

PART I

CLIENTELIST AND AUTHORITARIAN LEGACIES

For generations of Rwandans, clientelist relationships served as the social glue that unified to some extent the interests of actors with unequal access to political power, economic resources, and social status. However, clientelism rarely eroded the underlying inequities – and although it was a viable enough cement to hold together functional relationships, it did little to contain resentments, mutual stereotypes, and misperceptions. Ethnic identities hardened as Hutu and Tutsi found themselves on opposite ends of unequal clientelist relationships; received unequal access to sources of authoritarian patronage; and found themselves on opposite sides – either targeted or protected – during outbreaks of violence.

Chapter 1 traces more than 100 years of clientelist history through its emergence, forms and uses, and maintenance under periods of repressive rule even as power changed hands between elite Tutsi and elite Hutu. Over time, Rwandans were implicitly attuned to identify the powerful and recognize the advantages of entering into clientelistic relationships. Chapter 2 traces the consolidation of the post-genocide RPF regime. Not only did Tutsi-dominated RPF elites move quickly to establish unrivaled control of the political sphere, but also their political tactics and rhetoric about nation-building implicitly reinforced long-standing ethnic misperceptions. This set the stage for the Hutu masses to interpret the RPF regime as a form of elite Tutsi rule, to recognize their own vulnerability in being tried en masse for genocide crimes, and to appease the new rulers as the only viable source of political protection and patronage.

