Risk and Uncertainty: A Perilous Combination for UN Peacekeeping Missions: Exploring the Causal Mechanism leading to UN Failure in Rwanda

Böhm, Mathis

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Exploring the Causal Mechanism leading to UN Failure in Rwanda

Mathis Böhm

s2507145

Leiden University

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Supervisor: Dr. Arlinda Rrustemi

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1. Introduction

Researchers have frequently been surprised by major historical disruptions: the end of the Cold War, Arab-Spring, or Brexit. Given the inability to explain these grand historical events, traditional theories of power need to be rethought (Katzenstein & Seybert, 2018, p. 3). This inability is grounded in researchers' reduction of uncertainty into risk. Risk describes a condition under which the outcomes and the probabilities of specific actions are measurable by decision-makers. Opposingly, uncertainty presents a condition where such knowledge is unavailable (Toma & Sarpe, 2012, pp. 975-977). As most scientists are influenced by a realist paradigm, they believe that any action is purely the rational response to the probabilities of risk calculations (Katzenstein & Seybert, 2018). However, as seen above, such practice fails to explain major events as the world is too complex, containing not solely risk but also uncertainty. Consequently, political science requires a concept that goes beyond the notion of predicted probabilities alone. Until risk and uncertainty are mutually integrated into analyses, complex environments will outperform our capacity to comprehend and deal with them (Katzenstein & Seybert, 2018, p. 26).

In response, this thesis accepts the invitation of Katzenstein and Seybert (2018, p. xii) to integrate risk and uncertainty into a broadened analysis of power dynamics. Especially, peace and security research would benefit immensely from applying this new perspective as it is until today dominated by a traditional realist understanding (Buzan, 1984, pp. 109-110). The Rwandan genocide combines the concepts in question; risk, uncertainty, and complexity. Therefore, the corresponding failure of the United Nations (UN) mission deserves renewed attention. This would allow to not only shed light on peace and security literature alone but most importantly help to create a more nuanced picture of one of the most researched puzzles in the field.

1.1. Rwanda: Historical Overview

With Belgian colonization, ethnic tensions between the Hutu majority and Tutsi minority increased significantly as the latter was treated favourably by the colonizers (Dorn & Matloff, 2000). As a result, resentment amongst Hutus developed steadily leading to a myriad of riots in which approximately 20,000 Tutsis were killed while many sought refuge in bordering states. Years later, displaced Tutsis in Uganda established the Rwandan-Patriotic-Front (RPF), under the command of today's Rwandan president Paul Kagame, to defeat Hutu president Habyarimana, and return to their motherland ("Rwanda", 2011). As the RPF set out to

forcefully return to Rwanda fierce fighting erupted ultimately leading to a civil war. To end the bloodshed, the Organisation-of-African-Unity (OAU) organized peace talks in Arusha, Tanzania. Eventually, on 4 August 1993, a cease-fire was negotiated to put an end to the conflict and establish a power-sharing arrangement that would introduce multi-party rule to Rwanda (Dorn & Matloff, 2000, p. 5). To safeguard the implementation of the Arusha Accords the UN launched the United-Nations-Assistance-Mission-for-Rwanda (UNAMIR) in October 1993. Despite anticipating it being a straightforward mission the situation sharpened when on April 6, 1994, the Hutu presidents of Rwanda and Burundi, were assassinated in a rocket strike on their plane above the Rwandan capital Kigali ("What happened", 2020). Immediately after the downing of the aircraft Hutu extremists began with the planned mass-slaughtering of Tutsis: the beginning of the Rwandan genocide. In the following 100 days, 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were brutally killed by nationalist Hutu government soldiers, paramilitary groups, and regular citizens. While thousands of people were being massacred every day the UN did not take any measures to stop the genocide but decided to evacuate all foreigners and downscale the mission. In other words, the UN failed to prevent a genocide despite having had the capabilities to stop it (Power, 2001). In view of this disturbing puzzle and the need to integrate risk as well as uncertainty in explanations of complex events the question arises:

How do perceptions of risk and uncertainty explain the failure of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda?

To unravel this puzzle, the subsequent assessment commences with a literature review outlining the explanations of UN failure to date and determines the significance of the research question. Second, the methodological section presents explaining-outcome process-tracing as the most fruitful method of analysis and justifies the case selection of Rwanda. Third, the theoretical framework elaborates further on Katzenstein and Seybert's (2018) theory, from which a causal mechanism is deduced. Fourth, the analysis investigates the Rwandan genocide and UN failure in-depth from a causal perspective. It discovers that the interplay of risk and uncertainty is a sufficient causal mechanism to explain UN failure in Rwanda. Finally, a detailed conclusion covers the implications and shortcomings of this work, while pointing towards future inquiries.

2. Literature Review

Explanations of the failure of UNAMIR have been plentiful. Single explanations alone are unlikely to explain the genocide. Instead, many factors and their symbiotic effects need to be

explored to understand the causes behind the humanitarian catastrophe (Verwimp, 2011, p. 398). As prior analyses have been extremely detailed, offering a variety of explanations to UN failure in Rwanda, the subsequent literature review concentrates only on the key findings of the major assessments to date.

Early inquiries as by the Lessons-Learned-Unit of the UN Department of Peace-keeping-Operations (DPKO, 1996) have pointed towards the lack of intelligence within the UN. Insufficient information and inadequate assessment before and during the genocide resulted in a poor understanding of the Rwandan environment. Consequently, due to the lack of reliable information, the UNSC could not make correct policy choices (Ludlow, 1999, p. 37). Furthermore, intelligence that was received by UN headquarters was not treated appropriately. For instance, the 'genocide fax' sent to New York in January 1994 by force commander Roméo Dallaire outlined clear warnings of the planned extermination of Tutsis. However, this fax never reached the secretary-general, nor the UNSC, as high functionaries such as Kofi Annan deemed the information irrelevant (Grünfeld, 2007, p. 252).

Although the intelligence shortcomings and structure of the UN played a crucial role in its failure, more recent studies show that specifically the permanent UNSC members, capable of individual intelligence gathering, were informed about the severeness of the situation in Rwanda (Epstein, 2017). In her book *Leave None to tell the Story* Des Forges (1999, p. 13) directs blame towards specific member states, indicating that the priority of national interests explains UN failure. According to her human-rights centred account, Belgium lobbied for the withdrawal of all UN troops after 10 Belgian peacekeepers were killed, the US was eager to save as much money as possible, and France continued supporting the Rwandan government to secure francophone dominance in the region. Additionally, these standpoints were reinforced by the dark shadow the failed peacekeeping mission in Somalia cast over the UN and the international community, especially the United States (JEEAR, 1996, p. 21). In other words, member states were reluctant to engage before and during the conflict as they had little national interests. This insufficient political will by the international community and especially the great powers is highlighted in most studies today (Ludlow, 1999, pp. 39; Newbury, 1995, p. 16).

A third common argument entails the lack of sufficient resources. As the UN is an international political body formed out of individual states, UNAMIR suffered from a severe lack of national contributions (Scherr, 2019, p. 126). General Dallaire had to deal with delayed budgets while his forces did not have the minimum amount of equipment (Jones, 2001, p. 107). As soldiers,

medicine, fuel, food, and ammunition were lacking, the general could not effectively deal with his mandate and even less so with an emerging genocide (Scherr, 2019, p. 125; Stettenheim, 2000, p. 233).

2.1. Literature Gap

In sum, the literature above explains UN failure in conjunction with intelligence shortcomings, self-interested states, cost-benefit calculations, the shadow of Somalia, and insufficient resources. Taking a broader perspective on these accounts reveals that most of the authors share an understanding of the Rwandan genocide from a traditional- and realist-informed viewpoint as they focus on hard facts, rational calculations, realpolitik, and most importantly risk. Although insights of previous research are valuable, Katzenstein and Seybert (2018) argue that this understanding alone is insufficient in fundamentally complex environments, like Rwanda at that time (Lang, 2002, p. 145; Piiparinen, 2010, p. 128). To gain greater understanding of UNAMIR's failure, uncertainty must be endorsed together with risk as previous research has investigated the puzzle solely through the latter.

Second, prior literature engages in methodological individualism (Piiparinen, 2010). It concentrates predominantly on (in)actions of individuals, assuming that the UN as an organisation is not more than the sum of its members (Piiparinen, 2010, p. 4). Put differently, research has mainly looked at the micro-level, assessing who was responsible for which reports, as well as when and how individuals reacted to them. While methodological individualism provides great insights into UNAMIR failure, it is unable to investigate the reasons and broader mechanisms behind the actions taken by actors. To obtain a more nuanced understanding of UN failure in Rwanda at the macro-level, it is necessary to account for risk and uncertainty which in turn requires an investigation from a broader perspective.

Third, and in line with the second argument, research on UNAMIR failure has been mostly narrative, with the exceptions of Barnett's (2002) and Piiparinen's (2010) studies. As seen in the literature review, prior research on Rwanda singles out specific aspects that contributed to UN failure but does not unveil the nexus between causes and consequences. In other words, what is lacking is a greater insight into a causal mechanism that offers a subjacent explanation of UNAMIR's failure. To illustrate, research has outlined the ingredients for genocide but has not yet talked about the recipe for this horror. Consequently, this 'black box' needs to be opened.

3. Research Design

Before building an argument and delving into the subsequent analysis, this section discusses why explaining-outcome process-tracing is most suited to investigate the causal mechanism behind UN failure. The research design proceeds the theoretical framework on purpose as the former informs the latter substantially in terms of structure and hypothesis development. Further, this section elaborates on why UNAMIR constitutes a fruitful case in view of the chosen method.

3.1. Explaining-Outcome Process-Tracing

As presented in the literature review, previous research has focussed on narrating accounts and identifying factors leading to the Rwandan genocide. Additionally, it primarily applies an individualist methodology. Opposingly, process-tracing allows a much more nuanced understanding of UN failure in Rwanda as it approaches the puzzle from a broader causal-mechanistic perspective that goes beyond mere description (Beach & Pedersen, 2013). A causal-mechanistic perspective, which consists of looking at the pathway through which an outcome emerged, implies particular concentration on the underlying roots of UN failure.

As process-tracing explores mechanisms leading to a specific outcome by making within-case inferences, it allows a fine-grained understanding of the underlying processes (Bennett, 2008; Checkel, 2008; George & Bennett, 2005). It aspires to trace the actual developments connecting a cause and an outcome through a sequence of interlinking stages (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, pp. 1-2, 13). Accordingly, process-tracing tests each component of a hypothesized causal mechanism step-by-step (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 5). Causal mechanisms describe "complex systems, which produce an outcome by the interaction of a number of parts" (Glennan, 1996, p. 52). These mechanisms can be understood as the 'black box' which will be opened and explored in this paper.

More specifically, explaining-outcome process-tracing, as opposed to theory-testing and theory-building process-tracing, is employed. Instead of building or testing generalizable theorized mechanisms, this branch of process-tracing aims to establish sufficient explanations for specific perplexing historical outcomes, such as UN failure in Rwanda. Sufficiency requires that an explanation only draws on the most important steps without incorporating superfluous parts (Mackie, 1965). Explaining-outcome process-tracing pursues a case-centric rather than theory-oriented logic. It does not aim to show that a theory is right but to demonstrate its function as the best possible explanation of a specific outcome (Beach & Pedersen, 2013).

Within the realm of explaining-outcome process-tracing, a deductive approach is pursued. This means that an existing theory is taken to assess its explanatory power on a case, here Rwanda. First, a hypothesized mechanism is conceptualized based on Katzenstein and Seybert's (2018) accounts. Second, each part of the hypothesized mechanism is assessed against observations to make within-case inferences. Finally, the sufficiency of the explanation is evaluated.

3.2. Case Selection: Rwanda

For explaining-outcome process-tracing specific case selection strategies do not strictly apply due to its case-centric nature. However, the method suggests the selection of a single case study as it aims to create a minimally sufficient explanation for a specific outcome (Beach & Pedersen, 2013). Doing so, the selection is guided by choosing a particularly interesting case in view of its added value to theory- and case-understanding. Moreover, unique cases require separate assessments due to their exceptionality in a broader population of events. Most importantly, existing theories should be inept to account for the outcome of the chosen case (Beach & Pedersen, 2013).

The case of UN failure to prevent the Rwandan genocide meets all criteria. Its uniqueness, even in comparison to other failed UN peacekeeping missions such as Somalia, deserves special attention (Lailach, 1998, p. 109). Further, as outlined in the section discussing the literature gap, previous accounts have not yet established a sufficient causal explanation for UN failure.

4. Theoretical Framework

Katzenstein and Seybert's (2018) innovative theory not only offers the tools to establish a sufficient causal mechanism but also approaches the shortcomings of previous research, explored earlier. Firstly, it goes beyond predicted probabilities alone by accounting for both risk and uncertainty. Secondly, it acknowledges the value of traditionalist individual methodology but also aspires to understand matters from a causal and mechanistic perspective, going beyond mere narrative accounts. Consequently, Katzenstein and Seybert's (2018) theory can help build a causal mechanism with uncertainty and risk at its core to better understand UNAMIR's failure and significantly contribute to previous literature.

Before delving deeper into Katzenstein and Seybert's (2018) theory and deducing a causal mechanism, the differences between risk and uncertainty deserve clarification as both concepts tend to be confused.

4.1. Risk and Uncertainty

Risk describes a situation in which probabilities of the results for specific actions can be identified by a decision-maker. This implies that risk can be quantified. (Toma & Sarpe, 2012, p. 976). In risky environments, actors are certain what effects (in-)actions have. The game of poker illustrates the concept nicely. Within poker, the probability of specific actions can be precisely estimated and accounted for in advance. Eventually, players who can calculate predicted probabilities win against adversaries with insufficient odds. Therefore, poker is a risky game (Silver, 2012, p. 29).

In contrast, uncertainty can be understood as risk that is difficult to determine. It cannot be quantified. Actors may have some ambiguous knowledge of a naturally complex situation; however, they cannot be sure what will happen, even less how and when. As opposed to poker, estimates can turn out to be correct, but they can also be off by a mile. In other words, uncertain actors operate in a dense mist of fog, not knowing what is to come (Silver, 2012, p. 29).

4.2. Protean Power

Katzenstein and Seybert's (2018) ground-breaking theory accounts for risk and uncertainty simultaneously. This is innovative, as previous research tends to focus solely on the former, thereby overlooking the omnipresence of uncertainties that cannot be accounted for by probability calculations. As follows, most scientists only apply what Katzenstein and Seybert (2018) conceptualize as *control power*.

Control power is strictly situated in a world of risk and pursues domination by calculated strategies, thereby diverging from *protean power*. Protean power is conceptualized as the improvisational and innovative response of actors to uncertain environments in which they benefit from creativity and agility. To illustrate what protean power and control power entail, Katzenstein and Seybert (2018) draw a comparison to chess:

> "Chess has fixed rules and calculates probabilities in a complex environment. Yet it also illustrates the limits of control. The current world chess champion is a young Norwegian, Magnus Carlsen. […] Carlsen's genius lies in his unorthodox and surprising strategies that rely on his prodigious memory rather than the conventions of computer chess. Carlsen has an aptitude for playing many different styles of chess, adapting readily rather than searching like a scientist for the best solution to a given problem. […] His huge success shows

that chess is a game where risk and uncertainty and control and protean power meet" (Katzenstein and Seybert, 2018, pp. 24-25).

The game of chess illustrates nicely that actors often find themselves in complex situations which are simultaneously risky and uncertain. In turn, to understand the causal relationships in complex environments, such as Rwanda in 1994, both control and protean power merit attention. Katzenstein and Seybert (2018) established a matrix to show how actors respond to different situations (Figure 1).

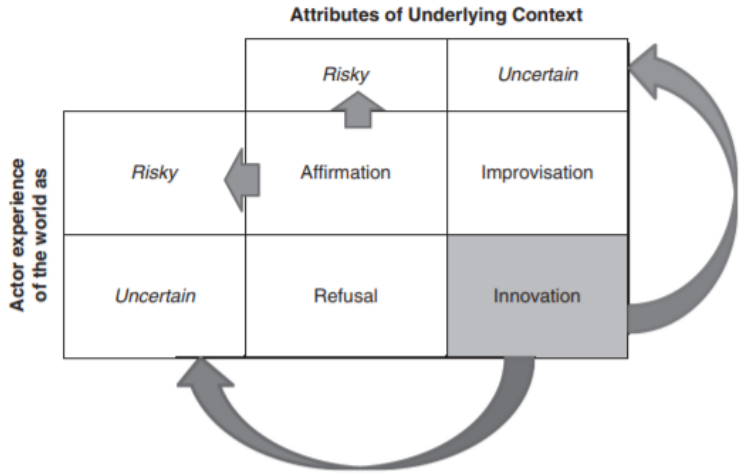

Figure 1: Context, Experience, and Power (Katzenstein & Seybert, 2018, p.13)

While *affirmation* is the response to perceived and real risk, falling in the domain of control power, *innovation*, part of the realm of protean power, is the response to a perceived and actual uncertain environment (Figure 1). In other words, strictly risky situations are managed with calculated responses (control power), whereas strictly uncertain situations are approached in innovative ways (protean power).

Despite this differentiation, protean power and control power are not as analytically distinct as the discussion above might suggest but should be seen on a continuum. Instead of competing with, protean power should be regarded as closely linked to and co-existing with control power. Actors often use a kind of power somewhere along the spectrum between radical risk and radical uncertainty (Figure 2). To capture this spectrum, Katzenstein & Seybert (2018) introduce two other categories (Figure 1, Figure 2). The categories *refusal* and *improvisation* fall in between control and protean power and are informed by both risk and uncertainty

(Katzenstein and Seybert, 2018, p. 33). As crises arise, actors of control power often do not recognize that shifts towards uncertainty make probability calculations not viable anymore. In other words, they refuse to change their perceptions and are eager to deal with challenges characterized by uncertainty in manners suited solely to risky contexts. This is what Katzenstein and Seybert (2018) describe as *refusal*. However, as actors slowly realise that risk-informed solutions cannot be applied anymore, they are required to improvise to deal with this newfound uncertainty. This describes *improvisation* (Katzenstein & Seybert, 2018, p. 14).

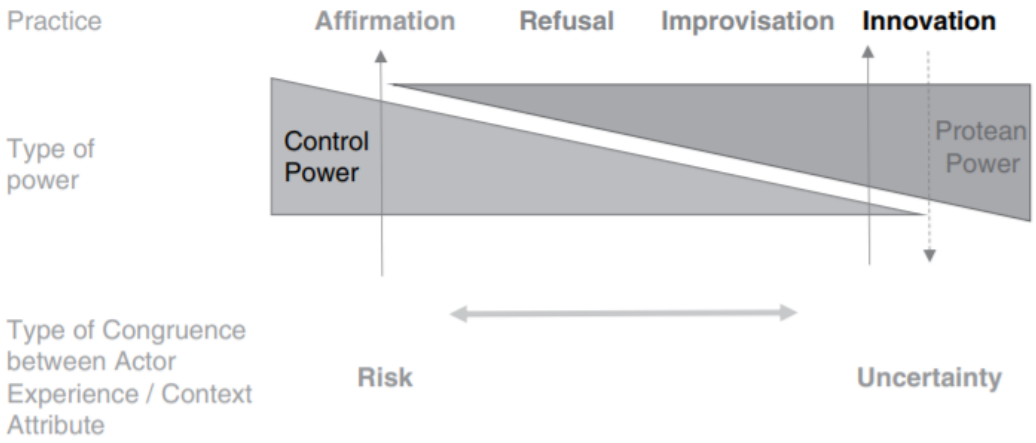

Figure 2: Risk and Uncertainty, Power Type, and Political Practice (Katzenstein & Seybert, 2018, p.33)

Further, Katzenstein and Seybert (2018) stress that innovation and improvisation intensify the uncertainty of the same situation from which it endured, ultimately leaving control power futile. However, if innovation and improvisation achieve success repeatedly, perceptions transform towards a risk-informed control power perspective, which is the preferred condition by actors. Opposingly, as risk-informed decisions are constantly successful, control power manifests itself further.

4.3. Protean Power and Rwanda: Establishing a Causal Mechanism

Katzenstein and Seybert's (2018) theory and prior works on the causes of UN failure can help build a causal mechanism with uncertainty and risk at its core to better understand UNAMIR's failure and fill the literature gap. Regarding the method of explaining-outcome process-tracing, it is insufficient to determine specific hypotheses alone. Instead, it requires the building of a

step-by-step mechanism that fills the 'black box' linking a cause and an outcome, namely complexity (simultaneously risky and uncertain situation) and UN failure (Figure 3).

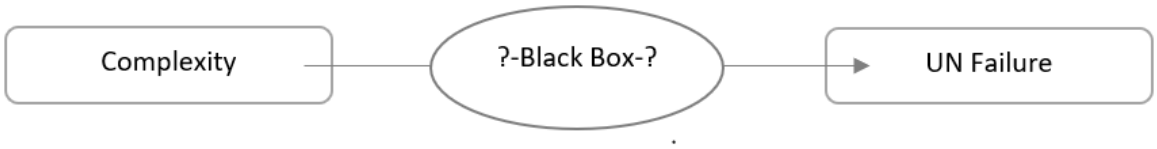

Figure 3: Causal-mechanism as black-box

The mechanism is hypothesized to work as follows (Figure 4):
Part 1: As established above, actors of control power use risk analysis as their preferred method to stabilise a world filled with uncertainty and ultimately reassure themselves in their use of control power. Thus, they engage in refusal, trying to fit all events into their risk-informed perspective. This role can be attributed to the UN forces and headquarters where every decision goes through a rigorous risk analysis (Barnett, 2009).

In contrast, the extremist Hutu government engaged in improvisation as it is uncertain about future Hutu hegemony in Rwanda. The government aims for radical change in view of an unacceptable power-sharing agreement the Arusha Accords were designed to introduce. Driven by concerns over an uncertain future, improvisation by Hutu extremists escalated the situation further by reinforcing uncertainty and making risk-informed decisions by the UN futile (Power, 2001).

Cause	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Part 4	Outcome
Complexity	**Activity:** Refusal **Entity:** UN **Activity:** Improvisation **Entity:** Extremist Hutu government	**Activity**: Improvisation as control power becomes futile. However, aim to re-establish their control power **Entity**: UNAMIR forces	**Activity:** Refusal by UN headquarters due to its internal structure and distance despite accounts of Dallaire → Decide on evacuation and downsizing of UNAMIR **Entity:** UN Headquarters	**Activity:** Improvisation changes to affirmation as innovative means work they become the norm → Beginning of mass genocide **Entity:** Extremist Hutu government	UNAMIR Failure

Figure 4: Causal-Mechanism of UN Failure

Part 2: As the extremists improvised by mass-killing political opponents and civilian Tutsis, UN forces stationed in Rwanda quickly recognized the need to improvise due to an increasingly uncertain environment (Dallaire, 2003). Being limited in its improvisation abilities due to the need to discuss any actions with New York and experiencing a steadily escalating situation as well as the paralysation of UN forces, UNAMIR commander Dallaire intended to re-establish a, in his view favourable, risk-informed environment. Therefore, Dallaire demanded UN headquarters for additional forces and better equipment to regain his control power on the ground.

Part 3: UN-Headquarters, however, were acting within a paradigm characterized by risk and deemed reinforcement too costly. Piiparinen (2010) argues that the UN was acting under the influence of 'Zweckrationalität': a situation where every policy choice needs to be rationally and precisely calculated to assess its benefit for the bureaucracy. In the book *Eyewitness to a Genocide* Barnett (2002) develops this argument further. In line with Weber, Barnett (2002, pp. 7-8) points out that the bureaucratic rationalization turned the UN into an objective and strictly technical organization unable to make morally-informed decisions.

Consequently, New York deemed intervention as too risky. Put differently, UN headquarters refused to adapt to uncertainty. Therefore, the UN actively opted against a restrengthening of UNAMIR and even decided it would be more rational to downscale the mission (Power, 2001). In a nutshell, Dallaire's risk-based solution to uncertainty was rejected by the risk-based culture of the UN.

Part 4: Since the initial improvisations by Hutu extremists turned out to be successful because of UN inflexibility, their conception of uncertainty transcended gradually into a much more risk-informed context and finally affirmation (control power) (Katzenstein & Seybert, 2018). When it became clear that UN forces would not raise their weapons, extremists became gradually more risk-informed and expanded the genocide leading to the death of approximately 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

4.4. Operationalization

The subsequent assessment considers the timeframe from the planning to the instalment of UN forces and until the end of the genocide (1993-1994). This allows capturing the crucial parts of the causal mechanism established above.

The analysis begins by collecting non-randomized empirical observations guided by the hypothesized causal mechanism. The aim is to gather observations that permit to deduce whether each part of the mechanism hypothesized above is present or not. Crucially, observations are not handpicked to verify the hypothesized mechanism. Instead, observations are purposefully collected to test whether the anticipated evidence can be observed. This approach allows to either verify or falsify the hypothesized causal mechanism (Beach & Pedersen, 2013).

However, before empirical observations can be employed to draw inferences they must be singled out as evidence. Observations need to be evaluated in view of context and accuracy to be classified as evidence. Accuracy is ensured by triangulating observations. As in criminal trials, observations have no value unless they are assessed for accuracy and understood in the broader context. Only after, observations can be used as evidence in court.

Generally, process-tracing is divided into four types of evidence: First, pattern evidence describes statistical findings, significant for assessing each part of the mechanism. Second, sequence evidence is the sequence of temporal and spatial events. It allows to verify or falsify whether events occurred in the hypothesized order. Third, trace evidence allows to demonstrate the sheer existence of the hypothesized causal mechanism, for instance, a picture that offers proof that two people met. Lastly, account evidence refers to the substance of empirical material, such as the content of interviews, observational evidence, and oral accounts (Beach & Pedersen, 2013).

These different forms of evidence can be found within either primary or secondary sources. However, this assessment relies predominantly on the latter as "redoing primary research for every investigation would be disastrous; it would rule out most comparative-historical research. If a topic is too big for purely primary research and if excellent studies by specialists are already available in some profusion—secondary sources are appropriate as the basic source of evidence for a given study" (Lustick, 1996, p. 606). Rwanda has already undergone extensive scrutiny and it only makes sense to use previous accounts for the following analysis.

Finally, the concepts of control and protean power require a brief outline of possible indicators. Due to their theoretical nature, the concepts are difficult to measure. However, control power (radical risk) is operationalized through broad indicators like institutional simplicity, determinacy, top-down diffusion, regulations, hierarchy, and standardization as shown in the works that already applied protean power theory (Katzenstein, 2020, pp. 483-484). Similarly,

previous accounts have broadly operationalized protean power (radical uncertainty) as creativity, the shift of norms, flexibility, disintermediation, survival tactics, and ad hoc decisions (Katzenstein, 2020, pp. 483-484). As the indicators are extremely ambiguous, the following analysis will be as transparent as possible in classifying evidence into either the realm of control power, protean power, or in-between.

5. Analysis

The subsequent analysis explores each of the parts of the causal mechanism hypothesized in the theoretical framework.

5.1. Cause: Complexity

After the Second World War and especially with the end of the Cold War, new types of conflict became the norm (Adekayne, 1999, p. 114; Piiparinen, 2010, p. 45). These conflicts crossed ethnic, social, political, and economic dimensions involving regional, state, and global actors, as was the case in Rwanda (Uurtimo & Väyrynen, 2000, p.15). Additionally, German, British, and Belgian colonial rule in Rwanda profoundly shaped ethnicity, identity, political, and power structures (Stys, 2012, p. 709). Finally, having two adjoined conflicts contributed to the complexity of the situation. Understanding the tensions between RPF and Rwandan government as well as the mass slaughtering of Tutsi led to an inherently complex environment (Hodgkin & Sebag Montefiore, 2005, p. 12; Power, 2001). As discussed by Katzenstein and Seybert (2018) and within the theoretical framework, this complexity allows both risk and uncertainty to coexist in the Rwandan context.

5.2. Part 1

Having analysed the complexity of the Rwandan background, the following part explores how the UN and Hutu extremists experienced the situation.

Prior to Rwanda, the UN had undergone major criticism in view of a catastrophic mission in Somalia where US and UN forces were brutally killed (Power, 2001). In comparison, Rwanda seemed like an opportunity for success that would better the UN's image and ensure its survival as an organization. For Keating, the president of the UNSC at the time, Rwanda "was like manna from heaven" (Barnett, 2002, p.69). This understanding was also shared by force commander Romeo Dallaire. He noted that "the people do not want war anymore. The situation is calm, and everybody has a clear desire for peace" (Barnett, 2002, p. 65). Understood from a risk-informed perspective, this achievable mission was to be approached entirely through

negotiation. As the pathway to peace seemed straightforward, UNAMIR was approved with a low budget, little resources, and limited political support (Jones, 2001, pp. 109-110). Further, the UN had to act risk-averse, respecting the interests of the permanent five. Especially the US was dissatisfied with any kind of peacekeeping at that time due to the Somalia debacle and internal pressure from Congress to reduce costs. Meanwhile, France supported the Hutu regime as it aspired to consolidate its dominance in the region (Power, 2001). Consequently, the UN established a mandate which would solely monitor the ceasefire between RPF and the Rwandan government, put together a transitional authority, and integrate the armed forces, as set out in the Arusha Accords (Winfield, 1999). As explored in the theoretical framework, this reasoning can be attributed to risk-informed thinking in the sphere of control power. In other words, the UN was refusing to accept complexity as risk was the desired context and everything seemed to be straightforward. This verifies the first segment of part one of the hypothesized mechanism.

Opposed to UN's perceptions, for Hutu extremists "the democratization process and the redistribution of the cards as a result of the Arusha peace accord constituted a vital threat to their interests and activities" (Reyntjens, 1996, p. 243). This led to an increased perception of uncertainty. As Habyarimana acceded more and more to international demands to share the government with the RPF, extremists became further uncertain about their future (Epstein, 2017). They were afraid that Hutu moderates would join forces with the RPF, leading to their defeat. Meanwhile, the French were limiting their support for the Hutu regime, leaving the government vulnerable to outside attacks (Human Rights Watch, 2006). When in 1993 the Burundian Hutu president was murdered by Tutsi radicals, Hutu extremists were confirmed in their fears. Further, in 1994, Rwandan president Habyarimana finally signed Arusha under international pressure and in view of a strong RPF. This would exclude the Hutu extremist parties MRND and CDR from and include the military branch of the RPF in the future Rwandan coalition (Grünfeld & Huijboom, 2007, pp. 36-37). Aware of their military inferiority and experiencing fear, insecurity, and uncertainty, Hutu extremists decided to manage this complex environment by "taking fate into their own hands" (Grünfeld & Huijboom, 2007, p. 62). In other words, they improvised to deal with an increasingly uncertain environment. Already in the months leading up to the genocide, the Radio station 'RTLM' asserted that "the only remedy is total extermination" (Dorn and Maltoff, 2000, p. 1). Additionally, secret arms caches were established, cheap machetes purchased and distributed to civilians, assassinations directed, killing lists composed, militias like the Interahamwe created, and plans conducted to

kill Belgian peacekeepers to achieve complete withdrawal from UNAMIR (Dorn and Maltoff, 2000, pp. 1, 12; Jones, 2001, p. 112). As argued by most historians, Hutu extremists were also responsible for shooting down Habyarimana's plane which, in retrospect, was a critical juncture as it was the starting point of 100 days of slaughter. Clearly, this cannot be classified as innovation (full protean power) as these acts were planned in detail (Erskine, 2008). Nonetheless, the actions by Hutu extremists were improvised and unorthodox in nature due to perceived uncertainty and desperateness to consolidate power. Hutu extremists could have guessed but could not have known that the UN would cave in so quickly. This is exemplified by Hutu extremists' decision to conduct trial massacres aimed to lower the uncertainty of how the international community would respond to their improvised and horrific actions (Stanton, 2004, p. 216).

To conclude, Hutu extremists' uncertainty triggered improvisation, whereas a risk-informed UN engaged in refusal, confirming part one of the hypothesized mechanism.

5.3. Part 2

As the violence in Rwanda escalated after the downing of Habyarimana's plane, Dallaire and his forces slowly understood that the extremists had no intention to restore a cease-fire. They began to realize that their risk-informed understanding had become futile. The general grasped that Rwanda was much more uncertain than previously thought. He compared the situation to having burst tires and no tape to fix them, whereas a Belgian soldier recalled, "something big was happening but we did not know exactly what" (Dorn & Matloff, 2000, p. 10; O'Clery, 2012). Dallaire himself was uncertain whether he was experiencing a military coup, return to civil war, or something else (Barnett, 2002, p. 97). What he did know is that immediate action was required (Dorn & Matloff, 2000, p. 12). In view of this daunting reality and only possessing a small ill-equipped force to cope with an increasingly dangerous and uncertain environment, Dallaire could no longer use conventional measures but needed to improvise as his control power became ineffective. He focussed on protecting important Tutsi and moderate Hutu politicians while seeking to provide moderate vice-president Madame Agathe with access to the radio station so she could calm the Rwandans. However, the mandate did not allow UNAMIR to use force, ultimately leading to the death of Belgian peacekeepers as well as Madame Agathe, many other politicians, and thousands of civilians (Barnett, 2002, p. 98). The general began to grasp that a genocide was ahead. Having lost the upper hand and unsuccessfully improvising due to New York's restraints put on the mission, Dallaire aimed to

re-establish his control power. He sent several faxes to his superiors in New York stressing that he needed more means to take control of the situation while asking to change his mandate to a chapter VII mission that would allow him to use force (Barnett, 2002, p. 110). In summary, failed improvisation and the inherent need for Dallaire to re-establish a risk-informed environment made him refuse to abandon control power. According to him, reinforcing the mission presented the only rational solution to end conflict, validating the second part of the hypothesized mechanism (Power, 2001).

5.4. Part 3

Despite having received these gloomy reports, UN headquarters decided to not commit to Rwanda due to risk concerns (Keating, 2018, p. 27). Instead, the UNSC weakened the mandate and lowered the present force to only 250 peacekeepers, allowing the extremists to run wild. This section further explores why this was the case.

As the UN is made up of member-states, studying the perceptions of major powers can help draw a better picture. First, the US as the major contributor to the organisation kept the UN on a tight leash. Shortly before Rwanda was discussed at the UNSC, US-peacekeepers were killed during the UN mission in Somalia (Winfield, 1999). Consequently, the US was not willing to risk any more lives. Moreover, the Clinton administration received pressure from the US-Congress to reduce skyrocketing peacekeeping costs (Keating, 2018, p. 32; McGreal, 2015). Even before forces were employed in Rwanda, the US embassy in Kigali sent a fax to Washington stating that "the costs associated with implementing Rwanda's peace accord will be enormous" (Dayal, 2018). Therefore, and despite Dallaire's requests for reinforcement and reports of an increasingly uncertain environment, the US regarded intervening as more costly than not intervening and lobbied against action at the UN-level.

Second, Belgium, the biggest contributor to UNAMIR, presented a similar risk-informed rationale. After the death of ten Belgian peacekeepers, the government decided to pull out (Power, 2001). Belgian public opinion was against reinforcement. In a phone call to the UN, foreign affairs minister Claes stated: "I am not crazy, I am not going to risk my political head in Belgium" (Grünfeld & Huijboom, 2007, p. 190). Further, afraid of pulling out unilaterally, Belgium lobbied for the complete withdrawal of UNAMIR (Power, 2001).

Next to the pressure of member-states, the UN bureaucratic structure presents another reason why the organisation was strictly adhering to control power and therefore to a zero-risk policy. New York stressed that the remaining UNAMIR forces were "not to fire unless fired upon,

they were to negotiate, and above all, avoid conflict" (Dallaire, 2003, p. 229). Non-intervention seemed like the reasonable decision as: 1) the secretariat made the tragedy seem distant resulting in a business-as-usual approach, 2) member-states were unwilling to contribute, 3) the increasingly dangerous and complex situation in Rwanda required the UN to protect its force and reputation (Barnett, 1997, pp. 558-559). Especially the third point deserves closer attention. For the UN, genocide was acceptable as the substitute would be to harm the organisation since the major powers of the UNSC opposed any kind of reinforced intervention. For instance, the British representative to the UNSC told the UN to "not do it, because this will be counter-productive for what you are asking for somewhere else" (Piiparinen, 2010, p. 111).

Further, UN structure led to the bureaucratization of peacekeeping. In view of previous failures, the UN developed a set of criteria to which missions needed to comply to be ratified. These included conditions such as whether a conflict was a genuine threat to international peace and whether the safety of UN forces was ensured. However, applying these criteria led to bureaucratization, and in turn rationalization which ultimately only allowed risk-informed choices (Barnett, 1997, p. 568). Finally, UN bureaucrats were "psychologically and imaginatively limited" (Power, 2001) meaning that they were bound to risk-informed thinking and unable to engage in protean power. This bureaucratic inflexibility meant that the UN could not adapt to the changing situation in Rwanda. In what is known as cognitive dissonance, New York was constantly looking for confirmation to their fundamental beliefs as the UN chose a solution before a problem and unconditionally stuck to it (Lang, 2002, p. 150; Lebow, 1984, p. 58).

The idea that "cold-hearted strategic calculations always trump noble ideas" (Barnett, 2002, p. 4) is best illustrated when assessing why Rwanda was considered a genocide only after it occurred. As stressed by Dorn and Matloff (2000, pp. 28-29), public recognition of genocide would have required the UN and member-states to act under the genocide convention. In a press conference of the American State Department, spokeswoman Shelly stated that "although there have been acts of genocide in Rwanda, all the murders cannot be put into that category" (Dorn and Matloff, 2000, pp. 28-29). The US Office of the Secretary of Defense confirms this rationale. In a discussion paper, it stated, "be careful, legal at state was worried about this yesterday - genocide finding could commit [the U.S. government] to actually do something*"* (Power, 2001).

Put in a nutshell, the UN rationally thought not facing Rwanda would mean zero expectation and consequently zero risk to its organization. In view of the theory, New York rationally refused to listen to Dallaire as preventing threats to the organization itself was prioritized over the stopping of genocide. In other words, New York refused to change its course of action and behaved as risk-averse as possible in view of the organisations' needs, thereby confirming part three of the mechanism.

5.5. Part 4

As discussed in part one, Hutu extremists improvised in view of the uncertainty to remain the dominant power. However, with the UN playing the risk card, Hutu extremists' improvisation transcended into a domain characterized by control power allowing for greater certainty. As the UN openly communicated that non-compliance of Arusha would mean the end of UNAMIR, extremists substituted uncertainty with risk (Keating, 2018, p. 27, Pelz & Corbett, 2009). At the latest when the UN voted for UNAMIR withdrawal on April 21, 1994, Hutu extremists realized that their tests for the UN's resolve would not spark any reaction. Put differently, they understood that the UN was a "toothless tiger" (Barnett, 2002, pp. 88, 90). Knowing this, the Hutu extremists could scale up and formalize the killings by the creation of a document on the 'Organisation-de-l'Auto-Defense-Civile' which incorporated the Interahamwe (Hutu-militia) officially into the military and allowed it to train civilians for mass slaughter. Moreover, this document gave the genocide explicit approval of the government (Human Rights Watch, 2006, p. 16). To illustrate this changing perception of UN forces among Rwandans, the word MINUA in Kinyarwanda language, similar to MINUAR (French acronym for UNAMIR), was used to make fun of the international forces as it roughly translates into: "talk big but don't act" (Off, 2010, p. 103). Consequently, these findings validate part four of the hypotheses as uncertainty perceptions and the resulting improvisation of extremist Hutus developed into affirmation and therefore control power.

5.6. Outcome: UN Failure

As hypothesized, the processes outlined above account for the outcome, that is, UN failure to fulfil its mission but most importantly prevent a genocide. As the risk-averse UN prudently escaped conflict at all costs, it could not deal with uncertainty and Hutu improvisation, ultimately allowing genocide to occur under its supervision (Scherr, 2019, p. 133). To clarify what this means, Dallaire recalls that his "force was standing knee-deep in mutilated bodies, surrounded by the guttural moans of dying people, looking into the eyes of children bleeding

to death with their wounds burning in the sun and being invaded by maggots and flies" (Power, 2001). In retrospective to this humanitarian apocalypse, UN Secretary-General Boutros-Boutros-Ghali repents that "we are all to be held accountable for this failure, all of us, the great powers, African countries, the NGOs, the international community. It is a genocide. I have failed. It is a scandal" (Stettenheim, 2000, p. 236).

6. Sufficiency

As outlined in the research design, explaining-outcome process-tracing aims to establish a minimal sufficient explanation for UN failure in Rwanda. First, all parts of the causal mechanism need to be individually necessary for it to work (Mackie, 1965). This is the case for the mechanism forwarded here as each part depicts whether UNAMIR forces, UN headquarters, and Hutu extremists perceive the situation as risky or uncertain and maps out their appropriate actions and mutual influences.

Second, and relating back to the literature review, previous research has predominantly singled out specific factors. These alone provide an insufficient account for the broader outcome of UN failure. Instead, and as the analysis has shown, the mechanism forwarded in this paper takes a holistic perspective, exploring the root causes that underlie the behaviour of actors. Doing so, the mechanism accounts for all important aspects of the outcome. However, this does not constitute the only possible explanation for UNAMIR failure. Yet, the analysis of the hypothesized mechanism exposes that UN's and Hutu-extremist's different perceptions of risk and uncertainty, in a from complexity characterized Rwandan environment, lie at the core of all chosen actions and can sufficiently explain the disastrous outcome.

7. Conclusion

Explicitly answering the research question on how perceptions of risk and uncertainty explain UN failure, it can be concluded that UN's dominant risk perception (realm of control power) failed to appreciate Rwandan complexity, anathematizing the organization to acts of refusal alone. In contrast, the initially improvised actions (realm of protean power) of uncertain Hutu extremists left the UN paralysed, making control power even more futile. Having successfully improvised in view of UNAMIR withdrawal, Hutu extremists' perceptions shifted from uncertain to risk-informed, and with that from improvisation to affirmation (control power). Consequently, Hutu extremists could expand the genocide across the entire country without fearing international intervention. This process describes UN failure sufficiently.

7.1. Significance

The preceding analysis gives an innovative insight into UNAMIR's failure and confirms the sufficiency of the hypothesised mechanism with risk and uncertainty at its core. Ultimately, the interplay of the UN's and Hutu extremists' opposing perceptions of the situation as risky or uncertain was perilous for the fate of UNAMIR. How is this significant for the understanding of risk and uncertainty?

Although the Rwandan context became extremely uncertain, reinforcement was not deemed rational by New York. This is puzzling if connected to Katzenstein and Seybert's (2018) theory which stresses that actions are based on both context and perception. However, it seems that perceptions play a greater role in the formation of actions in the case of the UN. Despite indisputable uncertainty, New York maintained a strictly risk-informed approach. Pursuing this idea further, actors seem to be able to rationally decide to sideline uncertainty, as the UN did by withdrawing its soldiers. Consequently, it appears that risk and uncertainty are what actors make of it, bestowing the debate a constructivist perspective.

Turning towards the academic relevance of the thesis: First, the significance lies in the incorporation of uncertainty and risk into the analysis. As the literature gap has outlined, the often-neglected distinction between these concepts proves to be a key tool in the analyses of historical puzzles. Moreover, it shows how risk and uncertainty lie at the basis of human behaviour, signifying importance far beyond the Rwandan case.

Second, by constructing a causal mechanism that sufficiently explains the underlying causes for UN failure in Rwanda, this work responds to prior literature weaknesses as it goes beyond realist assumptions, methodological individualism, and narrative emphasis. Exploring the puzzle from a macro-level perspective, the paper provides valuable new insights which explain previously inexplicable decisions taken by actors in the complex Rwandan context.

7.2. Strengths and Weaknesses

The strength of this work lies in its internal validity. As process-tracing analyses each part of a hypothesized mechanism, linking an outcome to a cause within a case, the causal inferences that can be deduced are strong in their explanatory power for the Rwandan puzzle.

However, this research also suffers from limitations. First, within process-tracing, sources tend to select the researcher (Thies, 2002, p. 356). This means that predominantly verifying observations are gathered, and thus automatically affirm the hypothesized outcome through

selection and confirmation bias. Although this presents a danger to the validity of the findings, the analysis was not solely based on one account but incorporated a large variety of sources, ensuring the reliability of the results (Lustick, 1996).

Second, and as pointed out in the operationalization, control and protean power can only be described by ambiguous indicators. This makes it difficult to accurately pinpoint evidence on the spectrum of control to protean power, weakening the analysis substantially in its precision. In other words, the process may have suffered from attribution bias. However, as the analysis bases its inference on broader classifications into one of the two realms, rather than precise positioning on the spectrum, the findings of this thesis are not endangered.

7.3. Policy Implications and Academic Recommendations

Although explaining-outcome process-tracing seeks to explain a specific outcome, this assessment informs other cases as well. Because the core ideas of protean power theory, namely risk and uncertainty, forward broader theoretical claims, the argument reaches beyond the Rwandan case alone (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, pp. 19, 156-157). As most UN missions are characterized by complexity, risk and uncertainty may account for UN mission failure in countries like Somalia or Mali as well (Mugabi, 2021). Consequently, the UN should make fundamental structural changes to effectively deal with complex circumstances and be able to fulfil its mandate in future missions. In line with this, UN General Anyidoho called for "a review of the UN system where a civilian controls the military during peacekeeping" (Anyidoho, 1997, p. 124).

Taking a brief look at how the lessons learned in Rwanda mobilized change, the 2005 UN World-Summit-Outcome-Document called for more robust mandates by adopting the 'Responsibility-to-Protect' (R2P) principle. This doctrine should ensure that the UN never fails again to halt horrors such as mass atrocities, genocide, and war crimes (Keating, 2018, p. 35). However, despite R2P, hesitation and inability to act persist until today. What prevails are national interests of UNSC veto powers to reject R2P missions in view of cost-benefit and risk calculations, best exemplified by Russia's resistance to intervene in Syria (Holmes, 2014).

As R2P is unable to live up to its expectations, the UN requires fundamental reinvention to safeguard peace and security around the world. As the analysis has shown, the UN needs to become more flexible, leaving room for improvisation in complex environments. Similarly, the deeply bureaucratic organization requires restructuring to look beyond self-interest and inform actions by both risk and uncertainty. Katzenstein & Seybert's (2018) theory, as well as the

mechanism forwarded here, can advance this as both help to uncover deep-sitting structural flaws which need to be addressed. Finally, the analysis has shown that the UN as an organization deserves more autonomy against strong states and especially the permanent members of the Security Council.

Additionally, this thesis encourages future academic inquiry. First, primary sources such as interviews ought to be conducted to verify the conclusions made here. As perceptions of risk and uncertainty are central to the argument, interviews would allow to investigate if the mechanism applies to individuals as well. Second, more studies should go beyond a narrative analysis of single factors. Similarly to here, such work would help understand whether UN actions in other contexts can be explained by a comparable causal mechanism. Third, and most important, Katzenstein and Seybert's (2018) theory cannot only be used to understand the success/failure of UN missions but can provide a fresh breeze into realism-dominated peace and security studies. Ending with the words of Katzenstein (2020), "protean power is an invitation to rethink what we thought we fully understood but did not" (p. 481).

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