Nyangoma's ex-FRODEBU faction and elements of PALIPEHUTU as well as FROLINA. Activists and members of the two resistance traditions agreed on what they were resisting, but they did not agree on other administrative, military or ideological matters. For instance, some PALIPEHUTU and FROLINA elements were not comfortable with the high number of senior Tutsi figures among the ex-FRODEBU CNDD-FDD leaders.[2] The inability to find common ground beyond the decision to take up arms was one of the key reasons the coalition turned out to be short-lived, collapsing as early as November 1994 with the breakaway of PALIPEHUTU. This was soon followed by FROLINA's exit from the coalition (Burihabwa 2017: 147–50).

The official ideology of the CNDD movement initially reflected some of the ideas of FRODEBU, in which many of its leaders had

originated. An early document explaining the aims of the movement emphasized the restoration of a democratic constitutional order and stated that the CNDD was a multi-ethnic movement (CNDD 1995: 9). The goals were pluralist democracy with universal suffrage (CNDD 1995: 5) and the reform of the Burundian military (CNDD 1995: 7–9). A progressive, inclusive vision is articulated in that document, which describes two sociopolitical realities: on one side, a Tutsi minority that monopolizes power using military force, and cycles of conflict that have created a 'psychosis of revenge'; and on the other side, Hutu and Tutsi victims of regionalism and nepotism that suffer from frustrations, injustices and army massacres (CNDD 1995: 5). The CNDD also recognized legitimate interests related to life, employment, wealth and health of all Burundians (Ndarubagiye 1996: 81).

Nevertheless, grassroots discourse was shaped by the political diversity of the movement's mid-ranking militants. Many had been members of the PALIPEHUTU but decided to stay in the CNDD-FDD even after the PALIPEHUTU leadership left the original coalition. As a result, in the early stages of the rebellion the communication strategy of political commissioners within Burundi led by former PALIPEHUTU militant Hussein Radjabu resembled the ideological positions expressed by PALIPEHUTU in the late 1980s, albeit with less emphasis on ethnicity.[3]

Over time, the CNDD placed more of an emphasis on armed resistance and key demands such as military reform, rather than the further articulation of its progressive leftist ideas. This may have been because of the need to distance itself from the FRODEBU party (Burihabwa 2017: 139; Nindorera 2012: 15). Nevertheless, progressive ideas were still expressed. For instance, a January 1998 CNDD document starts by saying that the Burundi problem is a problem of justice, and goes on to make comparisons with apartheid South Africa and Nazism (CNDD 1998: 15, 18), before outlining the CNDD's 10 principles. These principles included democracy and human rights, but also education and literacy, and the suppression of social and institutional 'parasitism' in favour of the working masses and small operators (CNDD 1998: 20–1).

The focus on resistance and the sidelining of more progressive views became more pronounced through different leadership changes during the rebellion. A first leadership change saw Nyangoma and the ex-FRODEBU leaders within the CNDD political wing

removed in May 1998 by the military FDD staff led by chief of staff Jean-Bosco Ndayikengurukiye, who became the movement's new leader. This meant that the CNDD-FDD was taken over by a younger generation of leaders with military backgrounds, as they had been Hutu deserters of the Institut Supérieur des Cadres Militaires (ISCAM), the Burundian staff college. While implementing reforms that would fully integrate the military and political wings of the movement to make it more efficient (FDD 1998), these new leaders downplayed the ideological dimensions of the struggle although they did not explicitly disagree with previous ideological positions. They did not have the political experience of their predecessors, and instead focused on the shorter-term goal of military victory (Burihabwa 2017: 201, 205–6).

A second leadership change occurred in October 2001, when the ex-ISCAM leadership, including Ndayikengurukiye, was deposed by a new generation of CNDD-FDD leaders, led by Hussein Radjabu and the president, Pierre Nkurunziza. Virtually all members of this new politico-military leadership which also included Adolphe Nshimirimana, Alain Guillaume Bunyoni, Evariste Ndayishimiye and Silas Ntigurirwa, had evolved ideologically within PALIPEHUTU. They had not been part of Ndadaye's FRODEBU during Burundi's democratic interlude in the early 1990s. These were the leaders who would later guide the CNDD-FDD into peace negotiations beginning in 2002 before steering the movement's transformation into a political party in 2004. Thus, the CNDD-FDD entered peace negotiations under a leadership with the least commitment to previous liberal-leftist democratic ideas, and that had evolved in a more exclusivist ideological context.

THE CNDD-FDD IN GOVERNMENT

The new CNDD-FDD party statutes and party manifesto called the '39 Resolutions' were agreed upon during the Congress of Gitega in August 2004 (CNDD-FDD 2004). This marked the birth of the political party CNDD-FDD. The party manifesto emphasized socioeconomic development, which was partly reminiscent of FRODEBU's programme in 1993. However, due to the changes in the movement's leadership during the rebellion, the initial CNDD-FDD ideological commitment to re-establish democracy had faded (Rufyikiri 2016b:

12). The main pillars of the CNDD-FDD's electoral campaign rhetoric in 2005 emphasized the fact that it had successfully fulfilled the objectives of its 'resistance ideology' as liberator of the oppressed people. It also articulated ideas focusing on the poor and maintained generally positive relations with the rural population (Alfieri 2016: 248; Burihabwa 2017: 328).

Following the CNDD-FDD's electoral victory in 2005, it became obvious that the reliance on an ideology of resistance was not sufficient. The CNDD-FDD was, and continues to be, very popular, especially in most parts of the countryside, but the country faced immense challenges in 2005. After 10 years of civil war, preceded by almost three decades of military dictatorship, oppression and exclusion, the country was in a disastrous socioeconomic state. The education and health sectors as well as local infrastructure were in desperate need of improvement. The conflict-prone question of land ownership was unresolved and compounded by the resettlement of large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons (Reyntjens 2006: 133). Moreover, the CNDD-FDD had inherited a state that had no deeply internalized traditions of transparency, accountability or bureaucratic autonomy and lacked security since the other main rebel movement, the PALIPEHUTU-FNL, officially remained at war (Uvin and Bayer 2013: 275). In such a context, the fact that those CNDD-FDD leaders with a strong ideological vision for the country had been removed or sidelined was particularly problematic.

The lack of intra-party democratization of decision-making and the continuation of violent practices developed during the rebellion were sources of renewed conflict within the CNDD-FDD party (Nindorera 2008: 122). First, there were increased tensions between the 'insiders' who had stayed in Burundi during the rebellion and the 'outsiders' who had been in exile. This was especially due to the fact that some highly skilled returnees such as Gervais Rufyikiri and Pie Ntavyohanyuma had been immediately catapulted into important state positions while other 'insiders', who felt they had sacrificed their academic and professional development for the rebellion, did not receive the state positions they wanted (Burihabwa 2017: 403). Second, conflict emerged between 'old' members who had been militants in the rebel movement and 'new' members who joined the CNDD-FDD after the war (Nindorera 2012: 26). These two sources of tension often overlapped.

Ideologically, the 'outsiders/newcomers' were more open to developing and implementing a comprehensive and development-oriented state-building vision for Burundi and tried to initiate internal discussions on this within the party, without success.[4] In contrast, the 'insiders/old guard' primarily emphasized their entitlement to power as liberators and focused on pragmatic approaches to consolidating this power (Van Acker et al. 2018). The latter group would increasingly come to dominate the CNDD-FDD, after its Secretary-General Hussein Radjabu lost a power struggle with President Nkurunziza before being deposed and jailed in 2007. Radjabu's exit resulted in a vacuum within the CNDD-FDD, which was filled by ex-FDD generals close to Nkurunziza. Spearheaded by generals Adolphe Nshimirimana as intelligence chief and Alain-Guillaume Bunyoni as Minister of Public Security and thus at the helm of the national police, this group of hardliners intimidated remaining progressive forces in the CNDD-FDD and closed off avenues for ideological development within the party. Informal intra-party parlance soon made a distinction between the *Abanyamugambwe* ('the party members'), as civilian political cadres were described, and the *Bene umugambwe* ('the party owners') comprising the ex-FDD wartime military commanders-turned-senior national security actors (Burihabwa 2017: 404).

Under the strong influence of the *Bene umugambwe* hardliners, alternative ideological commitments within the CNDD-FDD struggled to find expression. The focus of the CNDD-FDD was the consolidation of control, through coercive means. Grave human rights violations by the security institutions went hand in hand with political violence vis-à-vis critics of the regime. CNDD-FDD rule would come to be associated with: (1) the issuing of exclusive clauses in tender documents; (2) overbilling; (3) under-invoicing; (4) the purchase of goods which were not provided; and (5) free shareholding in companies, sometimes involving foreign investors (Rufyikiri 2016a: 8ff). There were signs of growing authoritarianism as the CNDD-FDD tightened its control of state institutions. The ruling party placed CNDD-FDD officials in local administrations and also in the court system, undermining the independence of the judiciary. Several influential members who had no international experience were placed in the diplomatic corps (Rufyikiri 2016a: 15).

Paradoxically, the subsequent criticism by civil society and the media, which were still dominated by former elites, as well as the

rhetoric of opposition parties, further stimulated the very *réflexe du maquis* it aimed to criticize and strengthened the CNDD-FDD's authoritarian control. In part, this was because regime opponents sometimes incorrectly depicted Burundi's pre-war governance system as free of corruption, impunity and clientism (Lemarchand 2009: 186). Yet many of the features of CNDD-FDD rule were reminiscent of political behaviour under pre-war UPRONA, where corruption and patronage were deeply entrenched in Burundi's political economy. Likewise, the influence of ex-FDD fighters within the CNDD-FDD resembled the close relationship between the former ruling party UPRONA and the military. Furthermore, the CNDD-FDD's Imbonerakure youth wing has parallels with UPRONA's experience with the JRR (Wittig 2016: 152). While the governance strategies of UPRONA and the CNDD-FDD were not identical, the echoes of the past in the present are undeniable.

Despite these developments, it was business as usual in terms of ideological rhetoric when the CNDD-FDD launched its 2010 electoral campaign with a political programme for the edification of Burundi. This was structured in three sections: (1) justice and security for all; (2) good governance based on democracy; and (3) integral and sustainable development (CNDD-FDD 2010). However, the increased isolation of the CNDD-FDD and the criticism by international donors and partners following the 2010 elections reinforced hardliners' emphasis on political survival and power in a hostile environment – their 'comfort zone'. This left moderate forces within the party with little space to re-articulate and repackage their ideological commitments. These dynamics within the governing CNDD-FDD had devastating implications for Burundi which became clearly evident in the 2015 electoral crisis and its aftermath.

The outcome of the political crisis that was triggered in 2015 when President Nkurunziza declared that he would stand for a third term in office was the final sign that alternative progressive ideological conceptions within the CNDD-FDD had been subjugated. The 2015 crisis was driven by an internal CNDD-FDD crisis. Moderate progressives and intellectuals that opposed the third term (the *frondeurs*), including several senior state officials such as Second Vice-President Gervais Rufyikiri, the president of the National Assembly Pie Ntavyohanyuma, and even certain ex-FDD generals led by Godefroid Niyombare were on one side. On the other side, there were hardliners loyal to President Nkurunziza, both in the political party and

among ex-FDD members in the security sector. These hardliners used legitimation techniques that emphasized their role in dismantling Tutsi domination through armed struggle (Van Acker et al. 2018). Ultimately, the hardliners won, and the political space for the articulation of transformative ideologies dissipated, alongside many of the ideals that the CNDD-FDD had initially claimed it was fighting for.

CONCLUSIONS

When former rebel ruling parties govern in such a way that appears to contradict their earlier ideational commitments, it is tempting to conclude that these ideas were never very important, and thus easily discarded. Rebel movements, particularly in Africa, are often described as lacking in ideology and driven by opportunism. The trajectory of the CNDD-FDD suggests that this reading masks a much more complex dynamic. Many CNDD-FDD leaders showed deep and sustained commitment to progressive ideas and put forward an inclusive vision of the state. It is therefore overly simplistic to say that African rebels and former rebel parties lack ideology.

In relatively factionalized rebel movements, progressive ideas may not be shared by all elements. Ultimately in the CNDD-FDD, hardline factions dominated and thus shaped post-war governance in Burundi. This was not due to ethnic-outbidding and not for any electoral advantage, since there is no indication that exclusivist views were any more popular than inclusive and progressive views in Burundian society. Instead, the displacement of progressive ideas reflected internal power dynamics within the CNDD-FDD. Hardliners ultimately dominated due to their ability to control force. Indeed, it is notable that the most serious challenge to CNDD-FDD hardliners came from progressive elements within the military in 2015. This challenge failed, but it underlines the continued importance of control over the use of force.

The experience of the CNDD-FDD therefore offers important insights beyond Burundi, at a time when other former rebel parties, such as in South Sudan, are also experiencing serious internal divisions and an apparent abandonment of some of the ideals that had animated their armed struggles. The Burundi case highlights the stickiness of pre-conflict practices and strategies despite radical

leadership change in the country, since these practices proved to be effective for hardline leaders to consolidate their power. Yet although structural constraints posed by the past are formidable, they are not immutable, and the Burundi case offers at least two avenues for further comparative investigation. First, there is the question of the relationship between force, institutions and ideology. In Burundi, hardliners dominated since they largely controlled the use of force, but it is not always the case that security forces hold less progressive views. A comparative understanding of when and why members of armed wings hold progressive views would be helpful. Second, there is the question of outside support. A range of outside actors can influence the ideas and ideologies espoused by rebel movements and former rebel parties, and if they have a good understanding of internal divisions within the movement/party, outside support could help bolster some factions and their ideas over others. Post-war governance in Burundi underscores some of the difficulties in enacting transformative and inclusive political change, but to declare ideological bankruptcy in the country does a great disservice to those leaders and citizens who are committed to progressive alternatives.

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NOTES

[1] Anonymous interview with author, 18 June 2012.
[2] Anonymous interview with author, 14 August 2014.
[3] Anonymous interview with author, 7 August 2014.
[4] Anonymous interview with author and two former CNDD-FDD politicians, June 2012 and January 2013.

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