Before Colonization, there were three **social classes** in Rwanda:

- **Hutu**
  - 85% of the population
  - Mostly farmers

- **Tutsi**
  - 14% of the population
  - Mostly cattle herders

- **Twa**
  - 1% of the population
  - Mostly hunters and potters
Although the Germans were the first to colonize Rwanda in 1884, the Germans were forced to give control to the Belgians after World War I in 1918.
Classification (Rwanda)

Belgian colonialists believed Tutsis were a naturally superior nobility, descended from the Israelite tribe of Ham. The Rwandan royalty was Tutsi.

Belgians distinguished between Hutus and Tutsis by nose size, height & eye type. Another indicator to distinguish Hutu farmers from Tutsi pastoralists was the number of cattle owned.
The Belgians changed what was a social class, one that a person could change with the accumulation of wealth, into an ethnic class, one that was unchangeable.

All Rwandan were required to carry identification cards.
For years, there is civil unrest between the Hutu and Tutsis...
For years, the government worked to incite hatred between the Hutus and the Tutsis

*Rwandan Myth: The Story of Origins:*

“... there was Kigwa, who fell from heaven and had three sons: Gatwa, Gahutu, and Gatutsi. When he decided to choose his successor, he entrusted each of the three sons a pot of milk to watch over during the night. At daybreak, Gatwa had drunk the milk; Gahutu had fallen asleep and in the carelessness of the sleep, had spilt the milk; and only Gatutsi had kept watch throughout the night, and only his milk pot was safe. So it was clear to Kigwa that Gatutsi should be the successor and by that fact should be exempt of any menial tasks. Gahutu was to be his servant. The utter unreliability of Gatwa was to make him only a clown in society. As a result, Gatutsi received cattle and command whereas Gahutu would acquire cattle only through the services to Gatutsi, and Gatwa was condemned to hunger and gluttony and would not acquire cattle” (Jean).
Furthering the hatred between the Hutus and the Tutsis, the Hutu Ten Commandments were published in *Kangura* in 1990.

Some of the Commandments include:

1. Every Hutu must know that the Tutsi woman, wherever she may be, is working for the Tutsi ethnic cause. In consequence, any Hutu is a traitor who:
   
   i. Acquires a Tutsi wife;
   
   ii. Acquires a Tutsi concubine;
   
   iii. Acquires a Tutsi secretary or protégée.

3. All Hutus must know that all Tutsis are dishonest in business. Their only goal is ethnic superiority. We have learned this by experience from experience.

8. Hutu must stop taking pity on the Tutsi.
The radio played a big part in the spreading of the Anti-Tutsi propaganda.
Under President Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu, political corruption increases. Rwandans, mostly farmers, experienced extreme poverty in the late 1980s due to the price of coffee and tea plummeting. This further incited anger and resentment.
On April 6, 1994 at 8:23pm, President Habyarimana’s plane was shot down near Kigali.

This event was the catalyst for the beginning of the Genocide.
Within 52 minutes of the plane going down, roadblocks were constructed, houses were being searched, and shots could be heard in Kigali (Kigali Genocide Memorial).
INTERAHAMWE:
“those who attack together” - the Hutu extremist militias created by the Habyarimana clan in 1990s, trained by the Rwandan army (Kigali Genocide Memorial).

“On 10 January 1994 an informant, code-name ‘Jean-Pierre,’ who was a former member of the president’s security guard” informed the United Nations Colonel that the “1,700 Interahamwe had been trained in Rwandan army camps” and that the “Interahamwe was registering all Tutsi in Kigali for an extermination plan” (Kigali Genocide Memorial).

“In 1991, after the first attacks from the rebels in Uganda, army newspapers singled out the Tutsi as the Hutu’s natural enemy who had to be definitively destroyed. It was written in big fat letters on page one” - Elie from Machete Season

“The authorities had made lists of the important Tutsis in the commune - teachers and shopkeepers, for example” - Ignace from Machete Season

“[Joseph-Desire] didn’t know the tiny details of the genocide, such as the day and the exact agenda. But he certainly knew three months in advance that he was going to kill me, and my wife and my child…” - Innocent from Machete Season
Over the next 100 days, between 800,000 - 1 Million Tutsis and Tutsi Sympathizers were killed, most with machetes.
In 1994 in Rwanda, most Rwandese were Catholic, so many Tutsis sought refuge in their churches. They did not find salvation at Nyamata Church or Ntarama Church.
NEVER FORGET
“We are all Rwandans” - Nyange Secondary School Students
People who are making a difference in Rwanda...
Frederick Ndabaramiye
Pastor Simon-Pierre and the Hope House
Caritas
and the Ndengera Foundation