



APORIAS OF BELONGING IN SANDRA UWIRINGIYIMANA'S *HOW DARE THE SUN RISE.* *MEMOIRS OF A WAR CHILD* (2017)

*the first condition of humanity is exile,
thus we are forced to engage with one another*
(Dufourmantelle 14)

Hospitality is built into the very fabric of who we are
(Kearney and Fitzpatrick 10)

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The aim of this paper is to showcase the aporias at the heart of what it means to belong for stateless survivors of war and genocide; that is, for the people who were denied citizenship in their countries of birth and their countries of origin, who were brutally uprooted and forced into exile. Drawing in detail on Jacques Derrida's development of the concept of hospitality, this study analyses Sandra Uwiringiyimana's personal account of survival in her memoir, *How Dare the Sun Rise. Memoirs of a War Child* (2017). In this analysis, the formidable, if not irresolvable, aspects of belonging emerge as deeply entangled with the aporia at the heart of hospitality itself. As Derrida noticed, this aporia entails paradoxes of inclusion and exclusion, where the ethical imperative to welcome the other confronts the structural limitations of historical violence, national borders, and legal status. Consequently, the aporias of belonging for Sandra Uwiringiyimana emerge from and are manifested in numerous instances of the daily experienced contradiction: her human need to belong is perpetually frustrated, since while it is proclaimed a universal right, the national legal frameworks constantly deny it. The aporias of belonging entail all the insurmountable situations on the broad spectrum from marginalization to dehumanization that she and her family were thrown into and managed to survive, as well as all the losses (i.e., of family members, of belongings, of any stability and sense of self) on their way to the ultimately won recognition as rightful citizens of a nation state.

In narrating the lived reality of exiles and refugees, her memoir poignantly points to the broader political paradoxes of modern citizenship. Moreover, Uwiringiyimana's memoir indicates the invaluable potential of hospitality—as Derrida, Paul Ricoeur, and also Melissa Fitzpatrick and Richard Kearney explicate it—that is, hospitality as a human condition, linguistic hospitality, narrative hospitality, and hospitality as a narrative gift, all of which can guide and inform our interactions with others on personal, societal, cultural, and national levels.

1. HOSPITALITY AS A HUMAN CONDITION

The question of hospitality is fundamentally an ethical question that arises in an encounter between the self and the other within a given space. In *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*, Jacques Derrida writes that when we talk about hospitality, we, in fact, talk about “ethicity itself, the whole and the principle of ethics” (50). Currently, in cultural, political, and sociological discourses, the interest in the practices of hospitality emerges in intense discussions about immigrant policies. In these disputes, the other is the migrant: a stranger classified in accordance with the degree of their foreignness. Their otherness is regarded as either a promise of alliance and contribution, or a threat of conflict, maybe even a risk of annihilation. In “Linguistic Hospitality. The Risk of Translation,” Richard Kearney observes that this latter approach, that is, the negative and unwelcoming stance, appears to have become a prevailing reaction especially when the extent of unfamiliarity of the migrant is not easily reducible, when the foreigner defies a ready treatment as another self (22–23). When the host cannot see enough of themselves in the migrant to recognize their common humanity, their strangeness is experienced as a threat to the host's integrity. Thus, the host may refuse to treat the newcomer as a guest to whom they would otherwise extend all the regular gestures of welcome. Instead, the stranger is approached with fear as a dangerous trespasser, a violator of boundaries. Bearing this in mind, the question of hospitality is probably best approached, in the words of Dan Bulley, as a question of the way(s) of conduct—“the primary way in which ‘we’ practice everyday relations with difference” (*Migration* 4). Hospitality entails the ways we comprehend our sense of identity and integrity, whether as individuals, communities, and/or nations; it is concerned with how we manage our disposition when faced with the unfamiliar, and how we negotiate our understanding of boundaries, ownership, and belonging.

Hospitality as a way of conduct—as a verb rather than as a noun—Derrida acknowledges to emerge from a fundamental cleavage, that is, the aporia that results from the inherent incompatibility, yet mutual dependency between the unconditional and the conditional hospitality. The unconditional hospitality Derrida defines as

absolute hospitality [which] requires that I open up my home and that I give not only to the foreigner [...], but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other, and that I *give place* to them, that I let them come, that I let them arrive, and take place in the place I offer them, without asking of them either reciprocity or even their names. (*Hospitality* 25)

Unconditional hospitality cannot be reduced to laws and rights: it remains in the realm of ideals and opens towards the arrival of the absolute other. It seems akin to Franz Kafka's Law, as opposed to laws that correspond to conditional hospitality, which include particular regulations, demands, and expectations. Unconditional hospitality and conditional hospitality are irreducible to one another, yet are interdependent; they exist in endless loops of implications and delineations. Unconditional hospitality opens up the possibility to practice hospitality by way of the conditions through which it realizes itself

even while keeping itself above the law of hospitality, *the* unconditional law of hospitality needs the laws, it requires them. This demand is constitutive. It wouldn't be effectively unconditional, the law, if it didn't have to become effective, concrete, determined. (*Hospitality* 79)

Unconditional hospitality is operative only when realized through applicable rules, since the encounter between the self and the other, the host and the guest, is not relegated to an ideal realm, but always takes place in a particular space. Bulley calls hospitality "*a spatial relational practice with affective dimensions*" (*Migration* 7). Hospitality produces space: organizes, limits, and frees space as it requires crossing boundaries and thresholds as well as the demarcation between an inside and an outside (26–30). Hospitality is about known and familiar space, about space as home, or by extension, the state as home. A host can welcome the guest only when s/he owns a home and exerts a certain power over it: when s/he is the master of their own house (Derrida, *Hospitality* 51–53).

This fear of welcoming the stranger stems from the fluidity of roles between host and guest, which are ultimately not fixed. As Derrida explains, "Anyone who encroaches on my 'at home,' on my ipseity,

on my sovereignty as a host, I start to regard as an undesirable foreigner and virtually an enemy[...] I become their hostage” (*Hospitality* 53). Hospitality and hostility not only share a linguistic root but also a conceptual horizon, as both underlie the polar dynamics of the reaction to the other: either welcoming and taking the other in or excluding and casting the other out. Herein also lie the origins of Derrida’s concept of *hostipitality* that, as Kearney encapsulates it, combines the two: “the constant wagering between hostility and hospitality, between vigilance and welcome” (“Linguistic Hospitality” 21). While the other stands at the door, the host is at the decision threshold. Whether what separates the self from the other will prove to be a gateway or a barrier to communication and community is determined anew in each such confrontation.

2. THE BANYAMULENGE AND THE PERILS OF NONBELONGING

The complexity and hybridity of hospitality—its intrinsic entanglement with the variegated, sometimes even contradictory, aspects of space, power, generosity, responsibility, and enmity—offer a crucial approach to reading Sandra Uwiringiyimana’s life story in *How Dare the Sun Rise. Memoirs of a War Child* (2017). Her memoir evidences the lived blessings and pitfalls of hospitality in a dire context. Uwiringiyimana writes as a member of the minority Banyamulenge tribe, which is known to inhabit the High Plateau in South Kivu, one of the country’s twenty-five provinces¹ in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

As René Lemarchand writes, the Banyamulenge, who are “a culturally distinct group of Tutsi [...] migrated into the Congo from Rwanda in pre-colonial times” (xvi). Lemarchand clarifies that the label Banyamulenge “has been used by self-styled ‘authentic’ Congolese to stigmatize as foreigners all Tutsi elements residing in the Congo” (xvi). They are viewed as strangers, foreigners, and are not recognized as Congolese (Ntanyoma). Moreover, most Banyamulenge are cattle keepers, which further defines them as “enemy aliens” (Lemarchand 46). Beyond their appearance and lifestyle, their language sets them apart. Kinyamulenge is a blend of Kinyarwanda, the language of Rwanda, and Kirundi, the language of Burundi, often referred to as the twin country of Rwanda (Takeuchi 40–65). In the DRC, they are considered Rwandan or Burundian, as the Tutsi form a significant percentage

1 25 or 26 provinces, if the capital, Kinshasa that has the status of a province, is also included.

of the indigenous population. In contrast, in Rwanda and Burundi, the Banyamulenge are labeled as Congolese, in accordance with their country of birth.

The Banyamulenge community's population, estimated at 400,000 people, has been under heavy siege that intensified since 2017 and has been described as amounting to a genocide (Ntanyoma). Despite having lived in South Kivu for generations, long enough to claim native status, the recent reports highlight the persistent hostility toward the Banyamulenge in the DRC. It does not help that the DRC government dismisses "claims that the community is facing targeted attacks as fiction," and that local officials and militia are also violent towards the Banyamulenge (Ntanyoma). The repeated and coordinated hostilities, such as cattle theft, destruction of homes and villages, hate speech, and denial of citizenship, intensified during major attacks targeting the elimination of the ethnic group in 1996, 1998, and 2004, all of which unfolded in the aftermath of the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda. Many had to flee their homes and became internally displaced persons, relocated to refugee camps. Uwiringiyimana's memoir opens onto the gory events that occurred in one of them, the Gatumba refugee camp, situated on the border in Burundi.

On August 13, 2004, in a brutal massacre, the then ten-year-old Uwiringiyimana lost her younger sister, the six-year-old Deborah, while other members of her family were heavily wounded. The survivors, stateless and deeply traumatized, were relegated to another refugee camp in Burundi and subsequently transported to Rwanda. As non-citizens, unwanted and unrecognizable by the political apparatus, the Banyamulenge are perceived as people who are treated as—relying on the phrase used by Zygmunt Bauman—"the superfluous in the globalized world" (Kohlenberger 36). Without the necessary documentation—the stateless people are the undocumented—it was only through an opportunity presented by the UN Refugee Program that the promise of a potential home destination emerged. The UN enables endangered individuals to resettle, among others, to the United States under certain conditions, that is, if they have been permanently displaced from their home country due to persecution, war, and other life-threatening situations. Uwiringiyimana's family, after a couple of years of documentation filling and cross-questioning, eventually landed in Rochester, NY, in 2007.

Born in South Kivu on June 22, 1994, the 77th day of the Rwanda Genocide, a bloody massacre that deeply scarred the nation as well as the neighboring countries, Sandra Uwiringiyimana entered the world in a state of war. Her life, shaped by unimaginable violence, repeated

displacements, and poignant fault lines, is encapsulated in her memoir. The genre enables her to weave together varied narrative forms, and thus it is all of them: a grief narrative, a (family) survival story, a coming-of-age account, a confession, a witness's testimony, and a narrative of resilience. These personal dimensions collectively transform the memoir into a political act, as its publication places her story within the contested public arena of historical representation. Thus, Uwiringiyimana contributes not only her individual perspective but also serves as a voice for the often-ignored and silenced Banyamulenge.

3. THE EXILE'S CONDITION

The memoir, written in a direct manner as the author relies on concise and straightforward sentences, charts Uwiringiyimana's trajectory from the postcolonial—yet not fully decolonized—Global South to the relatively liberal-democratic Global North. It is a traumatic route of an Internally Displaced Person turned stateless refugee to a recognized and documented citizen of the USA. Only the last journey, across the pond, is a willed endeavor, or perhaps rather a last resort attempt to save life. The previous displacements in central Africa are forced and hostile casting-outs into the confined space of the refugee camp(s). Camps work by care and control; they are, as Bulley defines them, “literally spaces crafted to offer hospitality to those that need it most” (*Migration* 72). Their function is to save lives by providing basic provisions: shelter, food, clothes, warmth, and safety. Uwiringiyimana's reality, like that of most IDPs, is that what begins as a temporary arrangement that saves life often evolves into indefinite, unhomely detainment limbo that resembles a prison, and as such is marked by insecurity, vulnerability, and insufficiency (*Relational Ethics* 91–97). More than that, her experience lays bare that assembled in one place, the IDPs are an easy target for extremists who seek their extermination. The physical and mental confinement, augmented by the constant fear, prevents growth. What Uwiringiyimana repeatedly emphasizes is that the camps are a hostile space and, like quicksand, they pull one into their orbit, leaving little space to maneuver or even to think of maneuvering in the first place.

Uwiringiyimana's family's resettlement to the United States is not a regular order of things. As Alex Balch notices, “There is an asymmetry between the right to leave and the right to enter states” (40), and Uwiringiyimana's life narrative shows it is easy to disown people, to deny them citizenship, and their rights, whereas it verges on a serendipitous alignment of circumstances whether they will ever be able to gain these anew. Displaced people and refugees end up believing

citizenship is like a gift extended to them by powerful masters, hosts of a given space, instead of their right to belong. As Balch writes, there is no universally, cross-nationally recognized human right to immigrate, “there is no such principle included in any of the constitutions of receiving countries,” nor is there any automatic systemic order of recognition of lawful belonging (40).

What is more, in recent years, states have made it as difficult as possible for unwanted newcomers to enter and created a hostile environment to deter potential migrants. The motivation behind the politics of deterrence is that once a person finds themselves on the territory of a given state (at least in the Global North), they are not supposed to be denied the same rights as those cherished by its citizens (Balch 42). The hostility towards the newcomers may stem as much from their otherness as from concerns about resources—that there will not be enough to go around.² Adding to this the fear-mongering, scapegoating, topped with deliberate ambiguity, amplified by the media, the *xenia* or *xenos* (i.e., guest, stranger) are hastily closed the door at.

Hostile experiences and severe deprivations are part of Uwiringiyimana’s memoir. Fleeing South Kivu meant losing family members, abandoning the family’s yellow house, and leaving behind all their possessions, including photo albums—the only remaining proof of and connection to their meaningful past. For a time during their exile, these albums served as fading remnants of their world before the calamity, reaffirming their shared humanity and connection to one another and to what was lost. Most crucially, the family lost their (human) rights: they were denied the right to self-agency, unhampered movement, work, and the right to take any action. In the camp, Uwiringiyimana feels alienated and useless, as there is nothing meaningful to do. She is never to complain, though. Her mother differentiates between trauma in its original meaning, that is, between a wound inflicted on the body, and the psychological trauma. The latter is deemed inferior, insufficient to induce valid consequences: “Did they injure you in some way? [...] Do you have a wound?” (47). Faced with death and heavy injuries to their family and friends, these questions might be the mother’s last resort at preventing the surge of despair in her daughter. However, the call to suppress trauma makes the girl feel alienated from

2 As Richard Kearney and Melissa Fitzpatrick write, hospitality presupposes a gift economy: “a shared culture of reciprocity serving the common good, understood as common health, wealth, nourishment, education, and justice [...] the hospitality ethics argues there is always enough for everyone—if properly distributed” (8). Thus, the question of sufficiency arises as a potential regulatory measure in the tension between scarcity and sufficiency.

her parents and disconnected from herself. Uwiringiyimana's memoir finally answers "yes" to these questions as she confronts her wounds within the reflective space of narrative invention.

4. LINGUISTIC HOSPITALITY

Jacques Derrida asserts that "'displaced persons,' exiles, those who are deported, expelled, rootless, nomads, all share two sources of sighs (two nostalgias): their dead ones and their language" (*Hospitality* 87). When it comes to language, Derrida continues, the foreigner needs to "ask for hospitality in a language which by definition is not his own, the one imposed on him by the master of the house, the host. . . . This personage imposes on him translation into their own language, and that's the first act of violence" (15). All of us are asked for our name and personal data at borders, as identification is often verified through documentation. The answer to the question 'who are you?' is the first demand placed on people who enter someone else's home, and when they enter a different state. The question of the name is not without its complications for Uwiringiyimana, who explains:

In our tribe, parents give their kids both a first and a last name—family members don't share a last name. [...] Parents typically choose names with a goal of helping to shape their children's character. I was named after a Rwandan Prime Minister, Agathe Uwiringiyimana. [...] I love that my parents named me after her. It makes me feel like I have big shoes to fill, and that someday I can do something worth being remembered for. (19)

Agathe Uwiringiyimana,³ the Rwandan Prime Minister, together with the President of Rwanda Juvénal Habyarimana, both of Hutu origin, were for the implementation of Arusha Accords, that is, the Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Rwanda and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) to end the Civil War in Rwanda that broke out in 1990. Habyarimana's plane was shot down as it was lowering to land in Kigali on April 6, 1994. Agathe Uwiringiyimana, her husband, and ten Belgian peacekeepers who protected their home were brutally murdered by the Presidential guard on the morning of the next day. To give a Banyamulenge daughter, born two months after the tragic death of her namesake, a second name that belonged to a Hutu official may be interpreted as an act of acknowledgement of the personal courage and resilience of the first woman Prime Minister and acting President in the emergency of Rwanda. The par-

3 Also spelled as Uwilingiyimana.

ents' gesture extends beyond the Hutu–Tutsi divide and may be seen as an expression of a wish for peace in Rwanda and its neighboring states, which are also implicated in the conflict.

Before the family can move to safety across the ocean, Uwiringiyimana needs documents filled out in English. To be granted certificates of permission, she must first translate herself into a story that will match up with the accounts of her parents and siblings. It is overwhelmingly stressful for her since she must recall extreme atrocities and her perished relatives. Moreover, just as her family members do not share a common surname and may not be immediately recognized as a unit in the Global North, she is afraid

that if my answers didn't match up precisely with those of my family, we would not get to go to America [...] people don't always recall the same details from traumatic situations. I had noticed this from the members of my own family: We were in the same massacre, but we sometimes had different recollections. (109)

The precocity of the girl who recognizes the demands on her story adds a burden to an already precarious predicament. In practice, as the potential newcomer, she and her family are both individually and collectively tested on their skills, background, health, current political status, and on their general stamina to endure the intricate and lengthy scrutiny process, often compounded by the indifference and lack of empathy from officials during the frequent screenings. The proffered narration of a common survival story, corroborated by established data, is how entrance into the host territory is granted, combined with the negative test results for HIV and tuberculosis.

Just as she mastered Swahili and French before, upon arriving in the USA, the 13-year-old Sandra quickly masters English both in comprehension and communication. She is soon translating for her parents, from regular bills to crucial documents—which she is fluent in, but which somewhat alienates her from her role as a daughter. It is just one of the instances of parentification she is thrown into in the United States. Uwiringiyimana becomes the family's translator. To use the words of Paul Ricœur, she became the “flesh and blood mediator” (“Reflections” 5) between different linguistic systems, the onus on whom is the double duty of linguistic hospitality as Kearney defines it: “to remain faithful to one's own language and to welcome the foreigner's language at the same time” (“Linguistic Hospitality” 17). Ricœur defines linguistic hospitality as “the act of inhabiting the word of the Other paralleled by the act of receiving the word of the Other

into one's own home, one's own dwelling" (*On Translation* xvi). In Uwiringiyimana's case, this presents a dire challenge, since the space where she is supposed to practice linguistic hospitality is not truly hers; it is as new to her as the language she needs to welcome in order to survive. The only space she used to call home was the yellow house, and even that first family home was situated on the ground that never welcomed her. In fact, she never had a space to truly and fully call her own and one that would claim her as her own in return.

Already, as the family applied for entry to the USA, they were obliged to respond in the future host's terms. Often, the immigrant, as a guest, is demanded to fit their self into a shape recognizable by the host. As Kearney writes:

We naturally read every stranger with respect to our lifeworld of cultural horizons. As soon as I, *qua* host, ask, "Who are you?" my guest is obliged to respond in my terms. All hermeneutics in practice is a mixed act of "hostipitality" welcoming the other at the same time as one translates its alterity into someone "like me": a self I can recognize and identify. ("Linguistic Hospitality" 21)

What it means in practice is that in order to facilitate the flow of communication and recognition, as Ricœur emphasizes it in *On Translation*, there is always loss involved in the process of translation: the loss of meaning, the loss of self, and even loss of facts, as in the case with Uwiringiyimana's birthdate. The date now officially stands as June 1, 1994, instead of the correct June 22, 1994. Her mother, overwhelmed with anxiety, was too distressed to challenge the officials as they mistakenly recorded the date in the documents. The *hostipitality* experienced in the act of translation—both into the language of the other and into predetermined narrative structures—results from the general resistance to allow the other to come in their otherness as well as in the fundamental unintelligibility of this otherness prior to reducing it to what is familiar. Uwiringiyimana displays an uncanny ability to deal with loss and strives to make herself at home both in the English language and in the city of Rochester.

5. NARRATIVE HOSPITALITY

Still, at school, her language skills are of little value. The situation repeats itself: just as back in the DRC and Rwanda, her way of speaking is unwelcome again. It makes her conspicuous as a foreigner and in an awkward way:

I was quickly learning that I was not considered African American, even though I was from Africa and I was living in America. My words came out sounding different from theirs. In fact, as I began to learn and speak more English, the African American kids started accusing me of sounding “white.” (151)

The misunderstanding results from the fact that translation does not occur solely on the level of words, but also involves the cultural transfer of meanings and values. Just like the American idea of beauty, the American idea of fun (the reader may imagine that camping was not exactly a preferred activity of hers), and the unruly behavior of kids at school, while she considered education a privilege, the concept of racism in the USA is a novelty to her:

I didn’t understand the difference between black and white. Growing up in Congo, being black was not an issue for me. My skin color was something I never thought about. I didn’t understand why sounding “white” would be considered bad among black kids, or even what it meant to sound white. No one was teaching me [...] the right way. And I wondered what the “right” way was. (152)

The particulars of her predicament are new, yet the underlying mechanics of racism is familiar, as it is similar to the one that underpins the violence directed toward the Banyamulenge back in the DRC, Burundi, and Rwanda. Among other things, it was sparked by their unusual way of speaking. In what we may call the contemporary era of both/and, her reality was that of neither/nor: neither Congolese, nor Rwandan; neither white, nor black enough, but again a villain and a scapegoat for what is wrong in yet another country. As before, Uwiringiyimana finds it difficult to navigate the norms and values:

I was not well versed in American history, but I had learned the basics in school in Africa. I knew things like names of presidents and states. I knew that slavery had happened, but I didn’t know all the details [...]. It wasn’t part of my story. (163)

The non-recognition is mutual—her classmates had known nothing about her story, and so they projected onto her the available cultural categories and stereotypes that were accessible to them. A shift in understanding comes with the class screening of *Hotel Rwanda*. The film translates the Genocide in Rwanda into American visual language, with all the pros and cons that come with such a cross-cultural and cross-linguistic adaptation. Even though this 2004 Hollywoodized African *Schindler’s List* came into its share of fair criticism and the screening caused teenage Sandra considerable stress, it did foster a change in the classroom.

Whereas translation is linguistic hospitality, narrative hospitality, as Ricoeur writes, “is a matter of exchanging memories at the narrative level where they are presented for comprehension” (“Reflections” 7). The teacher who arranged the screening of the movie extended a gesture of welcome that enabled the emergence of what Dan Bulley calls “*particular* responsibilities [...] generated through interaction, interdependence, and connection” (*Relational Ethics* 8–9). By introducing the students to the brutal conflict, the teacher involved them in—as Ricoeur calls it—a practice of narrative hospitality, which means “taking responsibility, in imagination and in sympathy, for the story of the other, through the life narratives that concern that other” (“Reflections” 6). *Hotel Rwanda* becomes an intermediary between Uwiringiyimana and her classmates. It portrays regular people thrown into the 1994 atrocities with their human reactions, emotions, and the impossible choices most were forced to make. The movie offers substantial context to her story without revealing its specific details. As such, it became a corrective among her classmates, enabling what Kearney calls “recognition of the other as someone *like* myself, who shares important things in common with me” (“Linguistic Hospitality” 23), which in turn opens up a space for empathy and dialogue. Moreover, the event seems to have unlocked a new source of potential for Uwiringiyimana, which lies in the transformative power and importance of storytelling.

She was again confronted with her past, otherwise dormant and neglected amid her daily duties, when she stood in for her older sister at a welcome talk before the performance of a church choir her father had founded. This time, the story addressed specifically the fate of the Banyamulenge and her family. It was met with care and appreciation from the public, which made her eager to share it further.⁴ Her activist endeavors brought about relief and a sense of accomplishment, but also exhaustion and anger. The more she delved into her losses, the more she realized that hatred was at the core of genocide. Her memoir sets out both to work through her own grief and to dismantle the layers of the collective hatred towards the Banyamulenge by doing justice to them as regular and hardworking people who have been violently wronged with no opportunity to seek justice.

The question of representation and reception dominates Uwiringiyimana’s personal narrative. Both the physical appearance of people (skin color, hairstyle, clothing, etc.) and the narratives and attitudes

4 As David Kessler writes, people are hard-wired with the need to have their grief witnessed (2019, 29).

that circulate about particular groups of people are under her scrutiny. In her memoir, it is perceptible that she has an obligation on her part to set the account straight. This urge to provide a space for her people's representation is also what motivated her and her brother's work on the exhibition of portraits and stories of the survivors of the Gatumba massacre. In so doing, the siblings were, to use Kearney's words, giving "a future to the past by translating deep legacies of transgenerational hurt into narrative forms of healing" ("Narrative Hospitality" 29).

6. MEMOIR AS A NARRATIVE GIFT

After language, the other sigh Derrida mentions are the dead. The persistent presence/absence—the ghost in the memoir—is the brutally killed Deborah, Sandra's four-year-younger sister. Not only does the memoir begin, but it also ends with recollections of the little girl:

This book is for her. If I could sit down with her today, this is the story I would tell her. Deborah is with me still, and always will be. Sometimes at night, I talk with her in my dreams. When I see her there, she is always six years old. (276)

Uwiringiyimana's memoir is a work of mourning. She grieves for the life that was literally and metaphorically cut short, the life that had not happened. Everyone else seems to have moved on, which only aggravates her condition and eventually leads to a severe breakdown and an extended separation from her parents and her four older siblings. Throughout the narrative, no matter what she focuses on, Uwiringiyimana always makes room for Deborah: she mentions a couple of times how she corrects her mother when she introduces Sandra as her youngest child. She recalls Deborah's little gestures, her beauty, her favorite shirt, her smile, her face—always fearful of these memories' gradual disappearance into forgetting.

Derrida writes of hospitality as a form of mourning, that is, as an act of making space for the dead (*Hospitality* 102). It corresponds to what David Kessler points out in *Finding Meaning. The Sixth Stage of Grief*—the relationship with the dead does not end but continues in a different way. Kessler considers grief to be the other side of love: it is love that can no longer attach itself to a living and present object (34). Thus, it is relegated to the realm of reminiscence, the realm of thoughts. This is one of the reasons why the memoir seems to be a genre especially attuned to hospitality: it provides a space for thought about the past, a space for thoughtful recollection of others and of oneself in relation to others. Anne Dufourmantelle

mentions the space of thinking as the space where hospitality happens: “To think is to invite, to offer a shelter to the other, within ourselves; the other as the possibility to become yourself” (13). It is the thought that creates this space of encounter, that enables it by welcoming and housing the other as one remembers them. Memoir operates by converting these thoughts into stories, and as Ali Smith writes, “The telling of stories is an act of profound hospitality. It always has been; story is an ancient form of generosity. [...] Story has always been a welcoming-in...” (“A Welcome”). Stories forge a sense of connection by way of inclusion, commemoration, care, and guidance. In the USA, Uwiringiyimana’s parents passed all the tests and became citizens of the country. By default, as their underage child, she also became a citizen of the US and received her ID, “the first thing I owned that proved I exist” (205). Hence, the family—no longer stateless and now rightfully documented—was missing one more member still in need of a space of belonging.

The other way in which memoir provides space for the dead is through the narrative tomb or literary crypt (Derrida, *Hospitality* 103). Uwiringiyimana suffers from strong survival guilt: it is bewildering to her to think that if the attack had not happened, the family might still be in a refugee camp, but that Deborah might still be alive. In her desperate calculations, her sister’s death equals the survival of the entire family. Also, she is tormented sick by the fact that Deborah has never been properly buried, never properly mourned by the family, that no one knows what happened to her body, that there is no grave to visit. To lay her sister to rest and always be able to locate her, she composes the memoir: a narrative space where the memory of Deborah’s name and her brief life can be preserved. Hence, the memoir, a memorial in language, is at once most and least mobile of all⁵: contained between the covers of a book, it still can travel across the globe. At the time of its composition, Deborah would have been 18 years old and the memoir is also a gift: it welcomes her at the would-have-been adulthood. Thus, it may be considered as a gift in its purest form—offered to the dead, it can never be reciprocated. Or, perhaps, the memoir is an attempt to pay off an unpayable debt, as Uwiringiyimana feels herself poignantly indebted to Deborah for life. Certainly, with the memoir, she created a space where her love for the perished sister finally finds accommodation.

5 See also Lindsay Anne Balfour, *Hospitality in a Time of Terror. Strangers at the Gate*, Bucknell UP, 2018.

6. CONCLUSION

[...] hospitality has never been a stable, uncontested, or purely altruistic figure. What hospitality *is* is an intricate structure of ethics, violence, promise, threat, and impossibility that has been worked through, tested, and struggled over for millennia. (Balfour xiv)

If the migrant crisis is the crisis of hospitality, as Balch diagnoses it, it “is neither transitory nor temporary—it is something intrinsic to liberal democracies or liberalism itself” (246). As Melissa Fitzpatrick argues, “If the foreigner will be destroyed upon returning to the place from which he came, it is the duty of the host to [...] not send them back to a situation that would violate their dignity” (“Hospitality Beyond Borders” 63). However, as Fitzpatrick continues, Immanuel Kant already reserved the refusal of hospitality “if the stranger *gives up* their freedom, arriving in utter hostility” (63).

Uwiringiyimana’s memoir represents the vicissitudes of stateless migrants in response to the question always posed at the borders: ‘Who are you?’ She answers in detail in the form of a story and in so doing inscribes her reply into—what Ricoeur implies is—a global exchange of stories of suffering (“Reflections”). She writes because there was no trial and no one was held accountable for the Gatumba massacre. The collective suffering of the Banyamulenge was silenced, as was her own trauma, further augmented by a post-genocide sexual misconduct by a family acquaintance. Moreover, the general image of her people, she believes, is either unfamiliar or distorted. With the memoir, she both testifies to and documents the lives of the perished, the survivors, and their suffering that came from both strangers and kin alike. Addressing the hurt paradoxically both pains and empowers Uwiringiyimana as she owns her experience and endows it with a form. With the memoir she responds to the chronic question with: “I’m a human being. What are you?” (208).

To make their stories a visible part of the literary scene, the memoirist has to vie for the attention of the public. Uwiringiyimana has done this work—her exhibition of Banyamulenge portraits and stories garnered cordial responses and connected her with prominent people: Michelle Obama, Samantha Power, Angelina Jolie, Oprah, and others. Just like her class during the screening of *Hotel Rwanda*, the audiences were attentive. However, there is acute vulnerability involved in writing and publishing a memoir. The risk is that memoirs—consumed by people safely distant in their homes—will commodify the stories of survivors, that the hostile consumption and misappropriation

of the other will overshadow the values of hospitality and respect towards them. The gain is that the memoirist's truth is communicated and witnessed, even across large distances, in the hope that the reader will know how to be a guest invited to the space of the other's story.

Hope in storytelling's power to evoke emotions, recognition, reciprocity, and a sense of belonging endures, since it allows for imaginative overcoming of differences. One could go a step further and say that in the very act of reading the functions of the host and the guest enter into a state of chiasmic exchange: the memoirist is the host of their story and at the same a guest in the thoughts of the reader, whereas the reader is an invited guest to the story of the memoirist simultaneously providing their own space of thought for their story to unfold, to use the words of Fitzpatrick, to "host them and their unique perspective, listen, and learn" ("Impossible Hospitality" 87). Thus, the memoir, as a result of embodied storytelling, facilitates narrative hospitality, which may not resolve but temporarily suspend the aporia at the core of hospitality itself, creating space for the search for practical, if provisional, solutions to its crisis.

Abstract: This paper discusses the memoir *How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child* (2017) by Sandra Uwiringiyimana, exploring it in the context of hospitality as both ethics *per se* and as an underlying principle of the human condition. Hospitality is considered what governs interactions between people and helps to understand how we approach our sense of identity and integrity when faced with the unfamiliar. Referring to the texts of Jacques Derrida (conditional and unconditional hospitality, the work of grief), the works of Paul Ricœur (linguistic and narrative hospitality), Richard Kearney, Melissa Fitzpatrick, and others, Uwiringiyimana's memoir is discussed as a testimonial account and a narrative document of a member of an ethnic minority of the Banyamulenge from South Kivu, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As a girl, she becomes a stateless Internally Displaced Person who manages to migrate to the United States, where she is finally granted citizenship. Fraught with trauma and grief, but also hope and resilience, the memoir is shown to provide a unique space to record, evaluate, and foster acts of hospitality that undocumented refugees and migrants experience. In these reports, hospitality emerges as intricately intertwined with hostility; whether the one or the other will prevail is a matter determined anew in each confrontation between the self and the other. The implications of such a recognition of hospitality for both authors and readers of the memoir are also considered, alongside the memoir's value as a genre of a distinct form and function.

Keywords: hospitality, memoir, IDP, migration, citizenship, Banyamulenge

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