

BOOK REVIEW

## **Rwanda Revisited: Genocide, Civil War, and the Transformation of International Law**

**edited by Phillip DREW, Bruce OSWALD, Robert McLAUGHLIN, and Jeremy FARRALL. Leiden; Boston: Brill Nijhoff, 2021. xvi + 327 pp. Hardcover: €89.00; eBook (pdf): €89.00; MyBook: €25.00. doi: 10.1163/9789004430129**

Amit UPADHYAY  and Abhinav MEHROTRA

Jindal Global Law School, O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonapat, India

The failure of peacekeeping missions in Rwanda exposed the incompetence of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in preserving peace and security. The roots of the genocide in Rwanda lay in the environment of ethnic tensions and impunity, undermining the Arusha Accords signed between the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and the Rwandan government. Despite early warning signs, the UNSC failed to prevent the genocide. The establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal of Rwanda (ICTR) paved the way for the further development of international criminal law. After three decades, the painful memories of the massacre remain fresh in the minds of those who suffered. This book is an excellent attempt at revisiting the genocide, where authors from various fields and roles discuss their personal experiences, stressing the ignorance and isolation that Rwanda suffered in 1994 at the hands of the international community, in particular the UNSC.

The book is coherently organized into four parts. Ambassador Colin Keating, in his chapter on “Rwanda: The Political Failure of the UN Security Council”, describes the failure of the UNSC as manifested through the lack of political will to implement the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect through preventive action under Chapter VI or effective action under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Phillip Drew and Brent Beardsley argue in their chapter, “Do Not Intervene: UNAMIR’s Rule of Engagement from the Inside”, that the “Do Not Intervene” principle was legally incorrect, operationally nonsensical, and led to the loss of lives. Phillip Drew also found that the pattern of the Rwandan genocide largely resembled that of the Holocaust as in both cases racism as an ideology was propounded, and both hate propaganda and organized extermination campaigns were carried out.

Unlike most existing scholarship dealing with genocide and crimes against humanity, this book unusually uses a multidisciplinary approach and provides perspectives on the political, legal, and governance failures of the UNSC in dealing with the genocide. In particular, Part 2, in examining the genesis of the offence of genocide, serves as a distinctive contribution for two significant reasons. First, by attaching importance to the non-legal debates of genocide as an offence. Second, by emphasizing the significance of the role of culture as an important attribute for the offence of genocide which has been defined

under Article 6 of the Rome Statute to target a particular racial, religious, national, or ethnic group.

This publication, though, would benefit from a different and clearer presentation strategy by rearranging some content. For example, Chapter 3 in Part 1, which deals with the UNSC's response to the genocide in Rwanda, appears to serve the theme of Part 3 better, which deals with prosecuting genocide. Yet, we believe the authors and editors have provided an excellent resource with varied perspectives on the Rwandan genocide and lessons for the international community in the future.

**Competing interests.** The authors declare none.