



The Identity Crisis among Peoples from Mixed Parents from Countries under in Inter-States Conflicts: Case of Rwanda, D.R. Congo and Burundi

Safari Dieudonné¹, Cyuzuzo Alice², Mathias Twahirwa, PhD.³

¹Faculty of social science master program of psychomotricity-Pstcho-trauma and lecturer at Université Anglican de Bukavu (DRC), PsyD (Doctorate of Psychology at GIBU-USA).

²Midwife at Kibirizi Hospital and College Saint Bernard Kansi as midwife teacher, south province of Rwanda

³Faculty Dean at Kibogora Polytechnic, western Province of Rwanda

ABSTRACT : The study was carried out by 5 mixed- people living in Burundi, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, within the framework of guided interview seminars, in order to analyze the construction of mixed-ethics people in the context of identity conflicts due to ethnic or cultural conflicts, otherwise known as "ethnocultural conflicts". Mestizos are a minority in the states where we live, and are considered problematic in the various societies of Africa's Great Lakes region country. My fieldwork revealed that mixed-ethnic people in these three countries are victims of several atrocities, including ethnic marginalization, nepotism, socio-political demonization and economic discrimination. In this context, I have attempted to identify the main actors involved in identity conflicts among mixed-ethnic people, and to propose a perspective of dialogue as a solution to the situations of the mixed-ethnic people mentioned above. On this basis, a number of recommendations have been put forward to reinforce the hope of positive action at regional level for the promotion of peace and lasting stability, particularly for mixed people who are increasingly victims of appearance status at UN level.

KEY WORDS: Identity crisis, Peoples. Mixed Parents, Inter-state conflicts, Rwanda, D.R. Congo and Burundi

I. INTRODUCTION

In the context of our work, the term mixing-inter-states population is a complex word and too much of a political and sociological exaggeration; it refers to or concerns a person whose parents belong to different racial or ethnic groups (Genestier, 1991). The ideology of ethnic and cultural mixing controls decisions and contributes in practice to the isolation of individuals and their de-socialisation. The open society quickly becomes an area of exclusion, because any strictly unitary system generates pockets of marginalisation (Genestier, 1991). This article looks at the mixed identity experience of adults from mixed couples, one of whose parents is Congolese and considers himself or herself to be Congolese, and the other Burundian or Rwandan from the different ethnic groups of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Tutsi and Hutu ethnic groups from Rwanda and Burundi. The issue of ethnic mixing in different states and identities was raised in the 1990s or so, but mixing has always existed. For centuries, humans have practised exogamy. However, the problems of mixed people are not politically, diplomatically or socially recognised in the countries of the African Great Lakes region.

Depending on the political, social and historical contexts, mixed people have been assigned existing racial, political, social and ethnic categories. The generations of mixed-race adults in the CEPGL region are the subject interesting our study, those peoples who's their parents each belong to categories considered to be distinct from their heterogeneous origins. For a long time, theoretical discourses considered the identity of people from racial or ethnic couples to be problematic, because they assumed that pathological of identity disorders would necessarily stem from two incompatible ethnic identities and that mixed people inevitably experienced a situation of marginality and exclusion, leading to psychological imbalances. My study is based on 5 cases and seeks to identify the identity conflicts invoked by mixed adults living in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi and Rwanda. *"Do people from mixed backgrounds seek to build a unique identity according to the surrounding social norms? In what ways and what extent do the views of others on the phenotype of people from mixed race are affected in terms of identity conflict? ;What are the conflict resolution strategies used with mixed-race individuals experiencing identity conflict ?"*



II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Notion of mixed marriage

The French dictionaries use the concept of "mixed marriage" to describe a marriage between two people of different nationalities, races or religions (Le Petit Larousse Illustré, 2007 and Le Petit Robert, 1988). The human and social sciences also use the concept of mixed or heterogamous couple to refer to a couple that unites two people who differ from each other in religious, ethnic and national terms (Petit, 2003). Currently, mixed marriages are a growing phenomenon, directly associated with immigration (Parrisi, 2016). More than 300 years ago in Great Lakes Africa region countries, immigration phenomena due to colonial strategies, wars, economic exploitation and regional integration had favoured a migratory flow as Milan et al. have affirmed; despite ethnocultural diversity, the growth of migratory waves in recent decades is the result of the number of mixed couples that continue to form (Milan, et al., 2010). In the same vein, however, we note that there are few studies or researches on mixed couples in Africa (Therrien & Le Gall, 2013).

2.2. Identity and the myth of double identity

Identity encompasses notions of self-consciousness and self-representation (Codol, 1981). It consists in supposing that an individual's identity is constructed not only through his or her membership of groups, but through that membership. This is not the case. Collective identities are merely the material for the "fabrication" of individual identity (Giraud, 1987). In the same context, Giraud said that the notion of the myth of double identity is wrong because it is contradictory in the term, and only has a biological reality. It is part and parcel of a reunifying conception of culture, because it has real social effectiveness in that it serves contradictory strategies, some aimed at reinforcing the marginalisation of disadvantaged social groups, particularly immigrant populations, while others are implemented by groups seeking to combat the depreciation of which they are victims (Giraud, 1987).

2.3. Why ethnic mixing in Rwanda, Congo and Burundi?

Ethnic mixing is considered to be a cohabitation, an inter-ethnic marriage in a given geographical area or community, of individuals with different ethnic, social and cultural origins. In a different context at regional level, it is the same kind of practice.

2.3.1. Rwandan-Burundian context

Since independence, there have been many marriages at elite level between Zairians (Congolese) and the sons and daughters of (former) Rwandan Tutsi refugees and Hutu-Burundian refugees in Congo-Zaïre. The favourable economic policies of DR Congo since the Belgian colonisation and after the independence of the DR Congo, the Rwandan Hutus who were not refugees in 1994 married thousands of Congolese without forgetting the Tutsis from Burundi who were not refugees. The Democratic Republic of the Congo was for them an Eldorado of security, economics and above all a state of men of integrity and great intelligence; this was the basis of the interest of the Rwandans and Burundians woman to marrying the Congolese men. There are no data on the frequency and number of these marriages. Only the exception of Banyamulenge Congolese Tutsis, who living on the Itombwe high plateaux in Kivu, they had a reputation for being "proud" and haughty and for not "mixing" with other ethnic groups.

2.3.2. Congolese context

In the Congolese context, inter-ethnic marriages between Rwandan and Burundian women were interesting on Congolese men, especially those from Eastern Congo, because of their supposedly attractive physical beauty. Few Congolese women were attractive to Rwandan and Burundian men, whether Burundian Hutu or Tutsi and Rwandans Hutu or Tutsis were largely married by Congolese men.

2.4. Ethnic identity

Ethnic identification refers to the relationship that exists between a person and a group with which they believe they share a common ancestry due to common characteristics, common socio-cultural experiences, or both (Baumann, 2004). At this point, Ferréol and Jucquois explain that the concept of ethnicity, derived from the Greek ethnos (meaning race, people), refers to a human grouping that claims the same origin, a common name and a common cultural tradition. Its members are aware that they share an identical language, religion, territory and history (Ferréol & Jucquois, 2003). It is wrong, on the one hand, to consider all ethnic groups as remnants of an ancestral era, and, on the other, to identify them with tribes (sub-divisions of the ethnic group) or nations, in that they do not have the political, institutional and social characteristics of such groups. Ethnicities do not have clearly identifiable physical characteristics, but rather cultural differences from the dominant Anglo-Saxon Protestant model. Ethnicity becomes an alternative



form of identification of class consciousness which, for some, constitutes a universal attribute and not just a dimension relating to the struggle of groups generally defined as “*ethnic*” (Ferréol & Jucquois, 2003).

Ethnicity refers to the process of identification with a group, the consciousness of belonging. In 1971, in *Economie et société*, Ferréol and his colleague Weber defined ethnic groups as “*human groups which harbour a subjective belief in a community of origin based on similarities in external habitus or mores, or both, or on memories, so that this belief becomes important*” (Ferréol and Jucquois, 2003).

2.5. Identity strategy

Identity strategies is a situation of developing strategies that have different purposes, from which it allows the individual or a group to see social recognition; to allow him to identify with a specific social group or, conversely, to be able to disengage from it; to allow valorization, because it has economic or political interests, or psychological benefits. “Identity strategies appear to be the result of individual and collective elaboration and they appear in the adjustments made according to the variation of situations and aims expressed by the players. Three elements are necessary: the players, the situation in which they are involved and the goals pursued by the players” (Camilleri, 1990). Camilleri studied the following types of identity strategy: the assimilation strategy, which aims to be as similar as possible to the nationals. It can lead to cultural conformity, loss of identity and physical changes (hairstyle, clothing, etc.). Taken to its extreme, it can lead to a break with family ties and the community to which one belongs; the strategy of revalorising singularity: the aim of this strategy, in contrast to the previous one, is to preserve the ties and culture of origin by preserving it. This reaction sometimes tends towards idealisation of one's own group; intermediate strategies between the two consist of seeking similarities without renouncing one's own difference. Sociology, on the other hand, is mainly interested in the identity strategies put in place by collective movements.

2.6. Identity conflicts among people of mixed race

Based on the explanations of the researcher of Jean-Pierre, he had shown that identity-based civil wars oppose groups to which one belongs by birth and from which it is impossible or very difficult to change. They can also be called “racial” or ethnic. They could even be called national wars, which would be in line with the etymology (from the Latin *natio*, birth) but would be a source of confusion because of the common usage of the term “international” for wars between states.

Partisan civil wars are the ones that differ most from interstate wars, because individuals can, to a certain extent, choose sides. And the main characteristics of civil war ideologies respond to the need to overcome the difficulties that this freedom of choice creates for the cohesion of the groups in conflict. In identity wars, these difficulties are less acute, because the groups in conflict have social and sometimes territorial boundaries which, like those of states, are known in advance and difficult or even impossible for individuals to cross. This is why identity-based groups are often particularly effective in dealing with situations of violence, and identity-based civil wars are the ones that have the most similarities with inter-state wars. All people have multiple characteristics that make them belong to different categories: sex, height, skin colour, place of birth, language, religion, profession, wealth, citizenship (Jean-Pierre, 2001).

Of course, wars and identity conflicts are as old as humanity itself. But their predominance in Africa's Great Lakes region seems unacceptable, especially at the start of the third millennium or century of political modernity. Intercultural dialogue enables people to understand cultural differences in terms of the plural unity of the human condition. This does not mean that cultural differences have no substance. On the contrary, they are important in the sense that they are a source of mutual enrichment. Since the time of the Belgian colonisers, Congo-Belgium has seen a large influx of Rwandan and Burundian immigrants, with the result that the economy of the mining industry has followed their interests. During the process and after the independence of the Democratic Republic of Congo until the 1990s, Rwandan and Burundian women, whether refugees or sexual emigrants, became interested in Zairian men, who were considered intelligent when it came to sex and love. The DRC was therefore a sexual and amorous El Dorado for women from these two countries bordering on the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Mixed people from the east of Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi and Rwanda have many problems of ethnic and cultural identification. Hence the conflicts in Rwanda, Burundi and DRC in 1972, 1988-1990 and 1993 in Burundi, the Rwandan conflicts in 1959, 1965, 1973-1975, 1990-1994 in Rwanda and the Congolese conflicts in 1993 in North Kivu, 1996 to the present days have contributed to several identity crises among mixed people from these states mentioned above, including: discriminatory classification on the basis of nationality and ethnics groups, economic, political, cultural and community discrimination. Within the



Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL), with the exception of the Bakongo ethnic group in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which practices a matrimonial culture, other ethnic groups in the region practice a patriarchal culture.

This means that, in 90% of our region, children belong as much to their father's origins as to their mother's; but the many conflicts, wars of aggression between states, between ethnic groups, wars of economic competition between the superpowers in Africa have been like hell for people whose parents have origins in neighbouring countries.

Among Congolese, a child whose mother is Rwandan is considered to be of dubious or suspect nationality. Among the Rwandans, a Congolese whose mother is Rwandan is considered a foreigner "Umunyamahanga" or a Gicucu "a fool", or even Umutamenya "without intelligence or reasoning" or Udashoboye "someone who is worthless", Ibigarasha "the worthless".

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, people of mixed nationality, with one parent being Rwandan or Burundian in more than one case, are taken and understood to be of dubious nationality, while others take them to be traffickers or spies, as in the case of the Congolese notice known as Tchiani "who says that a pure Congolese is someone with mother and father of Congolese origin only" and in the Republic of Burundi, people of mixed nationality are automatically considered to be foreigners, hence the term "Ibivamahanga". In three countries in the region, people of mixed race are victims of ethnic, family, cultural, institutional and political discrimination.

III. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In this part of the methodology, I use semi-structured interviews, similar to thematic life stories, with mixed-race people living in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi to understand the identity of mixed-race people. The selection criterion was to be a person from a family in which one or other of the parents was of Congolese, Rwandan or Burundian origin, living either together in one of the above-mentioned countries or separately in both. The observation technique was used to understand the morphology inherited by the individual from mixed families (Bantu, semi-Nilothic-Hamitic morphology) and the psycho-behavioural attitudes, given his or her identity situation. The methodology used to analyse the interviews was presented.

Before we begin, we should explain the method used to conduct the interviews and introduce the mixed-race people interviewed. Once the interviews had been transcribed, we tried to identify the main themes by comparing the interviews with each other and drawing out the similarities and differences.

I examined the factors that could explain these similarities and divergences, and decided that they could be separated into two categories: on the one hand, the individual trajectory, personal experiences and the individual; and on the other, the overall socio-cultural context and the pressure of ethno-cultural categories.

IV. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

This chapter enabled us to analyse, examine, test and interpret the results of the research. The interview guide and questionnaire guided us into our research. The aim was to understand and analyse the difficulties of identity conflicts experienced by mixed people in countries experiencing inter-state conflict, in particular Rwanda, Burundi and DR Congo.

4.1. Cases recapitulation

Table 1: Summary of cases studied

No	Initial of names	Sex	Ages	Place of birth	Father origin	Mather origin	Mixing with
1	BJM	M	33	RDC	RDC	Rwanda	Congolese-Rwandans
2	BNB	M	42	Rwanda	RDC	Rwanda	Congolese-Rwandans
3	TMJ	F	28	RDC	RDC	Rwanda	Congolese-Rwandans
4	MJM	F	30	Burundi	RDC	Burundi	Congolese-Burundian-Rwandans
5	ZJM	M	27	RDC	RDC	Rwanda	Congolese-Rwandans

Source: our field count

Before I begin, I would like to point out that some of our mixing peoples have been victims of parental rejection, 80% of them having been rejected by their fathers and kept by their mothers, some of them in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi and Rwanda.



Case 1: *BJM, aged 33 old, father of Zairean origin (DRC) and mother of Rwandan origin. At the age of 10, BJM was forced to leave his father to go and live in Rwanda with his mother. BJM was the victim of insults from his maternal uncles, who identified him as Kinyendaro (child with no paternal origin), Igicucu (fool) or Umutwa (Mutwa or pygmy). In many ceremonies, it was difficult for him to identify with Rwandan or Congolese culture. In Rwanda, he is considered as a foreigner, while some inhabitants of the Democratic Republic of Congo refer to him as a Rwandan and a spy.*

Case 2 : *BNB, aged 42, was born in Rwanda to a Congolese father, who worked in the country as a secondary school teacher before the 1994 Tutsi genocide, and a Rwandan mother. BNB mother was killed during the Tutsi genocide, and even his father was killed by the Interahamwe in Rwanda for marrying a Tutsi woman. BNB was brought up by his maternal aunt living in Rwanda, and several of his young children were supported by the Rwandan government because they had survived the genocide. He, who was also saved from the genocide, was marginalised by the system in place. As a child of Umutwa of Congolese origin, he has been deprived of his father's or mother's inheritance, as both families have always considered him a foreigner to this day ; BNB does not know whether he can identify himself as Congolese or Rwandan, given the cultural and political differences between the two states.*

Case 3: *TMJ is 28 years old and was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo to a Congolese father and a mother of Rwandan origin. TMJ is a beautiful, intelligent young woman who has just finished studying economics at one of Bukavu's universities. She sees herself as a victim of ethnic marginalisation by her parents on both sides, her father's family acquiring her not as a Congolese but as a Rwandan Tutsi daughter because their son could not give birth to a purely Tutsi child on her mother's side; she is considered as a Congolese and not as a daughter of Rwandan origin. Some of the boys' friends' fathers refused their sons to marry her because they knew she is a Rwandan daughter and Tutsi women and her ethnic are accused in general of being unfaithful in their marriages. TMJ lacks self-confidence and experiences conflicts of cultural and ethnic identification due to her mixture with a Rwandan father and a Congolese woman.*

Case 4: *MJM is 30 years old. She was born in Burundi to a father of Congolese origin from South Kivu and a mother of mixed Rwandan and Burundian origin. On her mother's side, her grandfather is of Rwandan origin and her grandmother of Burundian origin. MJM has always been called CEPGL because her parents are all from Rwandan, Burundian and Congolese origin, and she has been lucky enough to live in three countries with her parents for over 20 years. MJM has the problem of identifying herself as Rwandan, Congolese or Burundian on a cultural level; it is difficult for her to appear as purely Congolese or purely Burundian-Rwandan. MJM therefore presents a blur of ethnic, national and cultural conflicts.*

Case 5: *ZJM, aged 27, was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo to a father of Congolese origin and a mother of Rwandan origin. ZJM had never been to Rwanda, the country of origin of his mother, who was originally from Kibuye in western Rwanda. What surprised him was that many people accused him of being a Rwandan Tutsi traitor on Congolese soil. It's difficult to identify with the origins of my father or my mother, because I love both my parents and all their origins, but the environment that surrounds us disturbs me, to the point of wanting to flee this region to other foreign countries because I feel so marginalised.*

V. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTATS

This part of the discussion of the results takes up all the theoretical explanations of various authors, combining them with the data collected from our field interviewees, some of whom live in the Congo, others in Rwanda and Burundi, or both.

5.1. The ethno-cultural context of identity conflict in mixed individuals

In his book *La diversité ethnoculturelle: entre la peur et la fascination* (Ethnocultural diversity: between fear and fascination), André Jacob illustrated that ethnocultural diversity is part of our daily lives in one way or another. In *Ethnocultural Diversity at the Heart of Society*, Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor presented the fact that within the mixed society, a crisis of reasonable accommodation is observable, so much so that they state that “*the most important factor is certainly related to the insecurity of the minority*” (Jacob, 2011 and Richard & Taylor, 2008).

Based on the case studies of our interviewees, our results coincide exactly with those of Richard and Tylor; or *Bikorimana, Byamungu, Teta, Murekatete and Zahinda* being the mixed people lacking identity positioning at ethnic, national and political levels



in Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. This is the root cause of individual and identity insecurity in this country.

5.2. The regional socio-political context in identity conflicts among mixed individuals

In the words of the inter-peace organisation, in their book entitled *Manipulation of identity and stereotypes* published in 2013. The African Great Lakes Region (Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda) has been the scene of violence of all kinds for the past 60 years. Very soon after independence, the young states of the region, in particular Burundi and Rwanda, were faced with violence characterised by large-scale ethnic massacres, thousands of people in exile, widespread insecurity economic stagnation and a sub-regional unstable socio-political environment (ADEPAE, 2011).

On this point, Franch points out that all observers who have studied the dynamics of the Great Lakes region agree on the fact that manipulations of identity play an important role in fuelling violent conflict (Franch, 1995) and political conflict. In one of his writings, Gérard Prunier concludes that one of the fundamental reasons behind the cyclical crises in the Great Lakes region is *"the uncertainty of multiple identities in Africa"*. Governments can manipulate what exists. The violence in the so-called Congolese conflict, which for a time became a war involving the whole continent, was the result of the unanswered questions that the genocide in Rwanda generated in a brutal way (Gérard, 2009). For his part, and on the subject of conflicts in the same region, Autesserre, in his book on *"les troubles du Congo (RDC)"*, establishes a direct link between the manipulation of identity in the region and the recurring violence in the east of the DRC.

In his view, the authorities in Kinshasa *"exploited local tensions between the indigenous"* and Banyarwanda communities in order to recruit political and military allies (Autesserre, 2010).

The author goes on to say that the commanders of the armed groups have used the most obvious division, namely *"veryone's hatred of people of Rwandan origin, to create hundreds of other potential divisions based on local problems that have often led to violence"*, and even sees a link between the complexity of this violence and *"the failure to consolidate peace in the DRC"* (Autesserre, 2010). According to our observations and research in the field, several authors have written in favour of Rwanda and Burundi with great force for the destabilisation of the DRC, it has been observed that Rwanda and Burundi are also used or manipulated by mixed populations in their interests of wars based on the plundering of natural resources, mixing persons or mixed populations have played an important role in these Machiavelique plans of Rwanda and Burundi in the destabilisation of the East of Democratic Republic of Congo under western economics profits; as consequences the cases interviewed in particular: Bikorimana, Byamungu, Teta, Murekatete and Zahinda presented political and identity problems on the part of the states in which they live, where they are marginalised by members of the local communities, where they calling them spies, traitors and many others, persons of whores, with no skin, no exact morphology, idiots, pygmies etc.

Our mixed interlocutors presented a wide range of identity, ethno-cultural and politico-institutional problems, under the auspices of the segregationist, marginalisation and ideological policies in which the three countries are engaged for their politico-economic and power-emergence interests between the states.

5.3. Regional integration and identity conflicts in mixed populations

Lazare L., asserts that the countries of the Great Lakes sub-region are marked by a highly complex regional dynamic with local cleavages and national conflicts that often take on cross-border dimensions (Lazare, 2014), has this point; he adds that since the 1960s, whenever a conflict has taken place in one of the region's states, the equilibrium of neighboring countries has also been threatened. This was the case with the Rwandan Tutsi genocide of 1994, which had repercussions on the outbreak of the first conflict in Zaire on the day of eight the DRC (Lazare, 2014). According to Arsène M.B., the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL) has been dysfunctional for over two decades, as a result of the political conflicts that have deeply undermined its member states, Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC. Founded on September 20, 1976, the CEPGL aims at economic integration and cross-border cooperation for the development of the African Great Lakes region. Many studies have shown that this organization, with its integrationist aims, was much more formal and that its institutions were largely dominated by the interpersonal relations of political and, I would add, ethnic leaders, rather than by real state relations (Kabamba, 2000 and Mutabazi, 2004).

As the populations of the CEPGL circulated freely and marriages between the populations of either country could leave or enter a country without visas or controls, the Rwandans could come to the DRC to drink "Kudumba" sorghum beer, and the Congolese could go to Rwanda to drink "Kuvumba inzoga" without problems, and to Burundi to drink "Gusorora"; In Rwanda, the culture of



Gugerera (when an adult man visits a household, he is offered a woman as a sleeping mat) was benevolent among the Congolese, with the adage that a woman is the common property of the family “*Umugore n'umuryango*”. Congolese men were also encouraged to seek out or want to sleep in Rwanda, as there were no sexual requirements.

The ancient Burundian culture, which considered a woman or a girl to be a male rug or carpet “*Umutambukanyi nakarago kabahisi*”, was also behind Congolese men's interest in Burundian women, as the only thing they had to offer was sex with their daughters. Cultural conditions were behind the most dynamic reinforcement of integration within the CEPGL countries, and the intense productivity of mixed children. Identity insecurity, intense marginalization and the growing exophobia of mixed-race or mixed-race people are all factors likely to exacerbate inter-state conflicts or hinder regional integration.

5.4. Identity conflict actors among mixed individuals, strategic groups, their diversity and contradictions.

States and their armies, ethnic groups and populations, refugees or displaced persons, the UN and its peace missions in the region (MONUSCO) and the regional organizations of the ICGLR, representatives of local civil society associations, NGOs and armed gangs are the main players in the identity conflicts of mixed populations living in the countries of the African Great Lakes region:

5.4.1. Political and military players in Rwanda

Rwandan politico-military actors intervene to support Congolese Tutsis in several human rights atrocities. According several report, since 1996, Kigali regime has regarded the nearby Hutu refugee camps as a threat to its security. Their armies therefore supported the mainly Tutsi rebellions of the AFDL, RDC, RCD, CNDP, M23 and many others. The regime in Kigali already poses as the defender of the Tutsi minority, to the extent that even when Burundian Tutsis are threatened, it is Rwanda that reacts with the most ardour. Through the media, ambitions for territorial expansion are relayed, and on the ground, according to several researchers and reports, the Rwandan army violates the territorial integrity of its neighbours, plundering its natural resources (diamonds, coltan, gold, redwood and ebony). At home, people or individuals of mixed ethnicity are victims, without knowing the origin of the situations that create the problems of conflicts, since they are part of the minority groups involved in the conflicts between the opposing groups.

5.4.2. The government of Burundi and its army

Les gouvernements burundais se caractérisent par leur ambiguïté. Ils choisissent le Rwanda par crainte d'être renversés. Les intérêts politiques font que les dirigeants burundais épargnent le Rwanda et attaquent la RDC pour poursuivre les rebelles du FNL sur le territoire congolais, mais aussi pour piller les richesses de la région et positionner leurs militaires dans un des districts de Kiliba pour contenir les attaques des rebelles. Paradoxically, they share fishing activities on Lake Tanganyika with the DRC. As a result, mixed-race people are victims of all kinds of violence at local and regional level.

5.4.3. the DRC's political leaders and their army

In many respects, the Congolese authorities have been weakened by the decay of the state. They have less initiative to get to the bottom of land and nationality issues. They do less to stop threats or to protect Hutus threatened by Tutsis. The army and local authority side with the government, which is accused of mismanaging the country's mining and natural resources. The mestizos are victims of a number of situations that undermine their integrity and dignity at state and regional level.

5.4.4. People of Tutsi ethnic origin (Banyamulenge, Burundi) and Hutus

Despite the inter-ethnic history of Tutsis and Hutus in the region, they have long enjoyed good relations. But wars, ethnicism and xenophobia have contributed to the loss of harmonious relations between the Tutsis of Burundi, Congo and Rwanda, to the point of internationalizing their ethnic problems and making mixed populations the most victimized in the region.

5.4.5. The United Nations and its specialized missions (MONUSCO)

Regional organizations such as the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), the African Union and the international community, even if they don't speak the same language, support efforts to promote peace and stability in the region, by combating militias and armed gangs. They also fund inter-community mediation and reconciliation conferences, both at local and regional level, but they focus more on specific ethnic groups than on mixed populations, so far in all four corners of the world, with the exception of the countries of Africa's Great Lakes region. United Nations programs at regional level do not always include agents for the protection of mixed populations.

5.4.6. The ICGLR

This organization is expected to devise actions likely to bring lasting peace to the region. Its ambitious aim is to "launch a process in which the leaders of the countries of the Great Lakes region will work together to agree on a number of principles of good



neighborliness, stability, peace, development, etc., and define and implement a series of action programs to put an end to the cyclical return of conflict and bring about a lasting peace in the region, and will define and implement a series of action programs with a view to putting an end to the cyclical return of conflicts and bringing lasting peace, stability, security, democracy and development to the whole region, but in their agendas mixed populations are not announced and protected by regional policy.

5.4.7. *Armed groups (Mai Mai, FDLR and FNL)*

These groups do not follow the logic of understanding between peoples, and have their own interests and agendas. Their arguments are different. Some subcontract the work of politico-military actors, while others improvise themselves as protectors of "ethnic communities" without a mandate from them. In all of this, it's the mestizos who have to pay for their interests and their ferocious behavior, which increasingly introduces mestizos into a deep fear and identity conflict experienced by other well-defined ethnic groups.

5.4.8. *Civil society groups (NGOs, associations, churches)*

Normally, these groups should not belong to governmental or ethnic groups, but to the population as a whole, which is considered a "living force" of the people. Consequently, they take an active part in conflicts through their speeches, declarations and stances in favor of or against one or other of the conflicting parties. But some members of civil society, churches and human rights organizations are trying to sensitize the population not to give in to the political rhetoric of their leaders. Some so-called civil society activists proliferate teachings of hatred, divisionism, ethnicity and segregationism, which have the effect of weakening the daily lives of mixed individuals, leading to identity crises and conflicts at individual and community level.

5.4.9. *Human rights organizations*

Human rights organizations denounce the negative attitudes of leaders, militia groups and military-nationals. Leaders and members of civil society have a difficult relationship with political actors. As advocates of the people, they are exposed to the malice of political leaders. As a result, some are hated in person, or even killed by government services, while others rally to power and play the government's game by claiming to represent the population with misleading "we" statements.

5.4.10. *Inter-state dialogue on the issue of regional integration and the policy of popular mixing as a sustainable solution to identity conflicts.*

Dialogue refers to a type of communication between several people or groups of people. Dialogue is distinct from discussion and debate: it refers to a mode of conversation that necessarily involves reason, discernment, accuracy and wisdom, as well as an interpenetration of convergent and convincing arguments, as the dialogue unfolds among the interlocutors (Phillipe, 2023). According to Dibi, intercultural dialogue means learning to manage cultural diversity within the dual dynamic of differences and the right to resemblances. It means integration in the sense not of pure assimilation, but rather of complementarity (Dibi, 1994). In concrete terms, two strong, competing ideas form the basis of our thinking: on the one hand, the ethno-identitarian conflictuality often experienced by mixed people in the context of their identity, without forgetting the process of democratization and regional integration in the Great Lakes countries of Africa; on the other hand, the spirit of tolerance that each of the ethnic groups or cultures of mixed people claims to embody, and which is at the heart of the crisis of identification among so-called mixed people in the Great Lakes region of Africa.

5.4.11. *The role and place of intercultural dialogue in the context of freedom of popular mixing in Africa's Great Lakes region*

A democratic context means a context of pluralism, i.e. a tolerant, open position that accepts or finds room for a plurality or diversity of styles of view, doctrines or religion. This is proof that pluralism is a positive value and an indispensable attitude (Dibi, 1994). If there's one continent deeply torn apart by wars and identity-based conflicts, it's Africa. And an analysis that is both etiological and phenomenological suggests that it is essentially rooted in a certain cultural intolerance, which if left unchecked could jeopardize the very political existence of these imperial states, i.e. those imposed by colonization. Hence the need for the governments of the countries concerned to promote intercultural dialogue between different ethnic or religious communities, in order to ward off the inordinate withdrawal into oneself, the radical identity that leads to mortal isolation (Dibi, 1994). We cannot conceive of our identity in isolation, but only in relation to those around us. Intercultural dialogue enables us to understand cultural differences in terms of the plural unity of the human condition. This is not to say that cultural differences are meaningless. On the contrary, they are very important, in the sense that they are a source of mutual enrichment. Intercultural dialogue helps them learn to manage cultural diversity within the dual dynamic of differences and the right to resemblances. It means integration, not pure



and simple assimilation, but rather complementarity. All of which is only possible if everyone accepts what John Rawls calls "consensus by intersection".

5.4.12. Intercultural dialogue against racism and discrimination of mixed people in the African Great Lakes region.

Racism is rooted in fear of differences, including language differences, as well as differences in cultures and cultural horizons (Eric, 1950; Yacouba, 2012 and Dibi, 1994). Fear of differences leads to contempt and denigration of others, to denial of their humanity, which can lead to their subjugation by force, or even to their physical elimination. Ethnocentrism is the embodiment of the voice of prejudice leading to the exclusion of the other considered ipso facto as inferior, as a cultural or historical retard, a foreigner in our region, out of step with our culture whose phenomenal manifestation is our language, an infidel to our religion. These are all types of racism that are the bane of the African continent (Eric, 1950 and Yacouba, 2012). Such racism often leads to denominational or armed intercommunity conflicts between sedentary and nomadic peoples, with dramatic consequences. And if we look at things the right way, intercultural dialogue, as a love of differences, is the best antidote to the universal moral plague of racism. It is a civilized struggle against all forms of racial, cultural and religious discrimination. Anything that requires communication, which means sharing, if not discussing too. As the author of *Logique de la philosophie*, Erich Weil, rightly put it, in discussion, the superiority of any interlocutor does not "express itself naturally, brutally through violence (Eric, 1950 and Yacouba, 2012).

VI. CONCLUSION

Within the economic community of the Great Lakes countries, the question of miscegenation due to Belgian colonization and regional integration has been a question of development on the one hand, and destruction on the other. As a result, mixed-race people born to parents from Rwanda, Burundi or the Democratic Republic of Congo are victims of marginalization, political-criminal considerations such as the label of traitor, spy, no-origin, unintelligent, son-of-a-bitch, imbecile, idiot and, of course, xenophobia.

Mestizos whose parents live in the above-mentioned neighboring countries, in countries plagued by repeated conflicts due to interstate aggression, internal ethnic conflicts, internal and external intercommunity killings and repeated civil wars, favoritism, nepotism and ethnicism, all have consequences in terms of identity conflicts among the mestizos of the African Great Lakes region. As part of my approach to resolving identity conflicts, I have emphasized dialogue between the victims, i.e. the mestizos, and the well-identified actors in the conflict cited in the fifth part of this work. With identity conflicts posing a threat to mixed-race people and disrupting their daily lives, there is an urgent need for greater national and local awareness of the problem, a better understanding of its dimensions, and a real willingness to tackle it. This awareness needs to be raised at several levels: *"We recommend to the governments of the countries of the Great Lakes region, in particular the Rwandan, Burundian and Congolese governments, must formally recognize their protection policies and put in place new measures and strategies to protect mixed people who are victims of identity crises caused by the various threats they face; We recommend that human rights organizations in the entire region campaign for the rights of mixed-race people, lobbying, raising awareness and popularizing the rights of mixed-race people or individuals who are victims of the many atrocities that lead to profound identity conflicts and unrest with United Nations organizations, at the UN and at regional government levels; We recommend that mixed-gender people get involved in peaceful struggle groups to defend their rights. By creating regional associations to defend the rights of mixed people, in order to combat marginalization of all kinds, to participate in and contribute to inter-community and inter-state dialogues with the aim of consolidating lasting peace and regional integration to strengthen peace and development on the African continent"*.

REFERENCES

1. ADEPAE, A. D. A. (2011). RIO, Au-delà des groupes armés. Conflits locaux et connexions sous-régionales : l'exemple d'Uvira et Fizi (Sud-Kivu, RDC).
2. Autesserre, S. (2010). *The trouble with the Congo : Local violence and the failure of international peacebuilding* (Vol. 115). Cambridge University Press.
3. Baumann, T. (2004). Defining ethnicity. *The SAA archaeological record*, 4(4), 12-14.
4. Bouchard, G. et C. Taylor (2008). Fonder l'avenir. Le temps de la conciliation. Rapport de la Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles, Gouvernement du Québec.



5. CAMILLERI, C. (1990). *Stratégies identitaires*, Paris, PUF.
6. Codol, J. P. (1981). Une approche cognitive du sentiment d'identité. *Social science information*, 20(1), 111-136.
7. Derriennic, J. P. (2003). Chapitre 31. Droit de sécession et droit à la citoyenneté : réflexions à partir d'une note de Kant dans le Projet de paix perpétuelle. In *Entre Kant et Kosovo* (pp. 459-476). Presses de Sciences Po.
8. Dibi, K. A. (1994). *L'Afrique et son autre : la différence libérée* (No. 1). Strateca.
9. Eric, W. E. I. L. (1950). *Logique de la philosophie*.
10. Ferreol, G. (2003). Attitude. *Gilles Ferreol et Guy Jucquois (éds), Dictionnaire de l'altérité et des relations interculturelles, Paris, Armand Colin*, 34-35.
11. Franche, D. (1995). Généalogie du génocide rwandais. Hutu et Tutsi: Gaulois et Francs?. *Temps modernes*, (582), 1-58.
12. Genestier, P. (1991). Pour une intégration communautaire. *Esprit (1940-)*, 48-59.
13. Gérard P. (2009). *Africa's World War*: Oxford University Press, Page xxxiii, traduit librement de l'Anglais.
14. Giraud, M. (1987). Mythes et stratégies de la «double identité». *L'Homme et la société*, 83(1), 59-67.
15. Jacob, A. (2011). La diversité ethnoculturelle: entre la peur et la fascination. *Nouvelles pratiques sociales*, 23(2), 209-231.
16. Kabamba, B., 2000, Interrégionalité des pays des Grands Lacs africains. Élaboration d'un modèle d'intégration régionale et son application à la région des Grands Lacs africains, Thèse de doctorat en Sciences politiques, Faculté de Droit, Université de Liège.
17. Larousse, P. (1965). *Petit Larousse*. Larousse.
18. Lazare L., (2014). Les conflits dans les espaces frontaliers des Etats de la sous-région des Grands Lacs Africains, septembre, RDC.
19. Milan, A., Maheux, H., & Chui, T. (2010). Un portrait des couples en union mixte repéré à <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2010001/article/11143-fra.html>
20. Parisi, R. (2017). Conflits et divorce dans les couples mixtes italo-marocains. *EtnoAntropologia*, 4(1), 91-110.
21. Petit, R. J., Aguinagalde, I., de Beaulieu, J. L., Bittkau, C., Brewer, S., Cheddadi, R., ... & Vendramin, G. G. (2003). Glacial refugia: hotspots but not melting pots of genetic diversity. *science*, 300(5625), 1563-1565.
22. Philippe, D. (2023). Cours de la resolutions des conflits dispenser par les professeur Phillipe Doudou.. au programme de master en psychomotricité, option psychotrauma. Universite Evangelique en Afrique et Universite Libre des bruxelles, Bukavu-RDC/Juin/2023.
23. Robert, P. (1988). *Dictionnaire universel des noms propres*. Montréal, Les Dictionnaires Robert-Canada S.C.C.
24. Therrien, C. (2013). Lien conjugal et représentations du chez-soi : la multiplicité et la mobilité comme éléments de construction identitaire. *Diversité urbaine*, 13(2), 87-106.
25. Weber, M., & Faber-Kaiser, M. (1971). *Sobre la teoría de las ciencias sociales* (Vol. 73). Barcelona: Península.
26. Yacouba, H. (2012). Guerres et conflits identitaires en Afrique : nécessité d'un dialogue interculturel. *Cites*, 52(4), 127-138.

Cite this Article: Safari Dieudonné, Cyuzuzo Alice, Mathias Twahirwa, PhD. (2024). The Identity Crisis among Peoples from Mixed Parents from Countries under in Inter-States Conflicts: Case of Rwanda, D.R. Congo and Burundi. International Journal of Current Science Research and Review, 7(6), 3536-3545