

Akabyutso (“The Awakening”), aka Nanga Abahutu (“I Despise Hutu”)

(INSTRUMENTAL INTRODUCTION)

REFRAIN (*INYIKILIZO*) (0’41”):

(1) *Hmmm...Ngire? Ngire nte uyu mwana muto uteye nyina agahinda, agatera se uruhagararo se rungano?*

[*Humming*] What am I to do? What am I to do with this small child who causes sorrow for his/her mother and worry for his/her father, my old man?¹

(2) *Intumva yabyaye intumbwe.*

Those who can’t understand give birth to the foolish,

(3) *Umutisiga abyara umusazi.*

The idiot² gives birth to a crazy person,

(4) *Igihuru kibyaye igihunyira, se rungano!*

The bush gives birth to an owl,³ old man!

(5) *Ukuri guca mu ziko ntigushye,*

The truth passes through fire without burning up,

(6) *Kandi kuvugisha ukuri ntibyica umutumirano mwa bagabo mwe!*

And, to tell the truth does not destroy good relations, you men!

(7) *Mbwirabumva. (x4)*

I speak to those who understand. (x4)

(8) *Ndarire Imana.*

I had a revelation from God.

(9) *Ndarire Imana, mbambure imanzi, se rungano!*

I had a revelation from God, I am reviving⁴ the old heroes,⁵ my old man!

¹ “*Rungano*” refers to a person or people of the same generation as the speaker. In this song, Bikindi, himself an older man, is complaining to another older man.

² “*Umutisiga*” refers literally to a person who does not use lotion or cream to protect his or her skin. It is used here as an insult suggesting laziness and stupidity.

³ The owl is a symbol of misfortune and death in Rwandan culture (as it is in many African cultures). One participant believed it referred to the RPF, because its soldiers often camped in the harsh wilderness (the “bush”) of the Virunga mountain chain and attacked at night.

⁴ “*Mbambure*,” translated here as “revive,” comes from the verb, “*kubambura*,” which literally means “to remove a hide from pegs after drying/curing.”

⁵ “*Imanzi*” refers to great heroes who are now deceased.

(10) *Ndarire Imana, mbambure imanzi rwakizima.*

I had a revelation from God, I am reviving the old heroes back to life.⁶

VERSE 1 (INTERO 1) (1'43'')

(11) *Njyewe nanga Abahutu. Njyewe nanga Abahutu.*

Me, I despise Hutu. Me, I despise Hutu.

(12) *Njyewe nanga ibihutu, kandi nanga ibyihuture rungano.*

Me, I despise those bad Hutu,⁷ and I despise those Hutu who are ashamed of their identity,⁸ old man.

(13) *(Ngo-ngo-ngo-ngo ugize ngo iki Mutaba?!)*

(Wh-wh-wh-what is this you say, Mutaba [lit. "savior"?])⁹

(14) *Mureke mbivuge ntuzza we, intimba inziritse umutima cyane. Mbabwire impamvu mbanga ye.*

(x2)

Let me say it, oh *ntuzza*,¹⁰ great sorrow overwhelms my heart. I will tell you why I despise them.

(x2)

(15) *Njyewe nanga Abahutu, banga ubwoko bwabooo...bwo kuba Abahutu aba buzuye.*

Me, I despise those Hutu, those who despise their own kind,¹¹ who are ashamed to be Hutu.

(16) *(Yee, aho ho turi kumwe!)*

(Yes, on these things I agree!)

(17) *Njyewe nanga Abahutu, basuzugurana cyane, ngo aha baruta abandi, bakanena abandi Bahutu, rungano.*

Me, I despise Hutu, those who really disrespect others, who think they are superior to other Hutu, who despise other Hutu, old man!

(18) *Njyewe nanga Abahutu, Abahutu b'inda ndende, babandi b'ibisahiranda, bakunda guhakwa batunzwe no guhakirizwa, rungano!*

Me, I despise Hutu, those Hutu with fat stomachs, who feed only themselves, and who enjoy gaining favor through flattery and begging, old man!

(19) *(Icyo hari uwakikugayira se?)*

(Can you be blamed for this?)

⁶ The root word of "rwakizima" is "-zima," which means wholeness or healthfulness.

⁷ The "ibi-" in "ibihutu" is a negative, connoting something or someone who is bad, stupid, wicked, rotten, etc.

⁸ "Ibyihuture" is a term that refers to Hutu who somehow try to deny or disguise their identity, for instance, by claiming they are Tutsi.

⁹ Lines in parantheses are uttered by an older man whom Bikindi addresses throughout the song.

¹⁰ "Ntuzza" may be used to address a man when his name is not known, like saying "Mr. So-and-So".

¹¹ "Their own kind" is translated from "ubwoko," which often refers to ethnicity but can also refer to clan.

- (20) *Abo niba mbanga ndamaze* (x2).
If I despise those people, then so what. (x2)
- (21) *Imana tugira iwacuuu...ni uko ari bake cyane, rungano.*
Fortunately for us,¹² there are very few of them, old man.
- (22) *(Ni bake cyane abarindagiye bo!)*
(It is very few who are so thoughtless!)
- (23) *Imana tugira iwacuuu...ni uko ari bake cyane, rungano.*
Fortunately for us, there are very few of them, old man.

REFRAIN (3'17")

VERSE 2 (4'21"):

- (24) *Njyewe nanga ibihutu, njyewe nanga ibihutu, bigendera inzira ubugari.*
Me, I despise bad Hutu. Me, I despise bad Hutu, those idiots who walk a path only because it is wide.¹³
- (25) *Njyewe nanga ibihutu, ibihutu bidashishoza...*
Me, I despise bad Hutu, bad Hutu who are undiscerning...
- (26) *(Bitareba!)*
(Unable to see!)
- (27) *...bateranya bigatemana, bikegura bikarwana intambara, bitazi imvano yayo, rungano!*
...who are easily manipulated, who tear themselves apart and fight in a war they don't even understand, old man!
- (28) *(Bakamarama! Urumva atari ishyano koko!)*
(They are annihilating one another! This is truly a tragedy!)
- (29) *Njyewe nanga umuhutu, umuhutu uhabwa igiceri akica umuntu, kandi akica umuhutu, rungano.*
Me, I despise a Hutu, a Hutu who receives a coin¹⁴ to kill a person, and then kills a Hutu, old man!

¹² Literally, "*Imana tugira iwacu*" means "God/fate we have in our home." "*Imana*" does not necessarily refer to the Judeo-Christian God (though the same name is used) but can also refer to a less personal, more abstract spiritual force or even fate. This line could be translated as, "The luck/fortune we have in our home..." The translators with whom I worked insisted that the English colloquialism, "fortunately for us," was the closest approximation of what this phrase conveys.

¹³ This comes from an old proverb, "*kugendera inzira ubugari*," which means "to walk a path only because it is wide." It can refer to people who do things without thinking about why they do them or without thinking about the consequences. The prefix "*(i)bi-*" denotes a person or people who are bad, stupid, lazy, rotten, etc., the same as in "*ibihutu*."

¹⁴ In other words, a very small amount.

- (30) (Yego ra!)
(*Yes indeed!*)
- (31) *Abo niba mbanga ndamaze.* (x2)
If I despise those people, then so what. (x2)
- (32) (*Nanjye ndacye, ndacye, ndacye.*)
(Me as well, as well, as well.)
- (33) *Imana tugira iwacuuu...ni uko ari bake cyane rungano.* (x2)
God be with us, there are very few of them, old man! (x2)

REFRAIN (5'22")

VERSE 3 (6'09"):

- (34) *Njyewe nanga Abahutu, ba Bahutu batibukaaa...Nzira ya Muramira, ngo bibuke urwo yapfuye, bibuke icyamwishe, rungano!*
Me, I despise Hutu, those Hutu who don't remember Nzira, son of Muramira,¹⁵ that they don't remember he died, they don't remember how and why he died, old man!
- (35) (*Bibuke urwo yapfuye, mwana wanjye.*)
(They don't remember he died, my child.)
- (36) *Njyewe nanga Abahutu, ba Bahutu batibukaaa...Mashira ya Sabugabo, hariya i Nyanza, ngo bibuke urwo yapfuyeee...bibuke icyamwishe, rungano!*
Me, I despise Hutu, those Hutu who don't remember Mashira, son of Sabugabo,¹⁶ there in Nyanza, that they don't remember that he died, they don't remember how and why he died, old man!
- (37) (*Bwa bwenge buke se?!)*
(Have they no sense?!)
- (38) *Njyewe nanga Abahutu, ba Bahutu batibukaaa...ngo bibuke Nyagakecuru mu bisi bya Huye! Ngo bibuke urwo yapfuye, bibuke icyamwishe, rungano!*
Me, I despise Hutu, those Hutu who don't remember Nyagakecuru of the hill of Huye!¹⁷ That they don't remember that she died, they don't remember how and why she died, old man!

¹⁵ Nzira was king of Bugara. According to legend, he was killed by Ruganzu Ndori who infiltrated Nzira's household disguised as a servant.

¹⁶ Mashira resided in Nyanza and was a member of the Ababanda clan. He was known for his powers to conjure rainfall. He was killed by the Ruganzu Ndori after Ndori gave him a girl to marry.

¹⁷ This refers to a well-known legend in Rwanda. Nyagakecuru was an old diviner who lived with her kin atop a mountain in the southern region of Huye. According to legend, she was protected by a large snake (or possibly many smaller snakes) that hid in the bushes surrounding her abode. Royal emissaries sent by Ruganzu Ndori came

(39) (*Hari ubyibaza!*)

(No one thinks about this!)

(40) *Njyewe nanga Abahutu, ba Bahutu batibukaaa...ngo bibuke rya jambo rivuga ngo: "Muhere ruhande, mwise Mpandahande," hariya i Butare, rungano!*

Me, I despise Hutu, those Hutu who don't remember, who don't remember the slogan that was said over there in Butare: "Starting at one side, kill everyone, [even] Mpandahande,"¹⁸ old man!

(41) *Njyewe nanga , ba Bahutu batibuka rwa Bishingwe, Basebya we na Ndungutse mu Ruhengeri rw'Umurera, ngo bibuke icyabishe rungano.*

Me, I despise Hutu, those Hutu who don't remember Rukara, son of Bishingwe,¹⁹ nor Basebya,²⁰ nor Ndungutse²¹ in Ruhengeri at Murera, that they don't remember why and how they died, old man!

(42) (*Yego koko, mwana wanjye!*)

(Yes, truly, my child!)

and offered her goats as a tribute. It was a trick, as the goats ate the leaves of the bushes, exposing the snake(s) and thus allowing warriors to invade Nyagakecuru's home and kill her and her family. Curiously, I have run into some disagreement over whether Nyagakecuru was a man or woman. The name literally means "old woman," but some have told me that this was a kind of joke and that Nyagakecuru was actually a man. According to one informant, she was a member of the Abungwe clan and the mother of the last king of the Abenengwe dynasty.

¹⁸ This is an ancient slogan credited to Ruganzu Ndori during his expeditions to seize and annex the southern lands of Rwanda where Butare is located. The slogan reflects the ferocity for which Ndori was known. Mpandahande was an important chief in the area.

¹⁹ Rukara, son of Bishingwe, was an early 20th-century leader of an anti-colonial and anti-monarchical revolt. He was a powerful chief of the Abarashi clan whose members mostly inhabited northern Rwanda. Rukara claimed to be a descendent of the Gisaka lineage, once the ruling dynasty in the region, and that he would resurrect the dynasty as a sovereign kingdom separate from the central monarchy. He acquired a large following. In 1910, several of his men killed a German priest, Paulin Roupias, while Rukara was meeting with him (Rukara ducked as his men shot the priest with bows and arrows). Father Roupias was the first German casualty since the colonial administration began formally working with the monarchy. With Basebya and Ndungutse, Rukara continued the rebellion which had come to a head by November 1911. In April 1912, Rukara was betrayed by Ndungutse and handed over to German soldiers. He was then hung in Ruhengeri under orders of the German Lieutenant Gedovius. Rukara's rebellion would venerate him as a hero among many Rwandans in the region. See Ian Linden, *Church and Revolution in Rwanda* (Oxford: Manchester University Press, 1977): 35-36, 82-96, and 105-107. Also Alison Des Forges, *Defeat Is the Only Bad News: Rwanda Under King Musinga, 1896-1931* (Madison: WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011): 114-15 and 121-27

²⁰ Basebya was the Twa chief of Murera who with Rukara and Ndungutse led the 1911 northern rebellion against King Musinga and the German colonial administration. He was tricked into captivity by Musinga's envoy, Rwabusisi, then brought to the German outpost where he was immediately shot by Gedovius. See Linden 1977, pp. 105 and 120, fn. 124. Also Des Forges 2011, pp. 104-7 and 115-120.

²¹ Ndungutse, likely a Tutsi, was the third ringleader of the northern rebellion. He, like Rukara, also pronounced himself king, concocted various myths about his lineage, and promoted the view that he possessed supernatural powers that could overcome German technological superiority. Unlike Rukara, he considered himself the rightful king of all Rwanda. His claims and goals eventually led to rivalry with Rukara, and so Ndungutse betrayed him and had him handed over to the Germans. Some sources claim that Ndungutse fled to Uganda when German soldiers assailed his encampment and burned it to the ground (his betrayal of Rukara turned out not to earn him any favor with the Germans). Others claim that he was killed in the assault. See Linden 1977, pp. 105-14 and Des Forges 2011, pp. 126-27.

- (43) *Ba Bahutu batibukaaa...Rukara rwa Bishingwe*
Those Hutu who don't remember Rukara, son of Bishingwe...
- (44) *(Ngo bibuke uko ya manitwese!)*
(That they don't remember that he was hung!)
- (45) *...Basebya we na Ndungutse mu Ruhengeri rw'Umurera, ngo bibuke icyabishe rungano?*
...nor Basebya, nor Ndungutse in Ruhengeri at Murera, that they don't remember why and how they died, old man!
(Akagambane ka Rwubusisi!)
(Betrayed by Rwubusisi!)²²
- (46) *Abo niba mbanga ndamaze (x2).*
If I despise those people, then so what . (x2)
- (47) *Imana tugira iwacuuu...ni uko ari bake cyane rungano! (x2)*
Fortunately for us, there are very few of them, old man! (x2)

REFRAIN (8'40")

VERSE 4 (9'32"):

- (48) *Njyewe nanga . Njyewe nanga Abahutu badashyira mu gisenge undi muhutu wabakoshereje ngo bamuhanire iyo ngiyooo...ariko ubumwe bukomeze, rungano.*
Me, I despise Hutu. Me, I despise those Hutu who don't privately discipline another Hutu who is in the wrong,²³ so that unity may be maintained, old man!
- (49) *(Ahubwo bagahogera).*
(Instead, they walk around like fools!)
- (50) *Njyewe nanga Abahutu badashyira mu gisenge undi muhutu wabakoshereje ngo bamuhanire iyo ngiyooo...ariko ubumwe bukomeze rungano.*
Me, I despise those Hutu who don't privately discipline another Hutu who is in the wrong, so that unity may be maintained, old man!
- (51) *(Inda gusa!)*
(Such selfishness!)²⁴

²² Rwubusisi was King Musinga's envoy who tricked Basebya into surrendering. Accompanied by four African soldiers carrying ornate grass mats, he told Basebya that he brought gifts. Hidden inside the rolled up mats were rifles, which Rwubusisi and the soldiers used to capture Basebya. See Des Forges 2011, p. 127.

²³ More literally, "who don't take another Hutu under the roof and discipline him/her there." The idea is that criticism and discipline should be done in private so that the one who is in the wrong is not publicly shamed, thus maintaining a unified front.

²⁴ Literally, "only the stomach."

- (52) *Abo niba mbanga ndamaze.* (x2)
If I despise those people, then so what. (x2)
- (53) *Imana tugira iwacuuu...ni uko ari bake cyane rungano!*
Fortunately for us, there are very few of them, old man.
- (54) [**Caka, caka, caka, caka...**]
[Chaka, chaka, chaka, chaka...]²⁵
- (55) *Abo niba mbanga ndamaze.*
If I despise those people, then so what.
- (56) *Imana tugira iwacuuu...ni uko ari bake cyane rungano!*
Fortunately for us, there are very few of them, old man!

INSTRUMENTAL INTERLUDE

VERSE 5 (11'25'"):

- (57) *Njyewe nanga Abahutu, Abahutu b'inda ndende, babandi b'ibisahiranda, bakunda guhakwa, yeee...batunzwe no guhakirizwa, rungano!*
Me, I despise Hutu, those Hutu with fat stomachs, who feed only themselves, and who enjoy gaining favor—yes!—through flattery and begging, old man!
- (58) *Njyewe nanga Abahutu, basuzugurana cyane, ngo aha baruta abandi, bakanena abandi Bahutu, rungano!*
Me, I despise Hutu, those who really disrespect others, who think they are superior to others, who despise other Hutu, old man!
- (59) (*Hari unena mwabo ra?!)*
(Who can despise their own?!)
- (60) *Njyewe nanga ibihutu, kandi nanga ibiyihuture rungano.*
Me, I despise those bad Hutu, and I despise those Hutu who are ashamed of their identity, old man.
- (61) *Njyewe nanga ibihutu, njyewe nanga ibihutu, bigendera inzira ubugari.*
Me, I despise bad Hutu. Me, I despise bad Hutu, those idiots who walk a path only because it is wide.
- (62) (*Nk'ibihuna!*)
(They can't see!)

²⁵ These are vocables used to imitate the sound of clapping.

- (63) *Njyewe nanga ibihutu, ibihutu bidashishoza bateranya bigatemana, bikegura bikarwana intambara, bitazi imvano yayo, rungano!*
 Me, I despise bad Hutu, bad Hutu who are undiscerning, who are easily manipulated, who tear themselves apart and fight in a war they don't even understand, old man!
- (64) (*Nndiya!*)
 (*sound of tongue clicking in derision*)
- (65) *Njyewe nanga umuhutu, umuhutu uhabwa igiceri akica umuntu... kandi akica umuhutu, rungano.*
 Me, I despise a Hutu, a Hutu who receives a coin to kill a person...
- (66) (Akica ndakakwambura!)
 (To kill, I could lose you!)
- (67) *...kandi akica umuhutu, rungano.*
 ...and then kills a Hutu, old man!
- (68) *Abo niba mbanga ndamaze. (x2)*
 If I despise those people, then so what. (x2)
- (69) (*Oya uramaze!*)
 (No, you're right!)
- (70) *Imana tugira iwacuuu...ni uko ari bake cyane rungano! (x2)*
 Fortunately for us, there are very few of them, old man! (x2)

REFRAIN (12'59")

- (71) *Mbwirabumva, ngwino wumve...*
 I speak to those who understand, come listen...(repeated several times)