

Bifulero

This region has considerable intermixture of people (**Bavira, Bifulero, Warega**). The **Bifulero** argue that they welcomed the Rwandans who settled in this region during the precolonial period, as tribute paying clients to the Bifulero kingdom. Other historians argue that this relationship was never in existence or possible, as the **Bifulero** are a very small group (maximum 20-25,000).

Banyamulenge

These Rwandan speaking peoples settled in Itombwe in the Murenge Hills, a high plateau to the west of Uvira, in the mid-18th century, fleeing from the centralization of power by the Nyaginya dynasty of Rwanda. The **Bifulero** welcomed the Rwandans who settled in this region as tribute paying clients to the **Bifulero** kingdom. They lived in relative peace with their neighbours until 1964, when they opposed the Mulele rebellion. However, in 1972 they were given Zaïrian citizenship which was revoked in 1981. Like other Rwandan groups they were ordered expelled in 1995. They were heavily targeted during the last part of 1996.

The number of "Tutsi" who could call themselves **Banyamulenge** increased with the exodus of Tutsi in 1959, and these people strongly supported the Rwandan Patriotic Front. There is considerable evidence that many returned to Rwanda in July 1994. Most experts on the area agree that despite their claims they do not number more than 25-50,000.

Fizi

Banyamulenge

These Rwandan speaking peoples settled in Itombwe in the Murenge Hills, a high plateau to the west of Uvira, in the mid-18th century, fleeing from the centralization of power by the Nyaginya dynasty of Rwanda. They appear to also live in the zone of Fizi. It has been reported that some of the groups which have been harassing the Tutsi in this region have been **Babembe**. (See above).

Babembe

This is a group which also would have had a king during the Belgian period, but have strong clan, social and cultural ties with other groups. They are closely related to the **Rega** (some would even say indistinguishable from the **Rega**). They are the majority inhabitants of this region and claim status and the original peoples in the area.

Babwari

The **Babwari** are essentially peoples peninsula of Bwari, but have been constituted as a people under Belgian rule. Like the Bembe they would be seen as most like the **Rega**.