Full Length Article

Being-in-family and being-in-community: Ontological (in)securities, diaspora youth agencies, and the Rwandan emigration state

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1. Introduction: securities after the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda[1]

'I ask you to always put Rwanda first, never give in to the hatred taught to you by those who should have been teaching you to live in harmony with others […] Even if you have been taught by your father or mother to hate your neighbours, they are not bigger than Rwanda' (Bamporiki, 2021)

In 2021, Edouard Bamporiki, then the State Minister for Culture in the Rwandan Ministry of Youth and Culture, wrote the above as part of an open letter to Rwandan and Rwandan-descent youth living aboard. Exhorted to reject divisionism, young people were instead encouraged to follow the examples set by the Inkotanyi (RPF, or Rwanda Patriotic Front) - the ruling party that has governed Rwanda since 1994. The letter forms one part of a wider set of discourses that have symbolically instrumentalised parent-child relations, including those of young people of Rwandan descent living and born abroad, as a conduit for the assertion of ndi umunyarwanda, or one Rwanda (Benda, 2019). Constituting an intimate move to secure young people's patriotism in contexts of genocide denialism and political critique in diaspora, the letter plays into a larger and ongoing project of extra-territorial securitization. The cornerstone of these efforts are the de-ethnicization of post-genocide diasporic identity politics and the production of a de-politicized Rwandan global diasporic citizenry invested in contributing to Rwanda's economic progress (Turner, 2013).

Bamporiki's letter exemplifies the recent slew of state policies designed to strategically engage diaspora youth to further varying political and economic interests (Böcü & Baser, 2022; Mahieu, 2015; Omotosho, 2017). Orientated particularly in strong-state contexts around top-down forms of political socialisation, nation-building and regime protecting projects, youth-orientated policies are connected to wider state-led diasporic securitization agendas (Hirt & Saleh Mohammad, 2018). Yet, as Böcü and Baser (2022) acknowledge, absent in these debates is knowledge of the agencies of young people and the various actors that comprise and shape the ways they engage with the emigration state to articulate a politics of belonging, engagement and attachment.

Ongoing work on the emigration state – a term that acknowledges the fluid nature of state-led diaspora (geo)politics – has begun the work of challenging top-down approaches to diaspora mobilisation by comprehending the everyday agencies associated with improvisation, flexibilization and negotiation that contributes to the emigration states' (re)production and reworking across transnational space (see Lacroix, 2022). What unites these literatures is a starting point that individuals strategically connect to emigration state agendas in the contexts of neoliberalisation, strategic accumulation and capital seeking. With the empirical example of Rwanda explored in this paper, we consider the relevance of familial dynamics and relations around conflict, exile, and reconciliation, to capture the intimate attachments and emotions that entangle young people with state-led diasporic politics. Such a focus allows us to trace connections between intergenerational familial effects of displacement, and the entwined spatial practices of diasporization by young people, community groups and the state. Drawing specifically upon theorisations of ontological securities (OS), we develop our analysis of the intergenerational biographical erasures associated with diasporic legacies of colonial subjugation and genocide, the varied spatial practices of silence, knowledge-seeking and disclosure around it, and the entwined (in)securities of nation-states, selves, families and communities that young people's diasporic political engagements reflect and rework.

We base our arguments on findings from our involvement in a 2019 to 2021 research project. Necessary for us, as white academic

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[1] Although we acknowledge the contested terminology of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, we use it here to recognise the links between mislabelling and genocide denialism, and to honour the requests of Tutsi survivor families.

researchers in British institutions, to respond to the imperatives of careful research, we collaborated with practitioners involved with Rwandese Community Associations in the UK and those involved with peace education in Kigali, to develop and support a 10-day visit programme aimed at British youth from Rwandese backgrounds. This collaboration allowed us to trace how discourses of national unity were arranged across various diasporic spaces, and young people's perception and responses to them. Using an analysis of how young people compared their motivations for and experiences around participation in this visit to those of other spaces of intergenerational memory work associated with national unity, including the home and community, in this paper we pay close attention to how young people narrated their (in)securities.

The contributions of this paper are two-fold: First, we develop the significance of ontological (in)securities to the formation of young people's political agencies in relation to the emigration state. Drawing upon theorisations of the multiple apparatuses of ontological (in)security (specifically, the inter-relations between being, identity, family, community, and states), we argue that the dynamics of diasporic memory transmission within these apparatuses scaffolds young people's agentive engagements and reworkings of the emigration state. In centring young people's (in)securities, we engage meaningfully with calls to take seriously emotions and memory in theorisations of emigration states (Délano Alonso & Mylonas, 2017; Öcal, 2020) and offer an alternative to approaches to agency that centres the strategic and pragmatic agendas that are argued to reproduce the emigration state and extend its reach.

Second, in focussing on the ways that young people's familial experiences of genocide, exile and reconciliation shape their (in)securities and political engagements with Rwanda, we contribute to the ongoing, necessary work of undoing what Rutazibwa (2014) argues is the epistemicide arising from the fractious academic debate around the authoritarian nature of the state securitization measures of the RPF. Instead, we follow the lead of Rwandan scholarship developing theorisations of securities related to everyday experiences of the interstices between government projections of national unity and familial and community silences and disclosures around ethnicity. Analysing the ways these contexts shape young diasporic Rwandan's ontological (in) securities, we look beyond narrow approaches to diasporic securitization in wider literature focussed on measures such as transnational coercion and repression. Instead, we put forward an approach to security based on the self, encompassing family and wider community pasts and futures. In so doing, we assert original possibilities for understanding young people's diasporic political mobilisation in the Rwandan case and more widely.

2. Diasporic youth (in)securities beyond the state

Despite being analytically elusive, diaspora youth are important subjects for state-led efforts at transnational mobilisation, as diasporic political engagement has expanded across various strategic institutional domains (Mahieu, 2015). Focused on homeland-oriented forms of engagement through the provision of cultural education (e.g. internships, scholarships, mobility programmes and heritage tourism), a growing number of scholars are exploring the strategic state-led mobilisation of diaspora youth (Abramson, 2017; Böcü & Baser, 2022; Graf, 2018; Mahieu, 2015; Toivanen & Baser, 2022). Scholars have interpreted such efforts as forms of political socialisation aimed at the generational transmission of national values and the (re)production of diasporic identity amongst second and subsequent generations (Graf, 2018; Mahieu, 2019). Located within a wider literature deploying state securitization frameworks to analyse the coercive and non-coercive measures through which states govern diaspora populations (Artan, 2022; Dalmasso et al., 2018; Naujoks, 2015), youth engagement is viewed as a means of using young people abroad as a counter-force for dissent and regime protection (e.g. Böcü & Baser, 2022). Youth engagement is also understood as a means for the state to manage

existential anxiety around the cultures, identities and norms of a state over time, by maintaining diasporic identities centred on an enduring national homeland (Abramson, 2017).

Both state and family modes of transmission of knowledge around the homeland can constitute an important element of the creation of long-distance nationalist projects amongst diaspora youth (Graf, 2018). However, wider research in Geography and beyond challenges some key assumptions around the idea of an ancestral homeland functioning as a primary site for the construction of young people's diasporic identities (e.g. Binaisa, 2011; Brocket, 2020; Malik, 2017; Omotosho, 2017; Wagner, 2023). For example, work on youth diaspora tourism evidences the complex, differing forms of attachments that emerge amongst young people visiting the homeland of their parents, both within the context of family visits and independent leisure tourism (Ankobrey, 2022). Acknowledging that young people forge diasporic spaces of belonging independent to those of their parents and family, this work highlights the complex renegotiations of a relationship to an ancestral home that take place within transitions to adulthood.

The intergenerational familial dynamics shaping diaspora youth identity and politics have however received scant attention within analysis of emigration state politics more generally, and within youth-orientated strategies specifically (but see Mahieu, 2019). This is despite the now considerable volume of work on the institutional and policy transformations that have increased the social, economic and legal linkages between governments and populations abroad (Gamlen, 2008; Ragazzi, 2014). One of the central contributions of this wider literature is the attention it has drawn to the operation of the emigration state not as a single sovereign apparatus, but a relational topological formation (Lacroix, 2022). Argued to involve political struggles, agencies, strategic positioning, negotiation and improvision among different actors (Artan, 2022) research has opened up the emigration state to considerations of the different social structures and formations that exist beyond the state, as constitutive of the development and (re) production of state-led engagement agendas.

Although these discussions have given nuanced treatment to a wide array of everyday spaces through which diasporic mobilisation around state agendas are produced, challenged and reworked, the omission of the family as one such domain has several consequences for analysis of the emigration state's youth politics and policies. First, the tendency has been to examine the non-state spaces associated with capital seeking and accumulation through which political agencies are expressed in relation to the emigration state. Although such contexts form a key aspect of reviewing top-down approaches to the emigration state, the diasporic feelings and memories associated with the family that inform perceptions of the emigration state (Öcal, 2020) have been given less emphasis as an alternative interpretive framework. Whilst there may be a wide range of practical and strategic dimensions associated with young people's engagements with emigration state policies (Toivanen & Baser, 2022), Öcal's work instead pushes us to be attentive to the familial struggles, histories and contexts that shape young people's articulations between the emigration state and their everyday political intimacies and relations.

Second, analysis of the emigration state that misses discussions of family experiences, practices and memories around migration, diaspora and exile (particularly those that have taken place as a result of violent conflict) also overlooks the relevance of the intergenerational (in)securities that contribute to the geographical formulations of young people's diasporic politics of return and engagement. Indeed young people's diaspora mobilisation is connected to memories, narratives and legacies of (in)security arising from both past and present crises in their parents' homelands (Chernobrov & Wilmers, 2019). For example, the literature around intergenerational trauma and memory draws attention to the legacies of conflict amongst second generations that are manifest in the ancestral homeland oriented nature of diasporic political activism and engagement (e.g. Karabegović, 2018; Müller-Suleymanova, 2023). Geographical expressions of diasporic youth political activism can also

be different to parents and previous generations', becoming multidirectional and multiscalar (Mavroudi, 2023). For example, this might include directing political activism towards global solidarities (Blachnicka-Ciacek, 2018).

Challenging conventional approaches to security (Hörschelmann & Reich, 2017), feminist geopolitics has long recognised the role of the affective and emotional excesses of youth transitions, experimentations and inventions through which young people navigate the plural, and conflicting securities and insecurities of, among and between families and the state, relations, selves and others (Hopkins et al., 2019). The intergenerational nature of young people's ontological securities (OS) is a key focus, that is, the pursuit of a distinct stable sense of 'being in the world', which equates to the need to have a stable subjective sense of who one is (Benwell, 2019; Botterill et al., 2020; Genz et al., 2023; Rosher, 2022). Originating in the work of psychologist RD Laing (1960) and later specified by Giddens (1991), OS denotes the multifaceted 'framework of reality' employed and produced by both individuals and governments to order reality and affirm their existence and sense of being and personhood through time (Krickel-Choi, 2022). The inclusion of memory transmission in theorisations of OS opens up understanding of how individuals' sense of self within the present and projections towards the future is maintained in relation to the wider collective social worlds giving shape to the maintenance of biographical (dis)continuities over time and space (Rosher, 2022, p. 32). Specifically, intergenerational aspects of social memory and narrative associated with geopolitical structures and discourses underpin young people's pursuit of ontological security through political struggle, connection and re-negotiations across scale, time and geographical space (Botterill et al., 2020). For us, work on ontological securities evidences a need to focus in on the memories and emotions around familial experiences of exile and migration, to explain how young people agentively engage with the emigration state, rather than exclusively on strategic and pragmatic agendas.

Theorisations of OS also raises questions about the limitations of a focus on identity that has so far dominated analysis of diaspora youth political agencies. Although identity is an important component of the 'being in the world', OS is not reducible merely to identity preservation. OS rests on a framework co-constructed among actors and that is linked up with the social past (Rosher, 2022), encompassing multiple aspects, configurations and frameworks beyond and including identity that animates how people navigate (in)security. For example, work on Lakota concepts of OS argue for the inclusion of spiritual and cosmological dimensions in securing of a sense of self and collective identity over time, as the conditions that provide the "conceptual and ethical scaffolding" that "creates the conditions to process the world" (De Leon, 2020, p. 51). African and Afro-diasporic scholarship develops theorisations of 'being in the world' as inherently communal, embedded in the familial and communal relations that generate and sustain life, whilst also being shaped by colonial structures that disavow these ways of knowing (Tamale, 2020).

Acknowledgement of the wider worlds associated with the formation of OS also pushes attentiveness to the contextuality and situatedness that produces security struggles, to account for the influence of the apparatuses that contribute to insecurity, including those of structural violence, racism, state-sanctioned genocide and displacement (De Leon, 2020). Rwandan scholarship for example comprehends the security of the self through the colonial and genocidal denial of personhood and the past-presences of these denials. Theorisations start from an acknowledgement that the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi was not a singular event in time and space. The influence of first German then Belgian colonial orderings of the loose social groups of the Tusti, Hutu and Twa, generated social distinctions in distributions of citizenship and privilege (Nzahabwanayo et al., 2017). Following independence, a long campaign of the dehumanisation of the Tutsi under Hutu Power ideology, exacerbated by the failures of the international community, culminated in the targeted and coordinated mass murder of an estimated 800,000-1 million Tutsis. Described as both a literal and figurative collective wounding (Ndahinda et al., 2022), legacies of the denial of personhood persists in intergenerational trauma, wider familial environments and social relations that continue to stigmatize and re-traumatise, including amongst those who do not have direct knowledge but experience the genocide transgenerationally (Ingabire et al., 2022).

Although we are mindful of the specificities of the forms and durations of collective trauma that are not fully analogous to the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, nonetheless, Black Afro-diasporic writing around the intergenerational erasures of personhood also provides key insights into contexts of mass trauma and its relevance to collective familial experiences and practices that inform "being in the world". For example, in the contexts of slavery, Saidiya Hartman's (2007) autobiographical account recounts the absences within intergenerational circulations that would otherwise allow knowledge of the lives of her enslaved ancestors, leading to a journey to recover both the stories and a sense of self. Mirroring Hartmann's exposition of the irreconcilabilities of biographical erasure in the context of Rwanda, Alice Musabende in the BBC Radio Series Unspeakable documents her dilemmas around recreating her experiences as a survivor of genocide for her children (2021). These dilemmas turns on a tension between silencing and disclosure of the highly intimate, very personal nature of genocide, where perpetrators and victims knew each other as neighbours, friends, teachers, doctors and kin, with continuing collective effects (see Ingabire et al., 2022).

What unites both Hartman and Musabende is their expositions of the ways the dynamics of family memory, emplaced within structures that deny personhood and exert continued violence, uncertainty and (in)security, creates the conceptual framework for the navigation and search to establish a stable sense of self across space and time. Ontological security developed through these lenses establishes the multiple foundations and apparatuses of (in)security, whilst expositions of family memory transmission explains diasporic experiences and pursuits of (in)security.

3. Researching the praxis of diasporic security through a community-centred methodology

The project began through ongoing conversations with an organiser active in the Rwandan Community Associations (RCA) in the UK. Closely affiliated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and respective embassies, RCAs globally organise community events around commemoration and Rwandan identity-building. Keen to address the intergenerational effects of the genocide on the identities of young people from Rwandan backgrounds and their participation in Rwandan development, these conversations took us to collaborating on a Rwandan Diaspora Youth Conference in London in 2019, attended by over 100 diaspora Rwandans aged 18–30, the community associations and organisers that support them, and government ministers and representatives from the Rwandan High Commission in London. From this conference emerged a social learning educational programme in Kigali for British Rwandan youth aged 18–24, to respond to concerns raised at the conference around the loss of Rwandan identity amongst the settled post-1994 generation - those born to parents who left Rwanda during and after the genocide. The academic authors funded the collaboration partly through the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) Quality Related (QR) income as a community-centred research project for young people wishing to develop knowledge of how to contribute to post-genocide reconciliation and reconstruction, centering practical experiences, collaborations with NGOs and the aspirations of the young people at the conference to better understand their history.

Inclusion on the programme was through an application form, covering motivations for participation and what key issues and challenges in Rwanda they had an interest in and why. Given constraints around the time-bound nature and limited availability of the GCRF QR funding, Aegis Trust (Rwanda) and a UK Rwanda Community

Association (RCA) organiser along with two academic researchers identified those with concrete, implementable ideas and strong motivations for participation. Eighteen applied and ten young people were chosen to participate - this included eight identifying as women and two identifying as men. The participants comprised those already actively connected to Rwanda, despite our efforts to reach a broad audience. It was not possible within the scope and timeframe of the funding to include the voices of those holding political opinions that could be perceived as subversive - and nor did we want to expose them to risk. Not generalizable to the Rwandan diaspora either in the UK or as a whole, it is not our purpose to depict a holistic understanding – rather, we used our approach to build the trust necessary to develop deeper insights. The activities of diaspora groups and associations like RCAs, as well as Aegis Trust as an institution concerned with the transmission of official memory, are part of Rwandan state making processes. Our collaboration with them as part of this research process could be viewed through post-structural critiques in the same way. Concerned with the praxis of diasporic securitization-that is the connection between thought, engagement and action of the various collaborators including the young people-the extended time the authors spent with collaborating with this small group built the careful, reciprocal relations of trust that afforded us a vantage point for examining ontological (in)securities and its intersection with state-led securitization practices.

Aegis Trust delivered the learning programme in Rwanda, which included full day workshops, meetings with ministers and visits to peace-building projects organised by Aegis Trust's peace champions. Outside of planned activities, participants visited friends and family in Kigali. An NGO preventing crimes against humanity, Aegis Trust provides genocide education and manages the Kigali Genocide Memorial on behalf of the Commission Nationale de Lutte contre le Génocide (CNLG) – the state organisation that governs post-genocide reconciliation in Rwanda. Aegis Trust had considerable influence in shaping the final content. Their learning programme centred around Gregory H Stanton's model of the ten stages of genocide and the stages to peace, anchored in the officially sanctioned historical detail of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi and the rebuilding in models of witnessing, dialogue and national unity. Experiential learning activities, built on dialogical learning activities and direct witnessing of survivor and perpetrator testimony through visits to reconciliation villages, which although criticized as performative (e.g. Eramian, 2009), were viewed as pedagogical techniques centred on transferability to young people's lives.

University researchers acted on recommendations for content and structure and made observational notes, audio recordings and transcriptions of personal diaries when permission was given. Ethical approval was granted by the authors' universities prior to commencing the project, and a Rwandan research and visit permit secured by Aegis Trust. Consent was sought at different points with participants, according to specific context and nature of the spaces in which discussions were taking place. The above comprised the data set that was analysed, together with one-year follow up interviews with both the British Rwandese youth and the young Rwandans who also participated. This data was coded using NVivo, with the present paper drawn from analysis of themes of the UK participants related to in follow up interviews around family dialogue and ontological security. Consent for using anonymized quotes and biographical context was given. Participants understood that given the small size and extended time spent together, identification may be possible by others that took part on the visit to Rwanda but was less likely by those that didn't.

4. Securing the diasporic family

Rwanda's migratory history is composed of several geographical dispersions associated with distinct phases of Rwanda's political history. A series of forced displacements between 1958 and 1994, encompassing the Civil War and the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi, created a sizeable number of refugee communities in the neighbouring countries of the Great Lakes region, and to a lesser extent in Europe, the United States and South Africa following remigration (see Davies, 2008). Although most of the refugee communities in the Great Lakes returned, those remaining elsewhere are primarily a permanent diaspora. More recent out-migrations of students and workers constitute a temporary diaspora (Shindo, 2012).

The Rwanda Patriotic Front's (RPF) post-1994 management of an inclusive national identity as the basis of sustainable peace and security in Rwanda has received considerable academic and media attention. Research highlights the selective retelling of the histories of pre-colonial Rwanda, German then Belgian colonialism, and the subsequent liberation by the RPF, as the basis of claims to a unitary Rwandanness under ndi umuyarwanda (Thomson, 2013). Underlying the close institutional management of social relations are ontological political insecurities associated with a larger existential threat of a repetition of genocide (Beloff, 2021). Official narratives, transmitted through a wide range of discursive sites and spaces from schools, museums, re-education camps (ingando), peace-building and reconciliation programmes, and civic education (itorero), promulgate a historical consensus that rejects ethnicity as a false colonial invention, as the basis of forgiveness and the promotion of peaceful co-existence of genocide perpetrators, survivors and their descendants (Nzahabwanayo et al., 2017). Argued to contain inconsistencies and active silencing around those from mixed families, Hutu victims of violence and those who were victims of the RPA's violence in the civil war, the historical narrative is entwined with the storying of a wider post-1994 developmental arc of 'Rwandicity' based on values of 'home-grown solutions' and domestic and foreign policy discourse of agaciro (dignity) (Purdeková, 2015).

Diaspora governance secures against the ethnic identity-making processes that continue to persist in subversive and highly contested ways across Rwanda's diasporic spaces (Betts & Jones, 2016). For example, the 2009 Diaspora Policy defined the Rwandan diaspora as those who "are willing to contribute to the development of Rwanda" (Republic of Rwanda, 2009, p. 6). The replacement of the term 'diaspora' with Rwandan Community Abroad (European Union Global Diaspora Facility, 2021) signals a rejection of the complex histories of migration that are associated with ethnic identifications (and by implication, genocide survivorship and perpetratorship), instead promoting a singular identity as 'Rwandan.'

The broad definition of diaspora and language of developmentalism conceals biopolitical orderings of the complex layers within the diaspora into simplistic categorisations of saviours, victims and perpetrators of genocide (Turner, 2015), where the lines between those in the diaspora who are critical of the RPF and those who continue to support genocide ideology are uncertain and contested. The control over genocide memorialisation (Orjuela, 2022) and a wider 'culture of silence' in diaspora (Marson-Reed & McLaughlin, 2021) is argued to surveil and suppresses dissent, preventing those with legitimate claims to mourning from participating. Further, the dominance of diaspora returnees amongst the state elite – especially survivors and members of the RPF Liberation campaigns - tightly circumscribes the diaspora's role in reconstruction and reconciliation (Davies, 2008). The high-profile rendition of suspected genocidaires in France, Belgium and Southern Africa has directed further attention to the RPF's diasporic securitising practices.

Discussing the accuracies of the historical narrative is not the purpose of this piece. Rather, we find it important to explain how the histories that were circulated to participants in the research, through our visit to Rwanda and through dialogical interactions around the family, are a key tool in Rwandan management of memory around genocide as a multi-scalar securitization practice. The interplay between the family, parent-child relations and the state around achieving national stability through ndi umunyarwanda have been prominent in Rwanda for several years (Benda & Pells, 2020). This reflects the transformation of historical-cultural political cultures of umuryango (family, in Kinyarwanda) from one encompassing a spatially dispersed set of actors

holding cultural values, knowledges and authority in both loose associational and familial relatedness to one another, towards one where the RPF acts as a central authority within domestic affairs (Thomson, 2013). Specifically, the RPF uses the language of umuryango to specify membership of the wider Rwandan political family, conditional upon contributions and participation in national goals of reconciliation and unity (Purdeková, 2011), blurring distinctions between public and private concepts of the family.

Families, and specifically parent-child relations, are also a recurring theme in diaspora outreach. For example, politicians at Itorero (a civic programme for Rwandese and diaspora youth organised by the Rwanda Defence Forces) identified failures in parenting as the reason for the persistence of genocide denialism (Tashobya, 2016). Kwibohoro Europe 26, a diaspora dialogue event held in 2020 reiterated this (Rwanda TV, 2020). A youth participant from Germany stated that: "some of the youth are not bad people but are taken hostage by family members (…) the youth are the ones who are going to play a role and come out of their shameful past inherited from parents". Young people were exhorted to "liberate yourself from what parents are instilling in you … we all have a role in beginning this change including parents living abroad. We need to set our youth on the right tracks". The language that is employed suggests intergenerational dynamics in the diasporic family as being a key target for state intervention for mobilisation of diaspora towards longer-term reconciliation, with the intervention not parenting *per se*, but guidance from Rwanda and the wider diaspora community.

Countering misinformation is a key government concern in its engagements with diaspora youth, with reaching both those who are disengaged and those actively contributing to genocide denialism a key priority for action[2]. Forums and dialogues with youth and community associations aim to address genocide denialism (e.g. One Nation Radio, 2021), whilst addressing negative perceptions of Rwanda is the impetus behind government support for diaspora visit programmes. This includes those self-organised by diaspora groups (e.g. Rwanda Youth Tour) and government sponsored programmes such Indangamirwa and "Come and See, Go and Tell". Our own visit, cleared by CNLG, was perceived by government ministers who met with us as an opportunity for youth attendees to acquire the truth about Rwanda and its history, to be shared with others in diaspora, including their families. Perceived as ambassadors, diaspora youth are positioned to transform the image of Rwanda as a result of these engagements, and become actively involved in remedying the image of Rwanda globally and in diaspora (Wackenhut & Orjuela, 2023).

5. Familial insecurities in time and space

For the Rwandan state, filling in knowledge gaps left by circulations of misinformation in families and diaspora communities is a securitising practice extended to young people. But if, we are to explore the family as a site of and for security, as Botterill et al. argue, it is essential to "also interrogate the (in)stability of its relationships and the psycho-social processes that shape family life." (2020, p. 1143). As they argue, as a 'social product', the family is central to individual feelings of threat and safety.

In recalling the familial dynamics of concealment and silence around the genocide contributing to the biographical erasures that fractured their sense of being, most interviewee perceptions reflected upon the role of family dynamics in contributing to their ontological insecurities. Some participants were aware of what had happened to their families during the genocide, based either on parental conversations or by attending commemoration and liberation events. However, others experienced gaps that were framed not around individualised knowledge of rational truth or historical facts, but as embodied anxieties of *not*

knowing their parents' traumas. The young people identified missing pieces in their family histories and spoke of being 'lost in themselves'. Aurore, for example, related these fractured knowledges to a sense of herself as an insecure being:

"our parents don't really speak about it, umm, no one. It's like the genocide is kind of like not spoken of because of the traumatic events and the trauma that comes with it, so there's definitely been a part where I don't even know what's happened to my family […] I definitely have missing pieces and I definitely still do" (Aurore)

Even though Aurore did not personally experience the violent realities of the genocide, she is continuously re-negotiating them through the unknowable silences of older family members. Scholars refer to the collective trauma that circulates between material and immaterial bodies in diaspora space as flows of emotional and spatially embodied hauntings (Cho, 2008).

For others, ontological insecurity emerged from disrupted and fractured migration histories and journeys of their parents. Delphine described both her parents as being from and born in Rwanda before escaping to Uganda as refugees during the Civil War, which is where she was born and raised until they came to the UK when she was aged 7:

"being raised up in Uganda knowing that I'm truly Rwandan and then coming to the UK which is not truly my home home, […] I kind of … like … lost as to who I am as a Rwandan because I always knew Rwandan but it's just practising my identity and understanding more about my identity. I didn't truly understand so hence why, before the trip, I was lost"

Delphine refers to the insecurities of being in the interstices between knowing she is Rwandan through her parents and an embodied understanding *what it means to be Rwandan* - that is, the difference between cognitive and the experiential that shapes spatial knowledge and notions of being in the world (Genz et al., 2023).

Young people also represented themselves as insecure beings as part of a wider collective experience of genocide, highlighting the extension of intergenerational circulations beyond the family to a wider community. Hence Aurore reflected:

"we all really don't know how to explain the genocide. We don't really know how to speak about it. We don't really know how to express our feelings about it, so we just we're left not speaking about it and that's how it is with everyone, umm, because it's a collective" (Aurore).

Whilst this does recall what Carr (1991) describes as the 'we-subject' of ontological insecurity, that is, the historical ubiquity of social insecurities, amongst participants this was understood in relation not to other individual person's experiences, but to a recognition of the we-subject as a collective – an understanding in Ubuntu (Ubumuntu in Kinywarwanda) that the individual being is part of the being of a larger and more significant relational, communal, societal, environmental and spiritual world (Mbiti, 1969). This is evidenced in Aurore's discussion of the community dynamics, with the use of the unspecified 'we', where the unique circumstances of the genocide make the genocide still unspeakable (Berckmoes et al., 2021).

In the Rwandan context, familial legacies of genocide are also collectivised in unique forms of social navigation shaped by a political context where talk of ethnicity is banned in public but continues to live below the surface in private (Ingabire et al., 2022; Marson-Reed & McLaughlin, 2021). Although young people recognise the necessities of the public discourse, Ingabire et al. (2022) note that tensions manifest in parent–child communication, and this was also present in our participants' recollections:

"my cousin she's half Hutu and Tutsi, so when growing up, we used to have conversations about kind of like how she felt being from both sides […] [my Dad's family] would always treat her bad or they

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[2] Online webinar, Opportunities for diaspora engagement. 2nd December 2021. See also 2009 Diaspora Policy (Republic of Rwanda, 2009)

would be talking about her behind her back […] I don't know, I had, I was just so confused as to the ideas like understand we are two different tribes, but what was the hatred that they had against us, like I really didn't understand, [..] and I was, yes, I was just so umm, yes, so lost" (Marie)

Marie's father fought with the RPF in the civil war, joining the family once Marie's mother and aunts had already left East Africa for the UK as refugees during the 1990s. She described feelings of being uncomfortable talking to him about those experiences, because he was not around growing up and because of what she perceived as a strict African patriarchal culture. Although Marie attended genocide remembrance events, she also drew attention to the incompleteness of these spaces for knowing about the history of the genocide, describing "being put in another room" as a child. Here Marie speaks of the silences that become permeated, embedded, and reproduced within and across collective practices, gendered family and parenting dynamics, and social memories, embodied within her uncertainties about herself in relation to her family and community.

Crossing scales between nation, community and self, it is also evident that intergenerational silences articulated with family migratory histories profoundly influenced how young British Rwandan participants in our study located themselves between Rwanda and the UK. For example, Marie reflected:

"I didn't feel I could claim being from Rwanda, for some reason, my friends would ask me oh where I'm from, I would just be like I'm from here [the UK] and I don't know from there I was like I don't know why I was so ashamed to kind of just say I'm African, I'm from Rwanda […] because growing up my parents didn't engage me in conversation surrounding [the genocide], I didn't really know how to kind of explain to my friends, let along myself" (Marie)

These reflections where echoed by Aurore in the following way:

"The people that weren't from Rwanda would ask me about Rwanda, I'd be like, yes, don't know, or they'd ask me about the genocide, yes, I don't know and it's like why, how, and it's embarrassing, it's my country, or they'd ask me about my family and "I'm like yes I don't know, how do you not know about your Auntie and your Uncle", […] it's uncomfortable to say I don't know"(Aurore)

Locatedness is a critical aspect of ontological security for migrant and diasporic communities' lived experiences of political belonging (Alakija, 2021; Sullivan & Akhtar, 2019). In participants' narratives we see that experiences of silences around family and collective histories forecloses their ability to conceive of themselves as Rwandan. Participants expressed this not only as an *un*belonging to Rwanda, but also a *not knowing* that the gets to the core of the person, captured in Marie's use of the word 'lost' (above). The way in which participants found it difficult to explain their own biographical histories to non-Rwandans also draws attention to the relational nature of ontological security, generating shame and embarrassment.

There is a disjuncture apparent between what the effects are of familial silences, gaps, and absences. Countering misinformation derived from parents and diaspora community sources, as discussed in the previous section, is a key concern of government. For the community associations involved in planning our visit, knowledge transmission was primarily orientated around filling in gaps as a means of building identity and patriotism. For Aegis Trust, rectifying knowledge gaps was built around instilling in young people the philosophy of never again, anchored in witnessing and humanising victims and perpetrators. Participants also experience silences as knowledge gaps, but these gaps are lived and embodied in their sense of self as part of both a family and collective, embodying the memories and anxieties around the collectivisation of the genocide and its transgenerational legacies.

6. Mobilities and the search for knowing as being

In political geography, ontological security is developed through spatial practices of place-making, connected to individuals' negotiations of stability and continuity over time. For Genz et al. (2023), the negotiation of ontological (in)security is "an ongoing process and practice of sense-making through which the subject aims to position itself in relation to its world", as a realization of individual agency in contexts of geopolitical (in)securities (p. 394). In relation to the function of travel in restoring senses of personhood, Hartmann's *Lose your mother* (2007), for example, is part of a longer Afro-diasporic literary tradition of journeying to recover and reconstruct the traces and stories of people kidnapped in Africa and family genealogies interrupted by migration, trafficking, and slavery (Stitt, 2018; Figueroa-Vásquez, 2020). Here, memory work is articulated around active spatial processes of restoring collective personhood at entwined scales - lending spatial orientations that fix destabilized senses of personhood as part of a broader collective set of histories and biographies.

Discussions provided examples of how engaging with Rwandan history through travel offers a way out from the destabilized senses of self in space and time characterizing their ontological insecurities. Nicole's experience is illustrative of this, as she says "I think I didn't really understand my Rwandese side. I, obviously the British side I understood because I grew up here". In her written diary she shared with the researchers, she elaborated on the impacts of these childhood contexts: "I had many unanswered questions about myself as a Rwandan which is why I wanted to partake in the trip". Nicole's description of the visit as an identity seeking practice is closely aligned with research around second-generation diaspora tourism that demonstrates tourism questing as a response to generational identity negotiations (Graf, 2017). Journeys take on importance in contexts of double-consciousness, where roots have become lost over time following personal or collective identity disruptions under conditions of racialisation (DeBerry-Spence & Izberk-Bilgin, 2021). Nicole's emphasis on unanswered questions suggests engaging with the visit was a process and practice of sense-making through which she aims to position itself in relation to a transnational setting that she only partially knew.

Obligation to parents to sustain transnational familyhood through engaging with officially authorised histories also appeared in the narratives of several of our participants, and is as a point of discussion in the literature on diaspora tourism (Miah et al., 2023). For example, describing his motivations, Matthew says:

"It was a bit of umm a sense of obligation to my Mum […] encouraging me, you know, come along because it's important to us … the genocide happening […]so umm yes, it was like, it started off with this sort of yes a bit of an obligatory thing which I didn't know much about"

Matthew's mother was heavily involved in diaspora community activities, and even though visiting Rwanda was not something he had much of an interest in before, his mother had urged him to participate on the trip. Following up, he described the genocide as the context for a "bit of a pressure umm to either take on that responsibility". He also contextualised his (lack of) involvement in the community, by comparing the collective African culture of his parents to the influence of individualistic Western cultures on his childhood. Delphine also compares herself to her Mum, uncles, and friends, who had formed a strong, close-knit Rwandan community that she had grown up with in the UK, when she notes:

"I knew I was Rwandan but I wasn't practising my Rwandan heritage if that makes sense […] I've always thought oh I need to actually know more about my country, where I'm actually from, because all I knew sort of thing was Uganda

Both Martin and Delphine perceived the visit as an opportunity to understand and therefore locate themselves in relation to in their social

worlds, framing learning about Rwanda as a collective held responsibility to others, that has been described as at heart of worldviews in African social configurations (Tschaepe, 2014).

Some of the participants revealed how questing/discovery was also linked to the future sense of self, as related to both economic, familial, and social security. Hence Nicole, speaking about her identity, recalled:

> [my identity] is something I wanted to know more about as I was a young black Rwandese-Burundian female with goals and ambitions for my future, but how can I achieve these without knowing my roots? Understanding how I am made possible here today? (Nicole)

Nicole had spent her childhood in contexts where she was uncertain of her place in transnational family formations, owing to the complex refugee journeys of her parents, and the silences around the communal divisions of ethnicity and genocide survivorship/perpetratorship that had persisted. Removed too, from reconciliation and dialogue processes built around unity in Rwanda, connecting with Rwanda and its history and contemporary realities was seen as a way to deepen a spatial and temporal understanding of her existence. This existence was understood not only to be her own, but also her parents' 'being-in-the-world' too. Her account illustrates the role that imaginations of the future have as 'anchor-points' (Genz et al., 2023, p. 395) in efforts to secure the self, amidst the intergenerational effects of geopolitics (see also Rosher, 2022).

7. Securing selves, securing families

Abramson (2019) suggests that practices of diasporic travel can be linked to practices of ontological securitization by assisting in the process of crafting, and generating a diasporic identity. This was mirrored in our study where, even over the course of such a short time, most of the participants expressed that through the immersive nature of the trip, they had gained a newfound sense of themselves as Rwandan. Aurore's reflections are illustrative of this:

> "now like eternally I'm able to feel Rwandan, I'm able to feel more confident and that has a big aspect, a big impact in my whole life, not even just the Rwandan part of my life, just in general, even when I'm studying, even when wherever I am you can see that I know myself more, you can see that I'm more confident within myself" (Aurore)

Aurore's view is particularly significant as it exemplifies the dimensions of ontological security associated with inner consistency and everyday biographical continuities (Bondi, 2014), where understanding herself as Rwandan contributing to a sense of being stable and continuous in time, over her course of life and across her spatial environment. Later in the interview she extended this to her future family, and a sense of security that she wishes to pass onto her children, which she says "I don't want them to have years where they're not feeling like they know they are Rwandan. They shouldn't go through what I went through".

As well as securing an inner consistency as Rwandan, becoming knowledgeable was also linked to hopes to contribute to the relational constitution of the self, in the context of lingering familial anxieties and instabilities, through intergenerational flows of dialogue. A complex reality that Nicole gave voice to thus:

> "I think what was mainly important for me was why umm, why my Mum and my grandfather, so my Mum's Dad, weren't able to talk to me about it and I think having seen what happened and like actually understanding what we saw, I think that allowed me to realise now I know why they didn't want to tell me or tell my brother or sister, so I think it just umm, it just put me in their shoes" (Nicole)

Nicole describes using the visit to Rwanda as a basis for developing deeper, more appreciative understandings about her families experiences'. These reflections speak to both the unique circumstances of parent-child relationship in the Rwandan diasporic family, considering Rwanda's violent and traumatising histories, but also the importance to

the young people of engaging with publicly constituted historical narratives, for reinterpretations of that relationship. Reinterpretations of their childhood memories weave their own biographies with those of their parents, grandparents, and siblings, allowing then to grapple with prior uncertainties derived from intergenerational legacies of the genocide.

For others, in reaching an understanding of their parents' biographies they made a conscious decision to actively relate to their family in new ways, offering opportunities for decentred actions and a means through which ontological security may be forged in relational interconnectedness to kin. Some, focused more on generating dialogue with parents, whilst others, such as Fiona, focused on siblings:

> "my little sister she's getting older, she's 11 now, and so she's now having to understand about that period, so I want to ensure that she is fully aware of all the facts, in the right way as well, because now I know, I'm able to ensure that she's able to kind of comprehend the truth instead of, and kind of avoid that confusion that I had to go through [...] I feel like I want to ensure that she doesn't really go through that period of being lost, not knowing how to identify herself"

In these extracts, the circulation of knowledge about Rwanda's history and its rebuilding becomes significant to the construction of family relations, as the relational basis of young people's ontological security (Botterill et al., 2020). Place-based practices of intergenerational storytelling too, can offer a site of radical, collective repair work facilitating the re-evaluation of known histories and prior knowledges (Scott, 2020). In the accounts above, we see how memory work is articulated around active spatial processes of restoring the self as 'being in family', maintaining securities across the generations to uphold themselves.

Maintaining security of the self was also related by participants to a care ethic that places emphasis on ubuntu/ubumuntu, an importance of the self as being entwined with communal others, through recognising others' humanity. Restoring collective humanity is at the centre of Rwandan models of healing and, as experienced by our participants with Aegis Trust's programme, gave shape to understandings of their parents' sacrifices. Those whose parents had been part of the RPF expressed a duty to uphold discourses of unity at heart of Rwandan states' security-related knowledge. It is in the context of ongoing circulations of ethnic stigmatization that harms to their family members were perceived. Thus Yolande noted:

> "if I feel or see that there is anything that denies what happened, it does trigger me [...] because it's just it's basically saying my Dad's experience doesn't matter and it's not true [...] because I live in that, so I, when I'm with my father's side and I'm with my father I'm hearing about the struggle capturing the country. When I'm with my mother and her side I was hearing about how they had to survive and run away and hide and just for 100 days. So I'm hearing both sides of the struggle, so I have to defend it, as a product of that, you know"

Following the visits, Yolande became more active in the community and on social media, in contributing to community and state-led responses to genocide denial in diaspora. Her father had fought, along with 600 other men, with the RPF in the 1994 Liberation War. In the extract, she speaks of these family histories that lie behind seeking social justice, actions that she felt was necessary as resistance against the ongoing negation of the experiences and memories of other survivors and victims. Reflecting work that situates young people's geopolitical agencies around social justice as a response to ontological securities arising from intergenerational circulations (Botterill et al., 2020), Yolande identifies her parents' experiences as something she continues to live in, as what she calls a 'trigger' for action. This suggests that the storying of the genocide and the rebuilding of Rwanda experienced by our participants takes on much broader significances in the context of what it means to exist in Rwandan families. In this context, state-led securitization is not reducible as a mode of regulation or surveillance

around Rwanda's nation-building projects, but as a resource for managing collective insecurities, brought about by the weight of intergenerational traumas.

8. Conclusion

This article began by using the concept of ontological security to examine how diaspora youth respond to the securitising practices of the emigration state. Whilst national historical narratives around unity produce the diasporic family as a site of and for national security, young people's childhood formations of the self was the central reference point for interpretations of those histories. Private spaces of the home, along with semi-private spaces of remembrance, were the settings for unstable and uncertain flows of knowledge between family members, siblings, parents, grandparents, and wider collective memories and experiences of the 1994 genocide that diffuse feelings of insecurity and uncertainties in the present or towards the future. Engaging with official histories functions as powerful spatio-temporal imaginations, generating for young people referential time-space anchors used to negotiate inherited notions of anxiety and insecurities. The models of reconciliation they experienced for themselves, based on restoration of the personhood through humanisation of genocide victims and perpetrators, contributed to deeper understanding of their parents' stories and the instabilities around ethnicity in the community. Using travel to engage with the emigration state, restoring biographical erasures contributed to generating political subjectivities as diasporic Rwandans, negating existing insecurities and stabilising a spatial positioning.

It should be underlined that the Rwandan emigration state is not experienced evenly in diaspora. Responses to state and community forms of genocide commemoration and remembrance are mixed, with some finding engaging with collective histories a tool of healing, with others experiencing state silences, oppressions and violence (Orjuela, 2022), especially those young people continuing to live with inherited familial stigmas and fear. This is exacerbated by public forms of what Baldwin (2019) calls survivor nationalism that criminalises talk of ethnicity as genocide denialism, leading to the persistence of an underlying, unspoken identification and moral ordering of victims and perpetrators, with implications for ongoing perpetuation of collective guilt and stigmatization of offspring of perpetrators (Mukashema & Mullet, 2015). Thus, this article can only provide a partial snapshot of the entwining of state and everyday insecurities of diaspora engagement. Nonetheless, we highlight the role of ontological insecurities generated in relation to state insecurity, as a tool for explaining young people's geopolitical agencies. In our examination of the interwoven and interconnected spatial and temporal negotiation of ontological (in)security, we offer grounds for further research expanding understandings of state-led extraterritorial securitization to explain how subjects form ontological insecurities, as grounds for both mobilising and challenging governments' broader political-economic agendas.

Ontological (in)securities assists us to think differently about the emigration state, particularly in the aftermath and legacies of traumas of violence and displacement. Firstly, while generative of a constitutive account of power, governmentality approaches rely on accounts where agency is invoked in and through individual's strategic positionings in relation to state agendas, articulated through accumulations of capital and status under conditions of neoliberal individualizations. Whilst we concur with Bailey, Drbohlav, and Salukvadze (2018) that as articulations between state agendas and the conduct of everyday diasporic life works to invoke governance at different scales and levels, applications of governmentality have only just started to provide nuanced accounts of the complexity and excesses of emotions, relations affects and imaginings that exceed governance (Délano Alonso & Mylonas, 2017). Appreciating such forces is necessary to contribute to debates about how diaspora strategies travel, take root and acquire legitimacy amongst a varied set of actors, but also create openings for political agencies to develop. The framework of ontological security used here is a helpful

departure point for exploring the experiences of the Rwandan generation born in and growing up in diaspora after 1994. Using the theoretical development of ontological security from Rwandan and Afro-diasporic literature, we argue that there is a need to elaborate understandings of the role of the emigration state through intersections of the structural and everyday legacies of conflict and displacement embedded in intergenerational parent-child domestic intimacies and relations. Necessary to such a project is engaging with young people's reworking of state narratives and discourses, in their (re)building of diasporic forms of care and collectivity.

Secondly, we contribute to a growing body of work reassessing assumptions about the spatial and political articulations of diaspora youth (Mavroudi, 2023), drawing upon a multidimensional conceptualisation of security to reveal the interconnected scales and expressions of young people's securities in the everyday. Our analysis of 'being in the world' and 'being-in family' as lenses for young people's responses to the emigration state offers a framework through which to consider the centrality of embodied knowledges and agencies of how diaspora youth position themselves, and action, encounters with diaspora building projects. Whilst diasporic securitization may in a Foucauldian sense be distributed in bodies and selves (Fluri, 2014) we demonstrate, like Feghali et al. (2021) a need to unfold the work and labour of creation through which securities are assembled, through various components of intergenerational listening, circulations and movements across scale and space. In our empirical research, young people's ontological securitising practices respond to, and indeed are made by possible by those assembled by the state. In turn, further work should analyse young people's securitising practices as entangled with those of the political institutions of diaspora governance, connected to the reproduction of 'power geometries' (Massey, 1993) at different scales.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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