



Rwanda and Burundi, 1889-1930: Chronology of a Slow Assassination, Part 2

Author(s): Roger Botte

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RWANDA AND BURUNDI, 1889-1930:

CHRONOLOGY OF A SLOW ASSASSINATION

Part 2

Roger Botte

1908

Burundi

- . From 31 March to 18 May, Grawert leads a new expedition against the princes of the northeast. This expedition provokes the *Rumanyamasunzu* famine, which takes over the preceding famines and sweeps across the region.²¹⁹ It reaches horrendous proportions because of the terrible losses incurred by the war - "the natives were slaughtered *en masse* with gun or machine-gun shots" - and the pillage of enormous herds - "4,613 head of cattle and 3,659 head of small livestock."²²⁰ The repression that follows the expedition itself - led by a sergeant and a few soldiers but sustained by royal troops - literally devastates the country: "the cruelties inflicted on these people for three months are indescribable. All the crops were burnt, the banana groves were cut down, the people killed ... scaffolds were built to hang people upside down, their hands and feet were cut ... women and especially young girls were mistreated in atrocious ways; some were disemboweled alive; children were torn from their mother's breast and thrown onto the rocks..."²²¹
- . 15 May, passage of a "meteor at around 6:45 p.m. from east to west at a vertiginous speed, lighting up all the valleys and producing a very deafening, very intense sound."²²²
- . 21 August, death of King Mwezi II and new apparition of *Runyerere*, the fabulous dog that announces the death of a king.²²³

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²¹⁹Literally, "removing the girls' headdress," that is, no one paid attention to bodily cares because who would care for one's hair when the stomach cried famine?

²²⁰Oral data; SMA, GR; Ryckmans, *Une page d'histoire*, 14; Heinrich Schnee, "Die Nordwestlichen Gebiete deutsch-Ostafrika. Aus dem Reise Bericht des Gouverneur's Dr. Schnee," *Deutsches Kolonialblatt*, 1 September (1913), 746-752.

²²¹SMA, DMS, Rugari (Burundi), 25 January 1909.

²²²SMA, DMS, Buhonga, 15 May 1908.

²²³Oral data.

- . September-November, violent dysentery epidemic originating from Bweru - devastated by war; scattered seats of smallpox; grasshopper invasion.²²⁴

1909

Rwanda

- . March-April, new expedition (Langenn, Willmann, Bock von Wulfin-gen) against Basebya. According to Willmann "the results were not [...] very satisfying. Nevertheless about a hundred cows were taken." Following this expedition, there was much complaining in the region surrounding the Kabwayi mission station "concerning the sacrifices that officers passing through the area imposed upon the Bahutu: goats, sheep, etc."²²⁵
- June, Gudowius leads another expedition against Basebya but "Mr. Gudowius was no more successful against Basebya than was Captain Langenn: the famous Mutwa fled to Mulera after having burnt his huts."²²⁶
- September, a third expedition (Stegman) is no more successful than the others.²²⁷
- . March, expedition to Bukunzi against Mwami Ndagano "who refuses to do forced labor for the military station of Shanghi." Another expedition will take place between December 1909 and January 1910, "in order to impose Karama as king."²²⁸
- . June, several soldiers wage war in Bugesera.²²⁹
- . As a consequence of these military expeditions, famine begins in Bukunzi and Kinyaga toward the end of 1909 and the beginning of 1910.²³⁰
- . October, in Nyanza a smallpox epidemic "considerably ravages Kis-uruna."²³¹
- . Dysentery rages all year long. In February, it is observed in the Kabwayi region; in May, and from September to December it hits Mulera with rarely-seen intensity. The sickness is particularly deadly during October and November: "on certain hills more than a

²²⁴SMA, DMS, Mugeru, 13 September, 25 November 1908; Buhonga, 25 and 29 November 1908; Kanyinya, 13 September, 2 October 1908; Meyer, *Die Barundi*, 143.

²²⁵SMA, DMS, Zaza, 11 April 1909; Rwaza, 30 March, 3 April 1909; Kabwayi, 11 and 14 April 1909; Nyundo, 8 April 1909.

²²⁶SMA, DMS, Kabwayi, 14 June 1909; Louis, *Ruanda-Urundi*, 148.

²²⁷SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 7 and 18 September 1909.

²²⁸SMA, DMS, Mibirizi, 4 March, 6 December 1909, 10 January 1910.

²²⁹SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 9 and 12 June 1909.

²³⁰SMA, DMS, Mibirizi, 15 November 1909 - 11 January 1910.

²³¹SMA, DMS, Kabwayi, 18 October 1909.

tenth of the population has been carried off by the plague." The epidemic equally sweeps through Kinyaga from October 1909 to January 1910: "houses were demolished since all of the inhabitants had become victims of the sickness in several days time."²³²

Burundi

- . Famine is rampant in the Kanyinya region for the third consecutive year.²³³
- . March, clashes between dissident princes and royal troops resume in the northeast. The Germans dispatch an expedition (Wintgens) from 5 May to the end of August in order to delimit the frontier between the two parties.²³⁴
- . June-July, clashes in the northwest also resume between rebelling peasants (led by Karibwami) and royal troops. The Germans intervene in support the rebels following a new and sudden policy change: in June (Holzhausen), in July (Meyer) and in August (Keil). After these combats, there is an important food shortage in the center north.²³⁵
- . Meanwhile, in the east, the Germans wage war "a bit everywhere."²³⁶
- . May, an expedition from Bukoba "devastates Buha where the people had robbed two or three Indian caravans."²³⁷ The troops pursue the "bands of thieves" to Burundi: "officers and soldiers surface from all parts, burn the entire area situated somewhere between six or eight hours south of the Muyaga mission station."²³⁸
- . August or September, Muziguru (nicknamed *Kisesarubere*), a man from Buha who presented himself as a new king, settles in Munyinya (Ruyigi) "when the arrival of German troops put an end to his beautiful dreams. He persuaded his followers that they had no reason to fear the guns, but the 39 lying dead on the battlefield proved him wrong."²³⁹

²³²SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 5 May, 24 September - 25 December 1909; Mibirizi, 28 November 1909; Kabwayi, 10 February 1909.

²³³SMA, DMS, Kanyinya, 1909.

²³⁴SMA, GR, Reports dated 7 May, 19 and 26 July 1909.

²³⁵Oral data; SMA, GR, Holzhausen report dated 17 June, Langenn reports dated 24 July, 1 and 11 August 1909.

²³⁶SMA, DMS, Buhonga, 30 November 1909.

²³⁷*Ibid.*, 5 September 1909.

²³⁸SMA, Chroniques trimestrielles (1909), Muyaga.

²³⁹*Ibid.*

- . From November to the end of December, several expeditions cross the country in connection with a vast "clean up" campaign in Buha (Stegman, Nordeck, Buchwald, Wagner).²⁴⁰
- . November-December, a dysentery epidemic ravages the country and causes a high mortality rate: on "our hill of Muyaga, which totals 100 persons, ... 11 were killed by the plague."²⁴¹

1910

Rwanda

- . March, a bacterial anthrax (*ubutaka*) epidemic in Gisaka causes "numerous victims among the cattle."²⁴²
- . On 1 April, following political interventions in the affairs of the country, Father Loupias of the Catholic mission station at Rwaza is killed in Gahunga by Rukara rwa Bishingwa.²⁴³ Resident Kandt dispatches a punitive expedition (a non-commissioned officer) into the region of the Ruhengeri military post: there are "16 to 20 dead." Two other expeditions will take place: on 29 April (non-commissioned officer Pursche) and in October (Lt. Falkenstein).²⁴⁴ Meanwhile, Rukara "eluded his German enemies for almost two years. He was finally apprehended and executed 'in the interest of the restoration of public peace and security' during the Ndungutse bloodbath of April-May 1912."²⁴⁵
- . From 13 to 22 April, expedition (Falkenstein, Spaar) - distinct from the preceding - against the Abarashi.²⁴⁶
- . August, famine in Bushiru following punitive expedition: "the war had destroyed our small reserves and now we are hungry."²⁴⁷
- . September, the dysentery epidemic that had already caused ravages between October 1909 and January 1910, reappears in Kinyaga-Bukunzi.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁰SMA, GR, Brentzel report dated 23 November 1909; SMA, DMS, Buhonga, 8 August - 30 November 1909.

²⁴¹SMA, Chroniques trimestrielles (1909), Muyaga; SMA, DMS, Kanyinya, 15 October 1909.

²⁴²SMA, DMS, Zaza, 21 March 1910.

²⁴³SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 1 April 1910; *Histoire et chronologie*, 140; Dufays, *Pages d'Épopée africaine*, 72-74.

²⁴⁴SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 5 and 29 April, 11 October 1910.

²⁴⁵Louis, *Ruanda-Urundi*, 179.

²⁴⁶SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 7 and 22 April 1910.

²⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 2 August 1910.

²⁴⁸SMA, DMS, Mibirizi, 12 September 1910.

- . December, expedition (Lt. Wintgens) to Ruhengeri; results: 65 deaths, 60 women and children captured, 230 head of cattle taken.²⁴⁹ January 1911, the same expedition sets fire to Kivurunga in order to punish the inhabitants for the murder of a courier.²⁵⁰ On 1 January, "a number of people are killed. Many women are captured and brought to the camp [Ruhengeri] where the lieutenant distributes them by asking the chiefs who had followed him to draw lots."²⁵¹

Burundi

- . Following the 1909 combats and as a result of a shortage of rain-fall (March 1910) and an invasion of caterpillars that eat all of the crops, a terrible famine, known as *Kamaramaza*, breaks out in the north and northeast.²⁵² It provokes a massive exodus of people in the Kanyinya region, which had been hit for the fourth consecutive year: "on one hill, where we had counted up to 100 cases, only 25 remained; on another hill only the Batutsi, subsisting on their herds, escaped. Everywhere, the desert was moving in on us."²⁵³
- . 18 October - 17 December, expedition (Göring) into Buyogoma and the Rumonge region.²⁵⁴
- . May-June, whooping cough epidemic causes numerous deaths among young infants. October-November, smallpox epidemic of weak impact. July, epidemic consisting of swollen ganglions in the neck area. August, scattered seats of dysentery.²⁵⁵

Rwanda-Burundi

- . Early May, every morning between 4 and 5 a.m. for fifteen days, Halley's comet - nicknamed *Umuganzaruguru* ("he who rules above") in Burundi and more commonly known in Rwanda under the name of *Nyakotsi* ("she with the fumarole"). The Barundi think that the comet had to "marry the king of the fish (*umwami w-infi*) in Lake Tanganyika." In Rwanda, "there is much agitation among the pagans.

²⁴⁹Louis, *Ruanda-Urundi*, 179.

²⁵⁰As the Brentzel report states euphemistically, these couriers "were not angels" (SMA, GR, 23 November 1909). In Rwanda and Burundi, their passage was always accompanied by diverse exactions; this was the case here, but as was customary under colonial rule, the victims were the ones who were punished.

²⁵¹SMA, DMS, Rwanda, 1 and 10 January 1911.

²⁵²Significance: it is astonishing to lack food and goods that can be exchanged in order to obtain it.

²⁵³SMA, *Chroniques trimestrielles* (1911), Kanyinya; and also, oral data; SMA, DMS, Kanyinya, 1909; Meyer, *Die Barundi*, 19.

²⁵⁴SMA, GR, Göring report dated 3 March 1911.

²⁵⁵SMA, DMS, Buhonga, 20 May, 5 June, 18 August, 31 October, 9 November 1910; Rugari, 30 July 1910.

Their cows will die, famine will come, sickness will finish off those whom famine will have left upright."²⁵⁶

1910-1911

Burundi

- Sleeping sickness (*trypanosomiasis*) in an endemic stage makes spectacular progress in the Lake Tanganyika plain. In effect, in the hopes of exterminating "the glossina" from the infested zone, the Germans have been undertaking a colossal clearing of the underbrush for several years. People living on the foothills of the Nile-Congo crest are requisitioned for this labor; uncontaminated until then, they fall prey to the disease *en masse* (see introduction). Hans Meyer observes: "in 1911 ... I was horrified by the ravages caused by the epidemic."²⁵⁷
- The *Kazuba* famine ("little sun"), triggered by the drought, ravages the entire country. It began in June 1910 and continued until March 1911. Unusual event: because of the combined effects of sleeping sickness and drought, it also affects the Tanganyika plain.²⁵⁸
- Between October and November 1911, there is a violent resurgence of the famine in the south and southeast following several German expeditions: in August (Stegman, Büsse, Braunschweig) and in September - December (Büsse). In August, above all, in Mosso, Resident von Stegman and Lt. Büsse (nicknamed *Bigingo*) "killed quite a number of people, especially women and children; they burnt the entire country; they took 1,500 head of cattle ...; they hung two princes (Musukuri and Bizimana)."²⁵⁹ The famine is particularly dramatic in the Ruyigi region, which was the most affected by repression, where it will continue until 1913.²⁶⁰

1911

Rwanda

- From January to the end of the year, *Ntakarokorwa* famine (from *Ntituragakorwako*, meaning, compared to what awaits us "up to now we have not yet been struck") in Ruhengeri, where "people had not had to suffer from hunger for 20 years." Kansi's diary attributes the famine to a drought "never before experienced in recorded memory," but it is clear that the military operations between 1911 and 1912 also had an important influence.²⁶¹

²⁵⁶SMA, DMS, Buhonga, 13 May 1910; Mibirizi, 10 May 1910; Rugari, 25 April 1910.

²⁵⁷Meyer, *Die Burundi*, 144.

²⁵⁸SMA, DMS, Rugari, 11 March 1911.

²⁵⁹SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 22 August 1911; and also, Mugera, 21 September, 17 October 1911; Buhonga, 7 August 1911; Rugari, 4 September, 20 October, 7 December 1911.

²⁶⁰CR (1929), 79; L'Epine, "Historique des famines," 440.

²⁶¹SMA, DMS, Kansi, 1911.

- . In Ruhengeri, the entire year is marked by an expedition sent to delimit the boundaries between Uganda and Rwanda, and "on this occasion, the Germans took advantage of their visit of the country to display their power."²⁶²
- . February, smallpox epidemic begins in Gisaka and propagates throughout the country.²⁶³
- . March, dysentery epidemic in Nyundo region; it continues in December simultaneously with typhoid (see note 40) "which seems to be rife through the entire country in epidemic proportions."²⁶⁴
- . July, "the bovine pest rages with furor in Ankole"; the government takes "steps in Rwanda to prevent the spread of the contagion."²⁶⁵

Burundi

- . September, measles epidemic in the Tanganyika plain.²⁶⁶
- . January, April, November, dysentery epidemic in various regions of the country.²⁶⁷
- . On 15 September, letter sent from Bujumbura Residence (Langenn) to the missionaries complaining of Emil Zimmermann who had spoken to the governor of the colonies "about the dealings and maneuvers of the officers at Usumbura and of their endless wars, or rather their *periodic butcheries* in this poor country which he [the governor] should govern and open to civilization."²⁶⁸

1911-1912

Rwanda

- . One of the largest known repressive campaigns begins in 1911 and continues until May 1912. It is directed at Nyiragahumuza (Rwabugiri's widow), Ndungutze and Basebya (the latter was periodically attacked by the Germans ever since 1906). It affects the provinces of Buberuka, Mulera, Bukonya, Kibali, Bumbogo: "Gudowius and the royal armies set the provinces afire and caused a great deal of

²⁶² *Histoire et chronologie*, 139.

²⁶³ SMA, DMS, Zaza, 10 and 15 February 1911; *Histoire et chronologie*, 11, 49.

²⁶⁴ SMA, DMS, Nyundo, 27 March, 23 December 1911; Kansi, October 1911.

²⁶⁵ SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 21 August 1911; Nyundo, 5 July 1911.

²⁶⁶ SMA, DMS, Buhonga, 19 September 1911.

²⁶⁷ SMA, DMS, Buhonga, 18 and 24 January, 12 November 1911; Rugari, 8 April 1911.

²⁶⁸ SMA, DMS, Buhonga, 22 October 1911. Emil Zimmermann was travelling on behalf of the Deutsch Kolonial Gesellschaft to explore the possibilities of building a railroad from Tabora to Ujiji (Kigoma) and of exploiting palm oil (shores of Tanganyika) and rubber (Maniema). At the time, the officers in question were: the Resident, Captain von Stegman, Lieutenant Büsse, and Oberleutnant Braunschweig.

bloodshed." German troops were, in fact, aided by Rwandan warriors led by Rwubusisi.²⁶⁹

1912

Rwanda

- Regarding military operations in Ruhengeri, see 1911-1912. The German-Musinga alliance continues full-force: Rukara will be executed on 18 April at the Ruhengeri military station; Ndungutze is shot to death on 13 April by Gudowius (nicknamed *Bwana Lazima*), and above all, "the Batutsi chiefs were settled in a region they had not previously occupied." In Bushiru, the military campaign continues against Rwamiheto, Nyamakwa, Murinzi, and Nyakazana.²⁷⁰
- February, dysentery epidemic. In March, influenza is rampant throughout the country and from April to July, malaria; these two epidemics cause numerous deaths. In November, diphteria "so frequent in Bugoyi also rages in Kanage" (see note 40).²⁷¹
- In February and September, exactions in Bugoyi on the part of soldiers from the Gisenyi military station.²⁷²

Burundi

- January-February, scattered smallpox pockets.²⁷³
- The imperial residence of Gitega is founded on 15 August: the Germans - in Bujumbura ever since 1897 - settle in the country's henceforth "pacified" interior wherein military campaigns become "police operations." There are at least three in 1912: against Rususuruka, "a recalcitrant from all points of view"; against Runana; and against the inhabitants of Gitwe hill who "menaced Lt. Hammerslein when a telegraphic communications line was being installed."²⁷⁴
- On 25 April at 5 p.m., in the Rugari region, an enormous swamp of papyrus - between 25 and 30 miles long - disappears in the space of an hour, sucked in by the Ruvuvu river. The same phenomenon was said to have occurred at least two times in the past (ca. 1832,

²⁶⁹SMA, DMS, Kansi, 4 May 1911. 150 men under Gudowius's command. This question is already well known, see SMA, DMS, Rwaza, November 1911, 5 January to 15 April 1912; Nyundo, 9 March 1912; *Histoire et chronologie*, 17, 142-145, 166; R. Bourgeois, *Banyarwanda et Burundi* (Bruxelles, 1954), II, 175-176; Jean-Pierre Chrétien, "La révolte de Ndungutse (1912). Forces traditionnelles et pression coloniale au Rwanda allemand," *Revue française d'Histoire d'Outre-Mer*, 59, 4 (1972), 645-680; Kagame, *Un abrégé de l'histoire*, 160-169; Louis, *Ruanda-Urundi*, 153-154.

²⁷⁰SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 17 and 18 April 1912.

²⁷¹SMA, DMS, Save 1912; Murunda, 12 November 1912; Kansi, 1912.

²⁷²SMA, DMS, Nyundo, 10 February, 25 September 1912.

²⁷³SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 1912; Buhonga, 6 February 1912.

²⁷⁴SMA, GR, Jahresbericht 1911-1912; Meyer, *Die Burundi*, 172-173.

1872). The frightful uproar, as well as the movement of this gigantic water mass, fills the inhabitants with dread. They think that a fabulous animal has carried all off into the Ruvuvu river.²⁷⁵

Rwanda-Burundi

- The bovine pest (bacterial anthrax), *iragara* or *rukubinama*, recurs rather seriously in the north of Burundi and in Rwanda. The first signs begin in 1911, the last disappear in 1913.²⁷⁶

1913

Rwanda

- Sorghum does not germinate and thus shortages begin in the Kansi region. There also are shortages in Bugoyi where "following a family funeral that afflicted Rwakadigi their chief, the Abagoyi were required to abstain from cultivating for one month. Since the beans were sown late, they could not completely mature."²⁷⁷
- June, diphtheria "is raging" in Ruhengeri (see note 40); from August to September, there is a smallpox epidemic in Kinyaga and in the Rusizi plain. In December, a number of porters "die following several days" of a malaria which proves to be endemic, and Maltese fever (brucellosis, *ubwaganaga*).²⁷⁸
- November, Resident Kandt goes to Bushiru "where there are new troubles," whereas in December, Lt. Büsse wages war there.²⁷⁹

Burundi

- "Police operation" (Lt. Bock) on the foothills of the Nile-Congo crest against the chiefs refusing to supply men for forced road work.²⁸⁰
- March, and from August to November, smallpox epidemic in the northeast. Because the disease is making headway, all communication with Rwanda is prohibited. In the Tanganyika plain, sleeping sickness continues to cause havoc.²⁸¹

²⁷⁵Van der Burgt, "Ein Naturereignis in Urundi (Deutsch-Ostafrika)," *Petermann's Mitteilungen*, 2 (1913), 24.

²⁷⁶SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 18 June 1912; Rugari, 23 July 1911, 1 January and 8 August 1912; Kansi, November 1912; Kigali, 25 November 1913.

²⁷⁷SMA, DMS, Murunda, 13 February 1913; Kansi, January 1913.

²⁷⁸SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 7 June, 5 December 1913; Murunda, 29 August, 7 September 1913; Kansi, August 1913; Kigali, 25 November 1913.

²⁷⁹SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 28 December 1913; Kigali, 21 November 1913.

²⁸⁰SMA, GR, Jahresbericht 1913-1914; Meyer, *Die Burundi*, 174.

²⁸¹SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 11 November 1913; Buhonga, 1913; Rugari, 24 March, 25 August, 10 November 1913.

1914

Rwanda

- . April, Wintgens expedition to Ndorwa: 1,000 head of cattle are expropriated.²⁸²
- . 2 June, meteor from the east-northeast at around 5:45 a.m.²⁸³
- . July, Büsse expedition to Bukunzi against Ndagano and Bisamuka.²⁸⁴
- . The first military campaigns following the outbreak of World War I in Europe: 23 September, the Germans attack the Belgian military post on the island of Ijwi; 11 October, the Belgians attack the German post of Cyangugu; 20 October, clashes between Belgian and German forces in Gisenyi, etc.²⁸⁵

Burundi

- . Significant development in April, of the smallpox epidemic that had first appeared in 1913.²⁸⁶
- . Internal clashes between the princes of Buyogoma and Buha. Repressive campaign (dispatched from Bukoba) against prince Senyamurungu (20 are killed on 5 December) "who invites people to settle in his encampment where they will not have to pay taxes" (see below).²⁸⁷

Rwanda-Burundi

- . Taxes are levied from the entire territory for the first time: "one rupee per capita, married and unmarried men, or 30 days of labor at the Residence."²⁸⁸ In 1912, the Germans had conducted a census in view of the tax levy. In 1913, tentatives to collect this tax - especially in the vicinity of Kigali - yielded practically nothing. In 1914, the Germans renew their attempt for the second consecutive year, but "the natives are increasingly losing their heads over the fact that they are still called to work despite the rupee of tax they have just paid."²⁸⁹

²⁸²SMA, DMS, Kigali, 22 April 1914.

²⁸³SMA, DMS, Murunda, 2 June 1914.

²⁸⁴SMA, DMS, Mibirizi, 17 and 20 July 1914.

²⁸⁵SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 27 October 1914; Mibirizi, September - December 1914. Since the military vicissitudes of the war in East Africa are well known, it seemed unnecessary to go into details. Only the consequences (famine, disease, portage) of this war will be mentioned.

²⁸⁶SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 7 and 14 April 1914.

²⁸⁷SMA, GR, Letter to the Kibondo post, dated 20 November 1914.

²⁸⁸SMA, DMS, Mugeru, 20 April 1915.

²⁸⁹SMA, DMS, Nyundo, August 1912, 19 August 1914; *Histoire et chronologie*, 22, 70.

1915

Rwanda

- . As far as European war is concerned, we can cite: a serious Anglo-Belgian incursion in Bukemba in March; July-August, two raids by Belgian troops in Bugoyi in order to procure cattle. These inroads provoke an influx of refugees and "God only knows what they live on. No one cultivates. Night and day they are on the alert." September-October, clashes between Belgians and Germans, and in December the Belgians attack Ruhengeri. These events provide the foundation for the famine that will be rampant in Bugoyi between 1916-1918 (see below); at the same time, the incessant movement of reinforcement troops (which have to be fed) through the country provokes a difficult alimentary situation: "passage of a company coming from Bukoba and headed for Gisenyi. The country is in a flutter because of it; it's a question of supplying provisions for a caravan of 12,000 men."²⁹⁰
- . March, tax collection: "for 15 days the tax collectors have been once again roaming the country, provoking new miseries for our people who have no rupees, all trade having stopped because of the war."²⁹¹
- . April, a serious type of influenza epidemic rages throughout the Kabwayi region and "many people are dying."²⁹²
- . May, in Ruhengeri: "dysentery claims many victims on all sides. It would seem that this illness appears each year toward the end of the heavy rains and travels from hill to hill."²⁹³

Burundi

- . Small-scale famine (*Mutama*).²⁹⁴
- . May, German expedition in the Rumonge region: 6 "refractories" are hung, including Chief Magugu in Bujumbura (30 September).²⁹⁵
- . On 30 November, *mwami* Mutaga II dies.

²⁹⁰SMA, DMS, Kabwayi, 16 November 1915; see also, Rwaza, 19 March, 1 December 1915; Nyundo, July-October 1915.

²⁹¹SMA, DMS, Nyundo, 1 April 1915.

²⁹²SMA, DMS, Kabwayi, 5 April 1915.

²⁹³SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 28 May 1915.

²⁹⁴Oral data.

²⁹⁵SMA, GR, Jahresbericht 1914-1915.

1916

Rwanda

- . Troop movements resulting from the European war multiply. Thus, in January, toward Mpororo, "several German companies pass time and again on the road near the mission station, causing quite a stir in the country. Providing provisions for thousands of men all at once is not a simple matter."²⁹⁶ In the same diary, the following observation is made two days earlier: "famine is rife in Marangara. Captain Wintgens asks for provisions for his troops, no way it can be procured, shortage of food."²⁹⁷
- . *Rumanura* famine ("exhausting one's savings") is a direct consequence of the extension of the First World War in Africa.²⁹⁸ Begun in November 1914, it develops dramatically in Bugoyi and in all Gisenyi. It is due to both the massive requisitions of foodstuffs on the part of military troops and the impossibility of cultivating fields that have been beaten by the crossfire of the belligerents. Then, Belgian troops arrive in Nyundo: "after several days, the columns head toward the interior. There are interminable lines of porters ... hunger sets in after the troops; for the most part, the fields lie fallow, and the banana groves have been razed; at least hundreds if not thousands of men had to be fed all year long."²⁹⁹ In July, the famine "increases more and more," and in November it "continues to increase." By the end of the year, it reaches Ruhengeri.³⁰⁰ This famine will not end until January 1918. At this time, the population "estimated at 110,000 natives in 1914, was reduced by half as a result of the war and famine."³⁰¹
- . Smallpox epidemic in Nyanza and Ruhengeri, and in December in Gisaka.³⁰²
- . Sleeping sickness is "responsible for the disappearance of numerous horned animals in the region south-southeast of the Barassa (Gisaka)."³⁰³

²⁹⁶SMA, DMS, Kabwayi, 10 January 1916.

²⁹⁷*Ibid.*, 8 January 1916.

²⁹⁸Bernard Lugan, "Causes et effets de la famine 'Rumanura' au Rwanda, 1916-18," *Revue canadienne des Etudes africaines/Canadian Journal of African Studies*, X, 2 (1976), 347-356.

²⁹⁹SMA, DMS, Nyundo, 12 May 1916.

³⁰⁰SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 9 November 1916; Nyundo, July and 6 November 1916; Murunda, 23 November 1916.

³⁰¹CR (1929), 79.

³⁰²SMA, DMS, Zaza, 8 December 1916; *Histoire et chronologie*, 51, 73-74, 169.

³⁰³SMA, DMS, Zaza, 4 June 1917.

- . September-October, "absolutely torrential rains" fall for more than two weeks over the Astrida region; "this is so extraordinary for this time of year that is worth mentioning."³⁰⁴ Similarly, on 31 October, there are torrential rains (63 mm) accompanied by hail in Ruhengeri.³⁰⁵

Burundi

- . June, resurgences of internal clashes between dissident princes and royal troops in the northeast.³⁰⁶
- . September-October, Belgian, so-called "police" campaign (Deryck, nicknamed *Kawayawaga*) in Mugamba: "some natives were killed, others wounded in rather large numbers."³⁰⁷

Rwanda-Burundi

- . 15-17 April, the Belgian *Force publique* launches an offensive against German forces and captures Cyangugu on 17 April. Kigali is occupied on 16 May, Gitega on 17 June.

1916-1918

Rwanda-Burundi

- . The repercussions of war are strongly felt. In Rwanda, the *Rumanura* famine that had begun in Bugoyi in November 1914 (see above 1916) spreads to other regions in which it is sometimes called *Rumanurimbaba*. It is particularly serious in the north: Bugoyi, Bushiru, Kingogo, Bulera. It is estimated to have reduced the population by 20 percent in the Bushiru and Rubengera regions. It affects as well, if less seriously, the regions of Mulera, Nyanza, Astrida, Cyangugu, and Migongo (Gisaka).³⁰⁸
- . Local calamities add to the ravages of war and the inclement weather of 1916: caterpillar invasion in Gisaka in August 1917; grasshoppers ravage the region southeast of Gisaka in October; disastrous inundations in the Sebeya valley near Nyundo; extraordinary drought in the Save region.³⁰⁹
- . The *Rumanurimbaba* famine ends at the beginning of 1918 although "semi-hungered cadavers" can still be seen here and there, "on the

³⁰⁴SMA, DMS, Kansi, 6 October 1916.

³⁰⁵SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 31 October 1916.

³⁰⁶SMA, DMS, Kanyinya, 25 June 1916.

³⁰⁷SMA, DMS, Buhonga, September-October 1916.

³⁰⁸SMA, DMS, Save, 1917; Rwaza, 1917; Mibirizi, 1917; Kabwayi, 1917; Nyundo, 1917; Murunda, 1917; Kigali, 1917; CR (1929), 79; *Histoire et chronologie*, 12, 136; Gorju, *En zigzags*, 215-216.

³⁰⁹SMA, DMS, Save, November 1917.

paths."³¹⁰ Nevertheless, in May, "hunger" (*inzara y'umuhinbo*) rages in numerous hills in the Kansi region. Finally, in November-December, the famine named *Kumanurimhahe* ("unhooking the old hoes in order to fetch food") breaks out in the Kigali region and in Nyanza.³¹¹

- . In Burundi, in 1916 and 1917, famine in the northeast caused by the 1916 clashes between princes. It is accompanied by a dysentery epidemic that causes enormous ravages.³¹² As in Rwanda, the *Rumanura* famine (also called *Kamaramaza*) overtakes the country especially in the eastern section (Buyogoma, Mosso) and, to a lesser degree, in the northeast.³¹³ The conditions created by the war and epidemic (see below) are coupled by the consequences of the bad harvests. Food shortages are unequal during these two years: famine between October and December 1917, lull in January 1918 on account of a rather good bean and eleusine harvest, aggravation in March, lull in July owing to a good sorghum harvest, fresh aggravation in October-November. In March 1919, the effects of famine are once again felt; affecting Buha as well; the Burundi can no longer seek help in that area. In reality, both in Rwanda and in Burundi this period is marked by generalized food shortages.³¹⁴
- . The famine, however, is considerably amplified by two formidable epidemics that devastate the country: smallpox, and cerebrospinal meningitis (*mugiga* or *muhurishenyi*).
- . Smallpox rages all over Rwanda from May to November 1917. In Kingogo, where it surfaces for the first time, it causes considerable ravages between July and September. In Ruhengeri and in the Astrida region, it spreads together with a dysentery epidemic.³¹⁵
- . In Rwanda and Burundi, a crushing cerebrospinal meningitis epidemic breaks out (an illness unknown up to this date) and decimates the population between August and November 1917. It was "a hecatomb despite the magical remedies provided by sorcerers and healers." From Tabora, it is introduced by the thousands of porters, requisitioned for the Belgian offensive, who returned from Tanzania. In the vicinity of the Buhonga mission, it decimates a twentieth of the population in two months. In Rwanda, it appears in

³¹⁰SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 3 January 1918.

³¹¹SMA, DMS, Kabwayi, 20 November 1925; Kansi, May 1918; Kigali, 17 November 1918, 15 February 1919.

³¹²SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 10 April 1917; Rugari, March and May 1917.

³¹³SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 4 March 1918; CR (1929), 79; L'Epine, "Historique des famines," 441.

³¹⁴SMA, Chroniques trimestrielles (1917-1918); SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 4 March 1918, 20 March 1919.

³¹⁵SMA, DMS, Save, 1917; Rwaza, 1 October, 7 and 23 November 1917; Kabwayi, 3 July, 19 August 1917; Nyundo, 8 July - 5 September 1917; Murunda, 20 July 1917; Kansi, May and November 1917; Kigali, 4 June, 4 August 1917.

Gisaka in August; in October it reaches the Kigali and Ndara regions. In November, there is "an overwhelming death rate a bit everywhere." In December, an inquiry conducted by Father Hurel in the Kansi region reveals 198 deaths out of the 642 known cases (31 percent). The disease will continue, more or less seriously, until 1919.³¹⁶ At the same time, paludism, which was previously limited to the Tanganyika plain, spreads in a spectacular manner throughout both countries following the caravans of porters.

1917

Rwanda

- . As in Burundi, German repression is followed by Belgian repression: February-March, military expedition (Captain Delhaye) to the Kanage of Gisenyi "against the forest Batwa." August, campaign led by administrator Morteau to Bushiru with approximately 30 soldiers.³¹⁷ Toward the end of the year and at the beginning of 1918, "Mr. Mertens and later the adjutant Collard ... lead the repression and pacification campaign using all the desired force" at Balera (Ruhengeri).³¹⁸ In December, non-commissioned officer Marannes leads a campaign against the Abasigi: "since the men had fled, they [the Belgians] kidnapped the women, 6 men, 65 cows, and a large number of sheep and goats."³¹⁹
- . On 6 June, lunar eclipse at approximately 10 p.m.³²⁰

Burundi

- . Meteorite on the night of 25-26 February.³²¹
- . An unknown species of bean weevil is introduced into the country with the foodstuffs coming from the Belgian Congo; it multiplies so quickly that in 1918 it is difficult to find the seeds necessary for bean cultivation.³²²

Rwanda-Burundi

- . Beginning in July another misery is added to the war, famine, and illness: the first Belgian tax levy - 2,50 FB. per household.³²³

³¹⁶SMA, DMS, Mugeru, August 1917; Muyaga, 16 September, 1 November 1917; Zaza, 17 August, 18 September 1917; Buhonga, 1917; Rugari, 7 November 1917, October 1918; Kansi, October-December 1917; Kigali, 12 and 26 October 1917; *Histoire et chronologie*, 11, 51.

³¹⁷SMA, DMS, Nyundo, 27 August 1917; Murunda, 7 February, 8 March 1917.

³¹⁸*Histoire et chronologie*, 146.

³¹⁹SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 14 and 16 December 1917.

³²⁰SMA, DMS, Kigali, 6 June 1917.

³²¹SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 26 February 1917.

³²²SMA, DMS, Buhonga, 1920.

³²³SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 12 July 1917; Buhonga 1917; *Histoire et chronologie*, 22.

1918

Rwanda

- Smallpox continues its destruction everywhere, particularly at the beginning and end of the year, while the vaccine fails completely. In Bugoyi and Bushiru, smallpox rages at the same time as dysentery. Cerebrospinal meningitis still claims victims here and there. There is also mention of pockets of influenza (*gigore*) and cases of quinsy that cause innumerable deaths in Rulindo.³²⁴
- Several military expeditions also take place during the year: March, campaign to Mulera against Ngirimkirima; May and July, Van Beckford, followed by Roland, leads campaign against the Batwa in Kanage. Finally, at an unidentified date, "military operations in Buhoma and Bushiru - led by military agent Bidoul with a machine-gun and a shotgun section."³²⁵
- Single tax levy of 5 FB. (= 3 rupees) on cattle owners in Gisaka in January and Bugoyi in October.³²⁶
- The bacterial anthrax that is rife in Uganda invades the northern sections of the country, particularly Bugoyi and the regions of Bigogo and Ruhengeri.³²⁷
- In September, a multitude of grasshoppers invade Gisaka adding to another scourge: drought.³²⁸

Burundi

- Military expedition in the East against Prince Senyamurungu who opposes the requisitions and tax, and takes to the *maquis* in Buyenzi: Keun campaign - 10 dead - in February; Keun and Limbourg campaign in May-June; Krieking campaign in September-October; Krieking in January 1919; Limbourg in June 1919.³²⁹

1918-1919

Rwanda-Burundi

- Spanish influenza (*rukorora*) epidemic.

³²⁴SMA, DMS, Save, 1918; Zaza, 16 April 1918; Rwaza, 20 February, 26 March, 25 November 1918; Nyundo, 16 and 27 January, 24 March, 25 October 1918; Kansi, November 1918; Kigali, 4 and 7 November 1918; *Histoire et chronologie*, 11, 136.

³²⁵SMA, DMS, Nyundo, 3 March, 20 May 1918; Murunda, 23 May, 12 July 1918; *Histoire et chronologie*, 162.

³²⁶SMA, DMS, Nyundo, 8 October 1918; *Histoire et chronologie*, 52.

³²⁷SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 22 April, 21 May 1918; Kabwayi, 26 May, 8 December 1918.

³²⁸SMA, DMS, Zaza, 13 and 23 September 1918; Kigali, 17 September 1918; *Histoire et chronologie*, 52.

³²⁹SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 26 February, 5 June, 3 September 1918, 14 January, 2 June 1919.

- . In Burundi, it surfaces for the first time in August 1918; it provokes a high mortality rate until March 1919. It rages simultaneously with smallpox, the resurgence of which is the most murderous since the great epidemics between 1892-1893.³³⁰
- . In Rwanda, Spanish influenza in Cyangugu and the Mibirizi region; it becomes widespread and attacks violently in March; it reaches Gisaka "where it spreads out on all sides" in May. It recurs even more terribly from August to September: 50 dead in 5 weeks in the immediate vicinity of the Rwaza mission station.³³¹

1919

Rwanda

- . March-April, grasshoppers invade the regions of Kabwayi and Kigali; "the beans and eleusine are lost."³³²
- . From April to August, violent resurgence of cerebrospinal meningitis: "in Rubengera as well as in Mibirizi and Gatana, the mortality rate is very high." The Abahunde who frequent the Gisenyi marketplace are the supposed carriers-importers of the illness.³³³
- . April, sleeping sickness is rampant in the Nyundo region.³³⁴
- . May, the governmental tax levies favor exactions on the part of chiefs: "nice opportunity for chiefs and sub-chiefs to gather cows, goats, hoes, etc."³³⁵
- . May, Willems campaign "against the Abacuzi [blacksmiths] in the vicinity of Gaseke.... A revolt breaks out suddenly among the Abateke of Rukiga. This is a sign of the troubles and incidents that the Bahutu provoke in several regions (Buliza-Bumbogo)."³³⁶

Burundi

- . January, grasshoppers coming from Usuwu and Bugufi destroy eleusine ears and eat the corn and sorghum leaves in Bweru. In May, caterpillars (*ibinyugunyugu*) attack the sorghum crops.³³⁷

³³⁰SMA, DMS, Mugeru, 20 January, March 1919; Buhonga, August 1918; Kanyinya, 6 January - 17 March 1918, 5 January - 12 March 1919; Rugari, March 1919.

³³¹SMA, DMS, Zaza, 3 May - 5 November 1919; Rwaza, 27 March, 27 April, 2 and 24 September 1919; Mibirizi, 20 January 1919; Kabwayi, March 1919; Nyundo, 20 January, 15 and 18 March 1919; Kansi, March 1919.

³³²SMA, DMS, Kabwayi, March 1919; Kigali, March - April 1919.

³³³SMA, DMS, Nyundo, 17 April, 25 June, 22 August 1919.

³³⁴SMA, DMS, Nyundo, 14 May 1919; Kigali, April 1919.

³³⁵SMA, DMS, Kansi, May 1919.

³³⁶SMA, DMS, Rwaza, 23 May 1919; *Histoire et chronologie*, 20.

³³⁷SMA, DMS, Rugari, May 1919.

- . Pockets of smallpox at the beginning of the year.³³⁸
- . On 29 May, solar eclipse at 5 p.m.³³⁹
- . On 6 November, Belgian troops led by D'Hollander raid the Gisenyi hill (Busoni): "it was a senseless reprisal." A policeman "wanted to do violence to a woman who defended herself and wounded him by beating his forehead with her copper bracelets. Hearing her cries, the husband ran to his wife's rescue and pretended to draw his spear. The policeman fled to his station and asserted falsely that the people of Kagara wanted to prevent him from cutting the wood or reeds he had been sent to fetch. Thereupon, the head of the station left with soldiers and policemen and ordered the entire hill to be burnt" (123 huts and 93 corn-lofts were burnt).³⁴⁰

1920

Rwanda

- . January, cases of smallpox in Gisaka (Ruzirabgobwa hill) and the Kanage of Gisenyi.³⁴¹
- . June, "Mr. Verhulst arrives in Cingago among the Ruvugandekwe where some individuals refuse to obey neither the government nor the local chiefs; he must have killed several so that they would leave him alone.... An expedition to Bushiru is needed."³⁴²

Burundi

- . In January-February and in August, devastating recurrence of cerebrospinal meningitis. Important epidemic seats: smallpox in February-March, dysentery in November.³⁴³
- . February, green grasshopper (*ubuhahate*) invasion in Buyogoma; they attack the sorghum and eleusine and provoke an important scarcity.³⁴⁴
- . June, L'Epine campaign against Prince Nkunzumwami in Buyenzi.³⁴⁵

³³⁸SMA, DMS, Mugeru, 20 January 1919; Kanyinya, 5 January - 12 March 1919.

³³⁹SMA, DMS, Rugari, May 1919.

³⁴⁰SMA, DMS, Kanyinya, 6 and 15 November, 21 December 1919.

³⁴¹SMA, DMS, Zaza, 22 January 1920; *Histoire et chronologie*, 11, 136.

³⁴²SMA, DMS, Nyundo, 19 June 1920.

³⁴³SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 4 February, 3 August, 24 November 1920; Buhonga, February - March 1920; Kanyinya, January, 12 March 1920.

³⁴⁴SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 2 and 16 February 1920.

³⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 31 May, 13 July 1920.

1920-1922

Rwanda-Burundi

- . Anthrax (*iragara*), which is present from April 1919 and is rampant in Ankole, spreads to Rwanda in March 1920 and to Burundi in May. Known as *Rujoromba*, it is the most murderous reappearance of this bovine pest since the 1890-1892 epizooty.
In Rwanda, it causes damage everywhere in 1921. Mwami Musinga is opposed to the vaccination and in Bugesera, a soldier who wanted to vaccinate the cattle is killed.
In Burundi, the pest provokes a hecatomb estimated at 20 percent of the cattle in the Muyaga region; in Rugari, it "kills with fury and at least nine-tenths of the cattle disappears." Like in 1890-1892, it has the character of an enzooty that causes terrible wounds and numerous deaths.³⁴⁶

1921

Rwanda

- . From November 1921 to February 1922, famine in Gisaka and south of the territory of Gatsibo. The victims are numerous.³⁴⁷

Burundi

- . December, famine in the east and northeast (Bushahuzi, Bwambaran-gwe, Busoni) because of the lack of rainfall and the massive requisition of laborers ever since June.³⁴⁸ But there is also another reason: the stoppage of cultivation for one month (February) at Bugufi, at Busokoza's and Mbanzabugabo's chiefdoms at the "orders of Nyavyinshi, the king whom no one has seen and who lives in the swamps of Kabogo.... It was said that those who worked were devoured by animals or were swallowed up by the earth."³⁴⁹
- . In Kimeza, a weed, probably from Rwanda, appears (see above 1908); it is called *kurisuka* because where it takes root, it suffocates all.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁶SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 1 and 5 May 1920, 1 January 1921; Zaza, 20 June 1921; Rwaza, March and June 1921; Kanyinya, 2 January 1922; Kabwayi, 11 March 1920, 18 February, 5 August, 12 December 1921; Nyundo, 23 March 1920, 22 November 1921; Rugari, February 1922; Kigali, April 1919; Rwamagana (Rwanda), 16 March 1921; CR (1921), 77-79, *Histoire et chronologie*, 11; Gorju, *En zigzags*, 37.

³⁴⁷SMA, DMS, Zaza, 1 September 1922; CR (1929), 79.

³⁴⁸SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 4 December 1921.

³⁴⁹SMA, DMS, Rugari, February 1921.

³⁵⁰*Ibid.*, December 1921.

1922

Rwanda

- . Influenza epidemic (*muyegu*) in Bugoyi, and new cases of cerebro-spinal meningitis in Kanage (Gisenyi).³⁵¹
- . From July onward, significant shortages in the Mukarange region in Gisaka.³⁵²

Burundi

- . According to Resident Ryckmans, not even one third of the Burundi have eaten their fill.³⁵³
- . The *Ruyaga* famine, the most important in this region since the one from 1904 to 1906, devastates Busoni and Bukakwa from January 1922 to February 1923. The mortality rate is frightening: "we are told that starving people supposedly fall down on the roads, that birds of prey and dogs devour those who starved to death."³⁵⁴
- . From 21 May to 8 June, a large-scale military expedition (Lt. Colette, 3 machine-guns, 150 soldiers) in order to put down a peasant revolt in Buyenzi, led by Runyota.³⁵⁵
- . July, pockets of smallpox; the disease rages with virulence in Buyenzi and in the Rusizi river valley.³⁵⁶

1923

Burundi

- . *Ruhemura intakekwa* famine in the northeast (especially in the Kanyinya region). It follows the *Ruyaga* famine of 1922: "they complain of the scarcity; the Bahutu cannot pay the tax; then the Indian merchants sentence to death those whom they send to Bukoba with pelts; at any rate, they give them practically nothing."³⁵⁷ The famine persists in 1924: drought in May, precisely when the crops were just beginning to flower. This year, the death count is practically 5,000 in the Karibwami chiefdom alone where in 1925,

³⁵¹SMA, DMS, Nyundo, 3 June 1922; *Histoire et chronologie*, 11, 136.

³⁵²SMA, DMS, Rwamagana, 24 October 1922.

³⁵³Gorju, *En zigzags*, 45.

³⁵⁴SMA, DMS, Kanyinya, 25 January 1922; and also, CR (1921), 44; (1922), 7, 11; (1926), 90.

³⁵⁵SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 30 May 1922; Kanyinya, 2 and 21 May, 5 June 1922; CR (1922), 6; (1923), 7.

³⁵⁶SMA, DMS, Muyaga, July 1922; CR (1922), 12.

³⁵⁷SMA, DMS, Rugari, 25 October 1923. Porterage, in this case the transport of animal skins, was one of the means of acquiring money for taxes.

there will be a movement of revolt. In 1925-1926, the *Ruhemura intakekwa* famine merges with the large, general famine known as *Gakwege*.³⁵⁸

- . On 23 March, meteorite at the beginning of the evening.
- . November-December, gastric enteritis epidemic together with dysentery in the east, and renewed outbreak of quinsy.³⁵⁹

1924

Rwanda

- . Dissidence in Bukunzi "where little by little the 'kings' ... were diminishing the prestations they owed to the chief of Impara and to the king of Rwanda - so much so that the European administration found itself in the presence of an important region that was practically independent of central power."³⁶⁰
30 March 1923, death of Ndagano, the last of the rainmakers in Bukunzi. Cultivation is suspended as a sign of mourning. The region is under the military occupation of 50 men led by Adjutant Persain, later by Chief-Adjutant Meys, and then by officer-cadet Benzing. In April 1925, the queen mother and two of Ndagano's sons are killed. The occupation will end in May 1926.³⁶¹
- . April, whooping-cough epidemic and numerous mortal cases of pneumonia in Bugoyi. In November, "bilious fever" epidemic in the Kabwayi region where "the mortality rate has never been so great among Christians."³⁶²

Burundi

- . On 21 July, meteorite at around 7 p.m.³⁶³
- . 7 November, *statutory order No. 52* obliging all family heads to plant and care for at least five *ares* (500 square meters) of non-seasonal crops (manioc, sweet potatoes) in order to fight against the famine.
- . Sporadic cases of cerebrospinal meningitis in the Bujumbura region.³⁶⁴

³⁵⁸SMA, DMS, Kanyinya, 1 January - 6 August 1925; CR (1924), 14, 22; (1925), 67; (1926), 89-91.

³⁵⁹SMA, DMS, Mugeru, 22 November 1923.

³⁶⁰*Histoire et chronologie*, 99.

³⁶¹SMA, DMS, Mibirizi, 4 January 1923, 26 May 1926; Kabwayi, 14 March, 22 September, 16 October 1924, 9 April 1925; CR (1923), 7; *Histoire et chronologie*, 100.

³⁶²SMA, DMS, Kabwayi, 27 November 1924; Nyundo, 22 April 1924.

³⁶³SMA, DMS, Rusengo (Burundi), 21 July 1924.

³⁶⁴CR (1924), 15.

1924-1926

Rwanda-Burundi

- In Rwanda, from May 1924 onward, famine rages in Gisaka. Known as *Gakwege* (or *Ntunyanjweho*, "don't bug me," in Byumba), it gains ground in south and central Rwanda (in Rukaryi and Bugesera) from December 1924 to July 1925. In reality, it is part of a more general long-lasting famine which spreads here and there with periods of remission until 1930. It hits hardest from May 1925 to the beginning of 1926 in the Kabwayi region, which in January had suffered from the heaviest rainfall recorded (175mm) since 1908. In Gisaka, the famine, which had subsided for a while, picks up again even more severely in October 1925 and induces a dysentery epidemic. The situation is further aggravated by caravans of starving who "coming from all sides in search of foodstuff, impoverish the country." In the middle of 1926, the famine becomes a shortage, except from October to November, when it sorely afflicts the Akanyaru and Gisaka regions.³⁶⁵
- In Burundi, the official death toll of the *Gakwege* famine is 40,000. The famine is particularly severe in the northeast and north (regions of Musinga and Ngozi) where it reaches dramatic proportions following two successive bean crop failures. It is aggravated by a sickness that attacks sorghum crops and by grasshopper invasions. It provokes numerous cases of dysentery and a violent recrudescence of yaws.³⁶⁶ The essential cause of this long-lasting food crisis (aside from circumstantial calamities) lies in the "slow assassination" of the precapitalist state by the colonial powers (see introduction).

1925

Rwanda

- December, in Gisaka, the country is invaded by "clouds of moths. Never in the history of man have so many tiny beasts been seen."³⁶⁷
- Military occupation of Busozo, which had previously been independent of centralized power, continues into 1926.³⁶⁸

³⁶⁵SMA, DMS, Zaza, 1 October - 6 December 1925, 3 February 1927; Kabwayi, 5 May 1925 - 13 February 1926; Rwamagana, 10 October, 13 and 23 December 1925; CR (1929), 79; *Histoire et chronologie*, 12.

³⁶⁶Oral data; Rugari, 1 January, June 1925; Rusengo, 28 November 1925; CR (1925), 33; (1929), 79; L'Epine, "Historique des famines," 441.

³⁶⁷SMA, DMS, Zaza, 10 December 1925.

³⁶⁸*Histoire et chronologie*, 101, 106; Bourgeois, *Banyarwanda*, II, 182; Marcel d'Hertefeldt, "Le Rwanda," in *Les anciens royaumes de la zone interlacustre méridionale, Rwanda, Burundi, Buha* (Tervuren, 1962), 61.

³⁶⁹SMA, DMS, Rusengo, 16 February 1926.

Burundi

- . Beginning of obligatory non-seasonal subsistence crops in swamps: "the chiefs misinterpreted government orders; they make people work too much for their own benefit."³⁶⁹
- . January, invasion of small caterpillars that menace sorghum and eleusine crops in the Rusengo region: "never have we seen so many. And in the past, the small beasts only devoured the seeds in the ground. Now they attack the high stems ... for many, the crop yield will be nil ... there will be famine."³⁷⁰
- . August, movement of revolt in Bwambarangwe (Kabira hill) against payment of "traditional" prestations (see 1929) and the recruitment of laborers for the mines in Katanga. At the orders of the administrator L'Epine, Prince Karibwami leads the repression: there are 9 deaths on the rebel side and 3 on the Karibwami side, without speaking of the wounded. The hill and its environs are occupied from 17 September to 25 November by Mr. Stengele and 25 soldiers "in order to show people that they are not free to live as they wish but that they must obey the chiefs and the government."³⁷¹
- . Military occupation, until 1926, of the Bukeye region; its goal is to "reduce these overly independent populations."³⁷²
- . The 1925 report, enumerating the contagious or parasitic diseases of the livestock, notes that: "the East coast fever is enzootic in practically the entire country; trypanosomiasis seems to be spreading; measles is common; bacterial anthrax causes damages, aphtous stomatitis, coccidiosis, distomatosis severely strike the herds."³⁷³

1926

Rwanda-Burundi

- . In Rwanda, in February, dysentery epidemic in connection with the famine in the Kabwayi region; here in May, as in Gisaka in June, there is a violent recurrence of Spanish flu. May and July, diphtheria epidemic in Mulera (see note 40).³⁷⁴

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 5 January 1925.³⁷¹ CR (1925), 67; and also, SMA, DMS, Rugari, 15 August, 17 September, 25 November 1925.³⁷² SMA, DMS, Mugerero (Burundi), 13 December 1925; CR (1926), 67.³⁷³ *Histoire et chronologie*, 58.³⁷⁴ SMA, DMS, Zaza, 3 June 1926; Rwaza, 5 May, 2 July 1926; Kabwayi, 12 February, 18 May 1926.

- . In Burundi, particularly in the east, "we hear of dysentery everywhere. It began in Mosso in the country of Petro Buhahiro, whose men transmitted the disease when they came to Bweru." June-July, flu epidemic. It is rampant, especially in Bujumbura where it takes on a pulmonary form.³⁷⁵
- . Relapsing fever continues to rage on the banks of the Lake Tanganyika and in one part of Rwanda. In order to avoid infecting the porters in Bujumbura, "it is decided to construct a camp in Muhira where the people of the plain come and fetch the merchandise deposited by those of the interior."³⁷⁶

1927

Rwanda

- . May-December, precarious food situation in the Kabwayi region because, on 6 March, "the country-side is covered by several centimeters of hail, devastating the sorghum crop."³⁷⁷
- . July-November, dysentery and whooping-cough epidemic in Bugoyi. On 28 October, 60 deaths are counted in the immediate vicinity of the Nyundo mission station since July. In November, the dysentery spreads more and more.³⁷⁸

1928

Rwanda

- . April, the Ndorwa rise in support of a competing contender to the throne (Semaraso). Military expedition in the northeast (Commander de Rat) against the Bahutu, who are led by Rutayashwaga.³⁷⁹
- . Gisaka, sleeping sickness rages among the livestock.³⁸⁰

Burundi

- . March, invasion of *inabunati* insects. These insects, who suck the marrow of bean stems - precisely when the harvest promised to be plentiful - exacerbate the famine of 1928-1930 in the north.³⁸¹

³⁷⁵SMA, DMS, Mugeru, June-July 1926; Rusengo, 25 June - 7 December 1926; CR (1926), 72.

³⁷⁶SMA, DMS, Mugerero, 19 March 1926; CR (1926), 72.

³⁷⁷SMA, DMS, Kabwayi, 15 and 20 December 1927.

³⁷⁸SMA, DMS, Nyundo, 28 October, 11 November 1927.

³⁷⁹SMA, DMS, Astrida (Rwanda), 25 April 1928; *Histoire et chronologie*, 18, 173, 187.

³⁸⁰SMA, DMS, Zaza, 13 May, 18 July 1928.

³⁸¹SMA, DMS, Kanyinya, 20 March 1928.

1928-1930

Rwanda-Burundi

- The *Rwakayihura* famine (known as such in Rwanda because it begins in the Rukiga of Chief Kayihura) develops in the east, the center, and the south. The food shortage that began in September 1927 becomes a famine in the last months of 1928. It affects the following regions: Gatsibo, Gisaka, Kigali, Nyanza, Akanyaru, Ruben-gura. In the north, in "Rwanda's 'granary' where provisions were ordinarily procured, there is so much rain that the harvest was insufficient."³⁸²

In Gisaka, the shortage that started in February 1927 turns into a terrible famine in July 1928. In April 1929, "the people who have been nourishing themselves on banana roots for a long time, are exhausted and are falling like flies." The same holds true in August 1930.³⁸³ Contrary to administrative affirmations, the mortality rate is considerable, especially in the southeast.³⁸⁴

The famine finally provokes a massive exodus of people in search of food: "in the vicinity of Kigali, Gatsibo, and Rwagana, which total 300,000 inhabitants, 100,000 have temporarily left their homes to seek out more fortunate regions."³⁸⁵

- The famine also rages in the east, northeast, and north of Burundi where, in "certain areas, five successive harvests have been lost, dried at the root before reaching maturity. There were no more reserves in the country which, in addition, has been invaded by the undernourished from Rwanda, Bushubi, and Bugufi." The famine devastates Busoni and Bukakwa where, despite periods of remission, it had raged ever since 1922 (see above).³⁸⁶

The colonial government distributes emergency provisions, but their organization is such that ultimately it aggravates the penury: "despite the precarious situation in which the entire region finds itself, the chiefs still must provide hundreds of porters for the food transports to Rwanda. It's unbelievable ... one starving is providing provisions for another one."³⁸⁷ Rugari's diary makes the same observation: "administrator Hendrickx is asked to provide thousands of porters in order to furnish beans to Gisaka. Where do these beans come from? From Burundi itself. The Arabs are buyers in Gitega, but the chiefs are ordered to bring their sub-chiefs and subjects laden with food; it is more or less

³⁸²SMA, DMS, Astrida, 20 January 1930; see also, Kabwayi, 20 September, 2 October 1928; CR (1928), 66-72; (1929), 80; *Histoire et chronologie*, 12.

³⁸³SMA, DMS, Zaza, 3 February 1927 - 7 August 1930.

³⁸⁴SMA, DMS, Kigali, 15 February 1928 - 17 December 1929; Rwagana, April 1928 - 6 January 1929; Astrida, 23 February 1929.

³⁸⁵H. Jaspard, "Le Ruanda-Urundi, pays à disettes périodiques," *Congo*, II, 1 (1929), 18-19.

³⁸⁶SMA, DMS, Muyaga, 21 July 1929; see also, Rugari, 11 May 1929 - 6 February 1930; L'Epine, "Historique des famines," 442.

³⁸⁷SMA, DMS, Kanyinya, 18 February 1929.

forced sale ... Thus, tons of food are taken out of the country...; the entire country is mobilized for the transport of beans: the porters are given a miserable salary not even enough for *posho* [the minimum necessary to feed themselves]."³⁸⁸ As always in similar circumstances, the famine causes a massive exodus; thefts and other incidents multiply. In Gikomero, "the inhabitants steal from the poor who come to fetch provisions. It seems that on Musasa those who resist are killed."³⁸⁹

- . Sickness decimates the undernourished: dysentery, paludism, and flu in the Rwaza region; in Bugoyi, dysentery causes numerous victims; dysentery and fever are rampant in the Kabwayi region: in Karama (near Remera) there are 25 deaths in one month. In Burundi, dysentery also strikes.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁸SMA, DMS, Rugari, 2 November 1928.

³⁸⁹SMA, DMS, Murehe (Burundi), 4 February 1928.

³⁹⁰SMA, DMS, Mugeru, 11 January 1930; Rwaza, 2 January - 21 April 1928; Kabwayi, 31 March 1928; Nyundo, 12 and 24 November 1928; see also, Heinrich Schnee, "Die Hungersnot in Ruanda und die belgische Mandatverwaltung," *Koloniale Rundschau*, 357, 361-364, 368.