

Undoing Traceable Beginnings

Citizenship and Belonging among Former Burundian Refugees in Tanzania

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■ **ABSTRACT:** This article examines the sense of insecurity experienced by former Burundian refugees following their acquisition of legal citizenship in Tanzania. Using the concept of ontological security, it explores the strategies devised by the new citizens and their former refugee selves to negotiate a normative and stable identity in Tanzania, a country with a postcolonial history of contested citizenship and depoliticized ethnicity. Our argument is that the fluidity of identity, when associated with mobility, is vilified by policy-makers and given insufficient attention in the literatures on ethnicity and refugees in Africa, yet is important for generating a sense of belonging and a meaningful life away from a troubled and violent past. This fluidity of identity offers a significant mechanism for belonging even after the acquisition of formal citizenship.

■ **KEYWORDS:** belonging, citizenship, ethnicity, identity, refugees

“I went to Home Affairs to ask if I could change my tribe,” stated Zacharia, a young man of 27 years and a former Burundian refugee, who, on obtaining Tanzanian citizenship (*uraia*), went to the ministry responsible for immigration and refugee matters to request a change of his ethnic identity from Muhutu. He was adamant that having shed his refugee identity he needed to rid himself of his ethnic identity. Achieving the legal right to belong in Tanzania through gaining citizenship was insufficient for the positive self-identity that he craved—what the sociologist Anthony Giddens (1991) terms “ontological security.” For that, Zacharia needed to erase the affliction of his ethnic past. For over 40 years, refugees who fled Burundi in 1972 have lived as outsiders in Tanzania, working the land and transforming previously remote areas of the country into centers of agricultural surplus. In 2007, the government offered citizenship to those who wished to remain in Tanzania; just over 162,000 accepted, among them the Tanzanian-born Zacharia. Many second- and third-generation refugees have not visited Burundi and see themselves, socially and politically, as Tanzanians. Regularizing their stay in the way Tanzania has done is both progressive and pragmatic. Zacharia was not the only former Burundian who expressed such sentiments, albeit to varying degrees, and his action and the action of others begs further interrogation.

Host country citizenship offers access to civil and economic rights and promises security and a sense of belonging, which may be of critical importance for protracted refugee communities. Without devaluing the significance of national citizenship as a human right, we note the extensive body of literature revealing its complexities, dynamics, and limitations as a mech-



anism of inclusion. National citizenship does not equate to equal rights for all, since citizens can be differentially included according to gender, race, ethnicity, and merit (Anderson and Hughes 2015; Mezzadra and Neilson 2012). A scalar approach to citizenship also highlights its relationality—that is, the interconnectedness between the larger institutional processes and the subjective experiences at different scales and sites (Dickenson et al. 2008; Staeheli et al. 2012). However, most studies have focused on the global North, where mobility—notably the irregular in-migration of non-citizens—has thrown up questions of the dynamism of citizenship—its contestations and potentially “transformative capacities” (Dickenson et al. 2008: 102). In Africa, citizenship studies have addressed the bifurcating, exclusionary, and racialized practices of colonial rule (Mamdani 1996, 2005); the indigenization policies of postcolonial states; the promotion of national identity with the adoption of the nation-state model on independence (Aminzade 2013; Heilman 1998; Hunter 2015; Nagar 1997); and the politics of mobility in the context of economic liberalization and democratization (Dorman et al. 2007; Manby 2009; Nyamnjoh 2007).

Saskia van Hooyweghen (2001) argues that the presence of refugees supported by international aid enables states to assert the territorial principle of citizenship. At the same time, refugee mobility challenges the integrity of the liberal nation-state model bequeathed to African states as a legacy of colonialism. In refugee humanitarian regimes, ethnic identity is understood as problematic, since it is often perceived as the cause of conflict, displacement, and prolonged exile. It is also assumed to be territorial and immutable (Malkki 1992). This view persists despite the abundance of scholarly literature on the social construction of ethnic identity in Africa (Ranger 1983), on ethnic identities as political identities (Mamdani 1996), and how Africans have negotiated their ethnic identity to suit their circumstances, particularly those of the same ethnic group that straddles an international boundary or whose ethnicity was made indeterminate by the colonial state (Amutabi 2009; Lonsdale 2008; Lynch 2006; Schlee 2007).

Refugee identity, which is circumscribed in international law and humanitarian practice, is often seen as transitory, as the holders are expected to shed their refugee status by returning home and/or by acquiring the citizenship of a host country. However, increasing stigmatization of refugee status, amidst hostility from host states, has meant that the holders themselves view it as cursed. In certain contexts, refugees manage multiple identities while in exile, employing numerous strategies of invisibility, such as passing (Moriel 2005), in order to hide under conditions of perceived or real vulnerability (Bakewell 2008; Kibreab 1999; Malkki 1995; Sommers 2001). While Giddens views invisibility as contributing to ontological security, we argue that, in this case, it is actively sought to enable self-fulfillment.

This article seeks to develop the link between the literatures on refugees and that of identity politics and citizenship in Africa. According to Gaim Kibreab (1999: 385), with many rights territorially anchored, “the identity people gain from their association with a particular place is an indispensable instrument to a socially and economically fulfilling life.” However, “citizens who do not belong” (Mezzadra and Neilson 2012: 67) may experience the absence of the sense of belonging and a permanent sense of marginalization. Recently, growing international negativity towards those who are “out of place,” even if legitimately so, has impacted adversely on the receptivity of African states and local host communities. If formal citizenship is not a guarantor of rights or belonging, especially for those who acquired citizenship by registration, then it is understandable that former refugees may struggle to resolve their feelings of dislocation and marginality.

Giddens’ (1991) concept of ontological security offers a frame for understanding the insecurities displayed by the new citizens and their craving for an acceptable narrative of belonging. Giddens explains ontological security as a sense of biographical continuity and order in how

an individual experiences life. This is based on trust and people's ability to give meaning to their lives, which is found in experiencing positive and stable emotions and avoiding chaos and anxiety. Jennifer Hyndman and Wenona Giles (2016: 17) draw on the concept to explain the "permanent temporariness" or limbo experienced by refugees in protracted camp situations. For them, ontological security is "a lived sense of safety with a degree of uncertainty underwriting it." This is the opposite for a displaced person whose "life is insecure because the future is uncertain" (ibid.: 18, 9). With regards to the former Burundian refugees, the security of legal citizenship failed to override the fears and anxieties that come with feelings of not belonging to the national space.

Ontological insecurity in protracted refugee situations is partly dependent on the social context and the nature of governance of the camp/settlement and refugees. Politically, these are "spaces of exception," governed as bounded communities by the central government, and managed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees or its implementing agencies, with the refugees subjected to periodic threats of repatriation from high-ranking elected officials, warning that their asylum or now citizenship status can be rescinded, perpetuating a sense of insecurity. As we will argue here, ontological insecurity persists even when there is a measure of stability demonstrating that an individual's "biographical continuity" is a projection not just of future uncertainty, but also of their histories and social context.

For those refugees who have fled genocide and identity conflicts, whose ethnicity and therefore existential being came under attack, the question is how do they negotiate the future, reconcile the change in national identity with that of their ethnicity, and obtain a sense of belonging—ontological security—in their new country after years of marginalization? Rather than see them as victims, even if they effect a victimized identity, this article centers their agency in the discussion of the social construction, flexibility, and temporality of identity, even for those displaced by identity-induced violence. Finally, this study's example of the production and negotiation of identities can contribute to our understanding of the everyday practices of belonging amidst multi-ethnicity as experienced by African societies, challenging state-centered and populist notions of citizenship, the parochialism of indigeneity, and ethnic territorialism. By studying the citizenship experience of former Burundian refugees, we follow Oliver Bakewell (2008: 450) by moving away from the policy-relevance of refugee research and, instead, consider how refugees "negotiate their positions in different contexts." We seek to contribute to the understanding of the normative and subjective aspects of citizenship, including how mobility shapes the way in which multiple identities are experienced and deployed in contexts of violent histories and socially diverse spaces; and we problematize the construction of national identity in Tanzania by revealing how the reification of a pure national identity reproduces practices of exclusion.

This article is based on findings from 55 semi-structured interviews and nine focus groups conducted with former Burundian refugees and government officials in the city of Dar es Salaam, the towns of Mpanda and Kaliua, and in the refugee settlements of Katumba and Ulyankulu over three months in 2016. Men, women, and different age cohorts were selected purposefully through snowball sampling that reflected, to some degree, our gatekeepers' circles. The interviews addressed the changes to their everyday lives on achieving citizenship and the perceived and real challenges they face as they integrate into Tanzanian society. Being former refugees, these new Tanzanians were often suspicious of our research, even when we promised anonymity. Consequently, we did not record interviews, but tried as practically as possible to take detailed notes during and after the sessions.

The remainder of this article is structured into two main sections. The first section discusses the role of identity (refugee and ethnic) in the displacement and settlement of former Burun-

dian refugees in Tanzania, and situates the transition to the status of new citizens within wider debates on citizenship and ethnicity in Tanzania. The second section interrogates specifically the strategies used by the new citizens in negotiating their ethnic and new national identity, and the bureaucratic response. We conclude that while legal citizenship has been a positive development, the social and political context, particularly how Tanzanian national identity has been constructed, combines to generate ontological insecurity among the new citizens. Policies relating to refugee integration and national citizenship, which are still works in progress, might take cognizance of the lived realities of the people, in terms of how they practice a politics of belonging through the deployment of multiple identities.

From Refugees to Citizens in Tanzania

By the end of 2010, 162,151 Burundi refugees had been given Tanzanian citizenship. These people fled Burundi as a result of the 1972 genocide against the Hutu majority by the minority Tutsi who controlled the state. In the early 1990s, some Hutus, especially political activists, returned to Burundi following the introduction of multi-party politics and the election of a Hutu president. His assassination in October 1993, six months after taking up the post, led to renewed violence and acts of genocide (in which Hutus were also implicated), generating further outflows of refugees (Daley 2008). In Tanzania, this later cohort of refugees was placed in temporary camps and encouraged to repatriate after the democratic elections of 2005, when a Hutu-dominated government was re-installed (Daley 2008).

The 1972 cohort of refugees, labeled “old caseload” by the aid community, had their homes in the three settlement schemes of Katumba, Mishamo and Ulyankulu in the western Tanzanian regions of Katavi and Tabora (Daley 1989). These schemes were governed as exceptional spaces—as the responsibility of the national state under the Refugee Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs, not the local district or regional authorities. In the settlements, each household was given a five-hectare plot of land, which allowed them to gain domestic food self-sufficiency and income from the sale of agricultural surplus. Some refugees became quite successful in business, health care, education, and as religious leaders. Due to the limited resources of the Tanzanian state, the settlements still relied on the international community for infrastructure, such as schools, health care, and road maintenance. After more than 35 years in exile, in 2007 the Tanzanian government offered the refugees *en masse* the choice of either citizenship or repatriation. Only 20% chose to return to Burundi. Many families were split, with parents choosing repatriation and settlement-born offspring opting for Tanzanian citizenship. Before this group citizenship exercise, individual citizenship applications, though possible, were considered costly and fraught with bureaucratic and political hurdles.

The Tanzanian government’s willingness to proceed with the mass registration for citizenship was based on the recognition that the majority of refugees were born, educated, and were living productive lives in Tanzania; thus, the economic role of the non-citizen worker was seen as contributing to the development of the country and justification for citizenship. Diplomacy also played a role, as mass repatriation to Burundi would aggravate tensions there, especially in terms of competition for scarce land resources (International Refugee Rights Initiative [IRRI] et al. 2009).

Whether the former refugees should remain in the settlements or be dispersed across Tanzania remains a contentious issue. With fears of creating a “country within a country,” the government initiated plans to close the settlements and disperse the new citizens to 12 regions, in order to facilitate integration. These proposals sparked international outcry and were halted

after opposition by politicians from destination regions and districts. In 2016, the next step for the government was to facilitate the process of integration of these new citizens (*watanzanian wapya*) in a way that reduces the risk of tensions with indigenous Tanzanians (*wenyeji*). Having embraced citizenship, the central issue for the new citizens is how far their former refugee status and ethnic identity will hinder their acceptance into the political community.

Citizenship debates in Tanzania date back to the dawn of independence in the late 1950s when the British colonial authorities were trying to define Tanganyika as multi-racial. The nationalist party, Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), was divided as to whether Tanzanians of Asian, Arab, and European descent would have the same rights of citizenship as those who were considered indigenous or Black African (Aminzade 2013; Heilman 1998; Hunter 2015). Tanzanian nationalists were seeking to liberate themselves from the colonial order of racial hierarchy that positioned Africans at the bottom as non-citizens and “tribal” others. The issue of a racialized citizenship was resolved in 1961 when TANU members voted in favor of the position proposed by Julius Nyerere that citizenship should not be defined by race or class—adopting the concept of non-racial rather than multi-racial. With in-migration the source of Tanzania’s racialized hierarchies, the state since the 1960s has sought loyalty through refusing to recognize dual nationality, the consequence of which has been the reification of national citizenship (Chachage 2009).

Challenges to individuals’ citizenship status re-emerged in the 1990s, following the introduction of economic liberalization and multi-party politics, and spurred on by intense competition between local capitalists and foreign investors for government contracts (Aminzade 2013; Heilman 1998). The processes of accumulation that favors foreign investors and new, educated, entrepreneurial labor have given rise to narrow nationalism on the part of those among the elite and the popular classes who feel marginalized and excluded. Businessmen, members of parliaments, and critics of the government found their citizenship status challenged by forces opposed to them (Manby 2009).

Ethnicity has been a less contentious issue in Tanzania. The integration strategies of Nyerere ensured that ethnic identity has not been politicized among Tanzania’s 120 ethnic groups (Aminzade 2013; Nyangoro 2004). For Mahmood Mamdani (2011: n.p.), “Nyerere’s great achievement was to create a single law and a single machinery of enforcement—both legal and administrative—so that every Tanzanian came to be governed by the same law, regardless of race or tribe.” In addition, John Campbell (1999: 108) argues that, in the early postcolonial period, the state sought to promote a national culture through the use of Kiswahili as the language of primary and adult and political education, and in cultural programs. However, this later shifted to focus more on support for nation-building projects, rather than “creating a homogenous national culture.”

State policies designed to promote national unity, especially the nationwide mobility of public sector workers and secondary school students, irrespective of their regions of origin, have been deemed successful. These policies may have contributed to widespread intermarriage among ethnic groups, and the lack of public discourse on ethnicity, even though ethnic stereotypes pervade social and cultural life, but, in most cases, are articulated as *utani* (jokes). People’s areas of origin and names might indicate their ethnic group, but are not always reliable markers, since mobility has been high among certain groups and designation of “home” is increasingly less linked to colonially-designated ethnic homeland. Tanzania, therefore, offers the potential for inclusive citizenship, even after naturalization. However, developing a sense of belonging can be protracted for new citizens possessing former refugee identities and associated with specific localities (settlement areas).

Negotiating the Stigma of Refugee Identity

The global and local stigmatization of the refugee has increased the vulnerability of those with the status. In Tanzania, Nyerere had sought to avoid the stigma and alienation associated with the label refugees (*wakimbizi*) by using the term “resident guests” or “*wageni wakazi*.” However, for the *wageni* to access international humanitarian aid, they had to succumb to the bureaucratic label of “refugees” (Zetter 1991) as the criterion for assistance. Liisa Malkki (1995), in her study of the 1972 Burundi refugees in Mishamo settlement and Kigoma town, found that those refugees in the settlement used the label because it maintained their distinctiveness, collective mythico-history, and transformation into a categorical state of purity. This was not the case in Kigoma town, where refugees recounted the negative stereotypes and insulting treatment they received from local Tanzanians. Here, the label of refugee “was not a protective status because . . . the international organizations that were the source of legal protection and material aid played little role in the lives of most town refugees. The ‘status’ of refugee was neither particularly useful nor desirable” (Malkki 1995: 158). If we chart the history of refugee stigmatization in Tanzania, we can see a link between its rise and the local embedding of the international humanitarian regime, along with increasing coercive state legislation and public rhetoric of refugee criminality (Daley 1992). Simon Turner (2010), in his study of the 1993 cohort of Burundian refugees in Lukole Camp in Western Tanzania, found that attitudes to the label were mediated by place and the presence of humanitarian assistance. Refugees, he writes, “disturb the nation; they also help define it by being what the national citizen is not” (2010: 7).

Our research, which occurred after international assistance had significantly decreased in the settlements, indicates that the practices of spatial segregation and management of refugees served to externalize them physically and metaphorically from the political community. Such experiences continue to affect them subjectively as new citizens. The identity marker “former Burundian refugees,” which we used to select interviewees, was challenged by some of the respondents as a symbolic continuation of their marginalization.

State policies ensuring over 45 years of marginalization have not been dismantled by the acquisition of group citizenship and are being resisted by some local officials who maintain the same governance structure in the settlement. Life in the settlements is still overseen by settlement commandants, one of whom remarked that as long as there were still people in the settlements without citizenship (the number was small), then refugee law would apply to the whole community. In effect, the settlements acted as gated communities, simultaneously containing and excluding the new citizen, marking them out as “citizens who did not belong.”

Tanzania’s refugee law stipulates that refugees should reside in settlements/camps. Being illegally outside the camp, without a permit (*kibali*), was one reason for not disclosing one’s refugee identity. Those who obtained the *kibali* were often going to places (schools, urban centers, on business) where they could be challenged by Tanzanian authorities. The *kibali* system became less effective as numbers increased and successive generations looked for opportunities beyond the limited ones in the settlements. Those who left without the *kibali* had to hide their identity from the state. Yet almost all the educated and business people we interviewed, whether they had permission to leave the settlement or not, concealed their refugee identity when they were outside the settlement.

Accessing services outside the settlement, such as secondary and post-secondary education, was only lawfully possible through a small number of refugee quotas in schools or scholarships designated specifically for refugees. Many refugees opted for private schooling. Zacharia recalled, with great anger, how a scholarship for refugees, despite enabling him to attend a college in the city of Dar es Salaam, became a burden when the aid agency wrote to the head

teacher revealing his refugee status in order to ensure that he was provided with accommodation. He reported feeling uneasy throughout his time at the college, which adversely affected his academic performance. Another young woman, Lily, reminded us that only seven places were allocated to refugee students each year at her secondary school in Mpanda town outside of the settlement. “We stuck to each other, because we girls from Katumba were seen as different.” Therefore, while their refugee identity guaranteed their parents safety, the second generation see it as an obstacle to their progress in Tanzanian society.

All new citizens interviewed reported the “refugee” label as a problem, a stain—one they were happy to be rid of. For the generations born in Tanzania, their education and linguistic competence in the national language of Kiswahili ensured that they could avoid being perceived as refugees. However, the state and international agencies have coined a new term, Newly Naturalized Tanzanians (NNTs), to distinguish the former refugees from indigenous Tanzanians. The term allows for the targeting of specific aid for integration to the group, but for the new citizens it is another “othering” nomenclature that has the potential to imply differential inclusion and second-class citizenship.

Ethnicity and the New Citizens: Passing as a Survival Strategy

In multi-ethnic Tanzania, scholars such as Roland Aminzade (2013: 127) have argued that the state’s attempt to depoliticize ethnic identities in favor of a national political identity benefitted from the “absence of centralized political kingdoms” and “any one numerically dominant tribe within the nation.” To date, ethnicity does not act as an axis of division in Tanzania. However, ethnicity and genocidal histories dominate the popular stereotypes of Hutus and Tutsis in the region and in Tanzania. These inform the biographical narratives of Hutu subjectivities and have contributed to new citizens’ ontological fear of future exclusion from a non-ethnicized Tanzanian body politic.

The association of violence with the ethnic label Hutu carries greater signification because of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. As many of the *genocidaires* were Hutu, and the rump of the genocidal Rwandan army and the militias are still at large in the Democratic Republic of Congo, those who hold Hutu identity feel implicated in having the capacity for genocide. In addition, Hutu participation in the 1993 massacres of Tutsi in Burundi redacted their victim status.

Labeling whole communities as victims or killers is also partly due to the academic literature that shaped how successive scholars and policy-makers have come to understand ethnic conflict in Burundi and Rwanda, with insufficient attempts to recognize the importance to the histories of conflict of divisions in these ethnic groups, especially those along regional, class, and religious lines. Malkki’s (1995) acclaimed book on the 1972 Hutu refugees in Tanzania depicts those in Mishamo settlement as essentially consumed by ethnic hatred, presenting a single, unified identity that drew on a “master narrative”—a mythical historical past of experience of violence against the group. Malkki’s text has helped shaped interpretations of Hutus by scholars and policy-makers. Policies directed at long-term integration can be seen as futile, especially if, as one local policy advisor, who was exhibiting a degree of hostility towards the new citizens, states, “They are not really interested in staying. Did Malkki not say they want to return and overthrow the Burundi government?” Policy-makers’ transmission of histories of violence to the mainly second- or third-generation Burundians has the potential to negatively affect state approaches to their integration and the realization of the ontological security that the new citizens seek. In mitigation, new citizens, cognizant of their violent and refugee histories, continue to devise a variety of ways of passing.

Strategies of Invisibility

Liora Moriel (2005: 167) defines passing as “a movement from one identity group to another, usually from the margins to the mainstream.” Moriel’s focus, like much of the literature and empirical evidence relating to passing, is on North America and Europe, where culturally different people with a white skin color are able to pass into the White mainstream. In Africa, the popular view that identity, even if socially constructed, is immutable or salient means that passing is rarely considered a topic of research. Nevertheless, the refugee context can provide opportunities for passing that have implications for integration. Moriel (2005: 167) argues that passing involves “complex strategies for survival that may serve the community and the individual; passing is not just a process of hiding, but also a process of moving to a place or situation in and from which one can fully express oneself.” Passing is part of the search for ontological security as it reflects “differential access to forms of self-actualization” in the social environment (Giddens 1991: 6). In most contexts, passing is hazardous. For example, in racially charged social environments, it can mean breaking contact with the community and can be seen as treacherous by the mainstream.

Numerous strategies of invisibility that enable passing have been deployed by the respondents. Our study, and earlier research, identifies the key strategies as hiding ethnic identity (Hovil and Kweka 2008; Malkki 1992; Sommers 2001), name changes (Duchaj and Ntikirageza (2009), and intermarriage. These are mediated by places and spaces of encounter with indigenous Tanzanians, and without passers severing all contact with their ethnic community.

Almost all new citizens either reported hiding their ethnic identity or knew of people who did so, even after gaining Tanzanian nationality. Hutu identity was concealed from Tanzanian neighbors, workmates, spouses, girlfriends, and fellow church members. This was done largely to avoid hostility from state bureaucrats and out of fear of discrimination by indigenous Tanzanians as the label Hutu carries negative connotations. When asked why, since they have been accepted by the Tanzanian state and given citizenship, Hutus should fear Tanzanians, they replied, “Tanzanians see us as ‘evil’ people, as ‘killers,’ and would not want to marry or work with us.” For them, being visibly Hutu would magnify their vulnerability, and contribute to their perceived marginalization and exclusion from the common community of citizens.

Indigenous Tanzanians tend to dismiss ethnicity as an issue in the country and do not inquire about each other’s ethnic background, preferring to ask about region of origin, which is often an indicator of ethnic identity. Region of origin can be used to decipher ethnic homeland, even though “home” is increasingly less geographically fixed. Hutus in Dar es Salaam hiding their identity will refer to either the region or district they are from—Katavi, Kigoma or Tabora—leaving the questioner to decide their ethnicity. If pressured, they will take on the identity of another ethnic group; many declared themselves as Ha, Fipa, Nyamwezi, or Sukuma. Hutus sought to avoid the threat of discovery by adopting the culture of the dominant community around them, learning the local language, while relying on the *lingua franca*, Kiswahili. Lucy Hovil and Opportuna Kweka’s (2008) claim that former Burundians could be identified due to the inflection in their use of Kiswahili was not corroborated by our respondents since most of them were born and educated in Tanzania. Those with post-secondary education invariably outside of the settlements have mixed with Tanzanians from all parts of the country.

Name change was another strategy of invisibility. Karen Duchaj and Jeanine Ntikirageza (2009) found that Burundian refugees in Tanzanian towns were most likely to change their names, from French and Burundian to Swahili names. Name changing, they contend, serves to “ease some of the transitional challenges/barriers,” even though it might have negative consequences by “disconnecting the individual from his/her past” (2009: 338). They further argue

that name change should facilitate invisibility, without acculturation. Our research shows that individual practices of invisibility can also lead to the denial of culture and corroborates Malkki's (1995: 168–169) view that refugees in Kigoma town took on Muslim names and culture as a pragmatic response to “shifting relations with a rich variety of different actors.” In our study, we found families that were mixed Muslim and Pentecostal Christian with Muslim names. Religious conversion was in response to situational opportunities. Christian religious education was the only option for some who sought post-primary education outside of the settlements. This may explain some of the switching of religious identity we encountered. Even after gaining citizenship, new citizens continued to use pseudonyms or their adopted Muslim or Christian names.

Names allow for differential inclusion and remain points of contestation between the new citizens and the Tanzanian bureaucracy. New citizens perceive the names on citizenship documentation and on educational certificates to expose their origins and mark them out as less equal. The refugees tend to have three names, at least one of which is a Burundian name, and all three are required by the state for citizenship registration. This exposure in official documents was causing considerable anxiety, as it reduces the formal opportunities for concealing one's identity. School leaving certificates were another cause of consternation. New citizens in the settlements complained that students' former refugee identity was still being recorded on these certificates by Tanzanian teachers and this might lead to discrimination when accessing employment outside of the settlements. Despite high-level interventions from the Ministry and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) we were told that the practice was still continuing.

Intermarriage is another route to invisibility, especially in urban areas. We interviewed and heard reports of refugees who have married indigenous Tanzanians from other ethnic groups (Zaramo, Chagga, Sukuma), without disclosing their Hutu identity or culture. One woman married to a Zaramo man claimed she had to sneak away from her husband when she needed to attend refugee meetings, and was applying for citizenship in secret—“just in case he divorces her.” Those interviewed in Dar es Salaam were not concerned that their identity could be revealed because of their lack of cultural knowledge. Passing was possible in multi-ethnic Dar es Salaam or the second city of Mwanza, where identities are in flux and where younger city-born generations cannot speak their ethnic languages and, despite identifying with their ethnic group, rarely visit the home areas.

Invisibility was more commonly deployed in spaces where Hutus constitute the minority, as in border regions and urban centers, where everyday encounters with Tanzanians are greater. In the border regions of Kigoma, early cohorts of refugees settled among members of their own ethnic group, often kith and kin, where cultural and physical similarities allowed them anonymity. Malkki (1995) found that Hutu refugees residing in the multi-ethnic Kigoma town “juggled” multiple identities in order to carry out everyday activities undisturbed by officials. Marc Sommers (2001) reports that for young Hutu men in Dar es Salaam, invisibility from Tanzanians was a key preoccupation. Young refugees were consumed by fear and anxieties, which Sommers interpreted as often unwarranted. He terms this emotional state “cultural fear,” locating its origins in the traumatized past of Hutu/Tutsi animosity in Burundi, where fear and suspicion of strangers characterized life. These emotions, he claims, have been transmitted to Tanzania through generations of refugee life. In contrast, we contend that although Zacharia exhibits comparable anxieties to those of Sommers' young people, we understand this “ontological insecurity” as arising mainly from the marginalizing experience of exile. Fear of Tanzanians, especially the Ha, with whom the Hutus share cultural similarities, and of their clandestine life

being uncovered causes many to live in a constant state of anxiety—but not one that was crippling. Arguably, the fear of the Ha can be attributed to their ability to expose Hutus pretending to originate from the Kigoma region.

Our study also finds marked differences between settlement-based and urban-based new citizens in their use of passing. In the settlements, where the majority of new citizens remain, Hutu remains the normative identity, even though many Tanzanians of different ethnicity also reside there. Here, there was no obvious advantage to hiding your ethnic identity. Respondents in the settlements knew of their community's practice of concealing their identity outside the settlements. Questions about new citizens passing were met with either silence, embarrassment, or open criticism of those who continue to pass. Some commented: "hiding was acceptable when we were refugees. Now, we are citizens, we don't need to hide." Such remarks elide the deep apprehension towards how ethnic identity or birthplace in the settlements are recorded by, and therefore exposed in, official documents by indigenous Tanzanian bureaucrats.

Despite being contained, the settlements are not sealed entities—mobility and networks result in a two-way flow of people. Urban-based Hutus retain connections (family, access to land) in the settlements, and move between both during holidays or for family functions. Consequently, some of the people we interviewed in the settlements were still hiding their identities when outside. One respondent remarked: "we Hutus don't stand out—our physical features are no different from Tanzanians, unlike the Rwandans." Looking phenotypically like other Tanzanians meant Hutus were not seen as sufficiently different for questions to be asked. Even though groups in both the settlements and urban areas express fear of being discriminated against by indigenous Tanzanians, the educated urban elite consider identification as Hutu as a hindrance to their ability to benefit institutionally as Tanzanian citizens.

While invisibility was seen as a strategy of integration, the new citizens still maintained competing narratives of Hutu exceptionalism, drawing first on their histories of violence, and secondly on their victim and refugee status. They also differentiate themselves from Tanzanians by claiming a distinct history of overcoming displacement and suffering that made them more resilient and hard-working. For them, Tanzanians had an easier start in life. Tanzanians, for their part, see the influx of humanitarian aid that came with the refugees as providing unearned benefits. In sum, our findings support Moriel's (2005: 200) interpretation that as "a response to danger, anger or frustration," passing is a "personal" and a "conscious choice . . . one can choose to masquerade but never blend in . . . never assimilate."

Creating a New Ethnic Identity

Tanzanian ethnic groups are represented as peaceful. In marked contrast, Burundians are perceived to be prone to violence. Consequently, for some Burundians becoming Tanzanian symbolizes an escape from their violent histories. Not all urban-based Hutus were happy with their fellow ethnics passing as members of indigenous Tanzanian ethnic groups, or with the Hutu identity, which they perceived as problematic. Some would like to shed the ethnic name and its negative associations, while keeping aspects of their culture—language, food (*ugali* in banana leaves was mentioned), and attitude to women (absence of domestic violence), which they see as progressive. Their solution, which can be interpreted as offering ontological security, is to manufacture a new narrative of "biographical continuity" (Giddens 1991: 53) with an ethnic past that is disassociated from Burundi and begins with settlement in Tanzania. This new ethnic identity would indigenize them in Tanzania and, with time, remove the stigma of being Hutu.

A group of “ethnic constructivists” temporarily formed a movement to change the name of their ethnic group from Hutu to *Higwe*—a Kirundi term meaning lucky people. Peter explained: “we are lucky people. We escaped genocide in Burundi. We were given land to cultivate and not kept in camps. We have been given Tanzanian citizenship.” This group of Hutus has strong support among educated and wealthy Dar es Salaam-based new citizens, indicating the importance of class and elite status in the imagining of ethnic identities. This elite status is manifested in the group’s application to UNHCR for funds and to the Ministry of Home Affairs to initiate the official process of identity change. They were unsuccessful, and were told this was not a funding priority. For them, external/donor funding is central to the construction of this new social grouping that arises out of their humanitarian past.

As Günther Schlee’s (2007) study of ethnic groups along the Somali/Kenyan border, and John Lonsdale’s (2008) in Kibera, Nairobi, have shown, changing one ethnic group’s name is not unknown. Ethnic groups have merged, diverged, and changed their names to suit political contexts, to differentiate themselves from others, often in order to access resources. For the advocates who are *de facto* Tanzanians from birth, shedding the ethnic label Hutu offers a means of distancing themselves and their children from the Hutu past in Burundi. Among the most vociferous are urban elites whose parents have returned to Burundi and who are strategically seeking to secure their children’s future in Tanzania, while at the same time retaining the less contentious elements of Burundian Hutu culture.

Ethnic identity change can occur subjectively or can be imposed by external forces. As Schlee (2007: 430) notes, ethnic “identity games” can be played—ethnic affiliation can be hidden and resurfaced as the circumstances dictate. As ethnic identities are largely politicized constructs, the state’s attitude towards them is significant in attributing meaning. Tanzania’s state discourse on national and ethnic identities has tended to reify them, reflecting Mamdani’s (2005: 15) view that “if the law recognizes you as a member of an ethnicity, and state institutions treat you as a member of that particular ethnicity, then you become an ethnic being legally.” However, Tanzania, unlike other African countries such as Kenya (Lynch 2006; Schlee 2007), has sought to de-territorialize ethnicity, while fixing it subjectively in the individual body. For state officials, ethnicity is inviolable and Hutu ethnic identity is unproblematic in Tanzania. One official stated: “We have just added another tribe to the 120 we already have in Tanzania. It should not be a problem.” Some officials referred to the earlier integration of Rwandese in the 1980s and Somalis in the 1990s as evidence that integration of Hutus is possible, and viewed with suspicion Hutus who seek to change their ethnic identity. One remarked: “they cannot change the ethnic group that they have been born into.” According to state officials, those former refugees lucky enough to be given Tanzanian citizenship have to demonstrate their loyalty by eschewing all other national affiliations indefinitely. A return to Burundi would be considered a betrayal. Citizenship becomes an embodied process of relinquishing one subjectivity for another. Integration is perceived as possible if Burundians learn to behave like Tanzanians. When pressed as to what it means to be Tanzanian, state officials responded with idealized values, such as “peaceful,” “hospitable,” and “respectful of the country’s laws,” evoking popular stereotypes that the new citizens have a greater propensity for criminality than indigenous Tanzanians. In fact, the most repeated stereotype of the new Tanzanians by senior officials in the capital is that they are hard-working and merit the bestowal of citizenship, but the discourse in the media, often fueled by local politicians, is that they are involved in criminal activities, especially poaching—a behavior considered “unTanzanian.” Van Hoyweghen (2001: 22) notes how “government officials manipulated the refugee issue, in order to paint a picture of Tanzania as a victim of the international community and as a morally superior nation of peace-loving, hospitable citizens.” It is this national myth that new citizens seek to conform to by being invisible, and which is used to exclude them.

Conclusion

Enabling protracted refugees to become citizens of a host country puts to right what is an inhumane practice. Undoubtedly, the former Burundian refugees are immensely grateful to the Tanzanian government for the offer of citizenship and the ability to rid themselves of their refugee identity. Many feel more secure than they have ever been, as the threat of forced repatriation to an unstable and unfamiliar Burundi has been reduced. Most are second- or third-generation refugees, who do not speak French—the official language of government and education in Burundi—and lack the means to acquire livelihoods there. This study reveals that a significant proportion of new citizens were already committed to integration into Tanzanian society, even if it was being done covertly.

Legal citizenship does not on its own provide ontological security. Fear and anxiety remain prevalent among the new citizens, attenuated by the actual and perceived affective responses encountered in everyday life from indigenous Tanzanians. Even though formal citizenship gives the former Burundian refugees the right to remain and participate in Tanzanian society outside of the settlements, the actual number doing so explicitly under their old ethnic identity might be relatively small. Mobility and identity change are utilized as strategies to erase past identity and gain ontological security as citizens. While identity negotiation works in the everyday practices of living and belonging in Tanzania, state bureaucrats see this as treacherous. They want total conversion to one (national) identity, while refusing to consider the possibility of changing another (ethnic) identity, thus echoing colonial ideas of static primordial ethnic identities and reifying national identity. The state also affixes an identity (Newly Naturalized Tanzanians) that serves to marginalize the new citizens from the political community. Tanzanian national and Hutu ethnic identity are both perceived by state officials as pure, salient, and essentialized, even if they owe their origins to social constructivism. This study shows that, in some contexts, ontological insecurity can be an important factor in re-imagining ethnic subjectivities and their self-actualization.

Furthermore, it demonstrates the fluidity of identities among one group of people in everyday spaces in Tanzania. Mobility facilitates a potentially emancipatory interpretation of belonging that state structures, aligned to Eurocentric notions of the nation-state and ethnic identity, serve to restrict. We are in agreement with Francis Nyamnjoh (2017: 259) that Africans’ “capacity to straddle physical and cultural geographies enables them to point attention to the possibility and reality of a world beyond neat dichotomies . . . even as they know and are constantly reminded of the prescribed aspiration to commit loyalties to cultures and communities to which they are purportedly wedded by birth and place.”

The study highlights the interdependencies between the formal and structural processes of national citizenship and the everyday and subjective practices of belonging. For the former Burundian refugee, *de facto* second-class citizenship is reinforced by state officials threatening to relocate them or revoke their citizenship, if they do not conform. Mistrust pervades the interactions between state and “new citizens.” How former Burundi refugees have been governed, as well as the social context within which they have been inserted, continues to militate against their ontological security.

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