



# British International Studies Association Intervention and Responsibility to Protect Working Group Annual Conference

**Reimagining the Responsibility to Protect to meet  
new challenges**

**Date: 18 November 2022**

**Location:** Hybrid virtual and face-to-face at the University of Leeds, School of Politics and International Studies, European Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, Roger Stevens Lecture Theatre 11 (10.11)



## Schedule

9-9:30	Arrival, tea, coffee and pastries provided.
9:30-9:40	Welcome comments
9:40-10:00	<i>Provocations from a Practitioner: Towards a Devolution of R2P</i> Dr. Kate Ferguson (Protection Approaches)
10:00-11:20	Panel I: <i>Ongoing Contestation of R2P</i> Andrea Knapp, Shreejita Biswas, Zikun Yang, Ruolan Gan and Qiaochu Zhang
11:20-12:40	Panel II: <i>New Challenges for R2P Implementation and Responsibility</i> Adrian Gallagher, Helena Hinkkainen, Pinar Gozen Ercan, Caglar Acikyildiz, Chloë Gilgan, Bola Adediran, Mafruza Sultana
12:40- 13:40	Lunch
13:45-14:30	Keynote Speech by Professor Alex Bellamy (University of Queensland): <i>Between Brussels, Helsinki, and Yalta: Human Protection and the Return of Imperial Orders</i>
14:30-15:50	Panel III: <i>The Intersection between R2P and other Protection Norms and Neglected Contexts</i> Blake Lawrinson and Jason Ralph, James Pattison, Daeun Jung, Elif Çetin, Josephine Jackson
15:50-16:10	Coffee
16:10-17:30	Panel IV: <i>Meeting New and Unresolved Challenges</i> Lucas de Belmont, Renu Keer, Samuel Jarvis, Thomas Peak, Neil Renwick, Sophie T. Rosenberg
17:30-17:40	Closing remarks
18:00	Dinner and Drinks TBC

## PANELS

### I. 10:00-11:20: Ongoing Contestation of R2P

*Contesting the Responsibility to Protect in the Security Council: Insights from computational text analysis*

**Andrea Knapp**

The adoption of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) by the United Nations in 2005, aimed at guiding foreign responses to wars that threaten civilians, has merged two distinct contestation dynamics. On the one hand, the doctrine was introduced to challenge the normative ideal of non-interference that has prevailed since the Westphalian order. On the other hand, the legitimacy and application of R2P itself are contested by multiple critical member states - most notably China and Russia. Drawing on constructivist literature on norm contestation, this article contributes to the ongoing debate on the degree and impact of these practices on the acceptance of the Responsibility to Protect. Transcending simple word frequency queries, it reviews three contestation hypotheses in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC): overt (vetoes and abstentions), attitudinal (negative language) and tacit (non-application of the R2P label). 3,194 Council documents between 2005 and 2019 were inspected using a combination of qualitative (text and network analysis) and quantitative (sentiment analysis) methods. In line with existing constructivist research, R2P emerges as a norm that is contested on the applicatory but not the validity dimension. References to the norm do not disrupt ordinary voting behavior in the UNSC, nor is the concept surrounded by considerably negative language patterns, although a mismatch between continuity of its label between debates and resolutions (and vice versa) was exposed. In sum, the Responsibility to Protect evinces no major signs of norm decay and thus refutes accounts proclaiming its death after Libya.

*The Contestation of the R2P norm and the Ukraine Crisis: Re-envisioning the R2P norm in the context of India*

**Shreejita Biswas**

The paper studies the contestation of the norm of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) which emerged in 2005 at the UN for providing 'timely and decisive action' in case of genocide and mass atrocities by the international community. The strength of the norm and the extent of its diffusion in I.R have faced challenges when it comes to application of the norm in practice. Given India's emerging power status in the South Asian region, its R2P policy has been questionable. The paper addresses the fact that India's attitude for the global norm has faced a rough terrain since its inception. In this light, the study using the case study method of the Ukraine crisis, seeks to explain, how local actors of India had a distinctive response to the crisis viz-a-viz R2P and sovereignty. As a result, the study focuses upon, how R2P can be "re-imagined" in the South Asian context, specifically when it comes to the emerging powers like India in the region.

*Rising Powers and Norm Containment: Examining China's Disparate Response to Responsibility to Protect in the 21st Century*

**Zikun Yang**

Why has a rising China endorsed a sovereignty-compromising Responsibility to Protect (R2P), which often goes against its long-held values and beliefs, puts its regime/ontological security at risk, and constrains its ascendancy? What explains China's disparate compromise, contestation, and even rejection of R2P in the past two decades? Given COVID-19 and an assertive Beijing's recent abstention on the Ukraine crisis, its puzzling approach to R2P appears imperative and re-ignites our imagination

for state responsibility under the Liberal International Order. While enumerating instrumental calculations, inner politik, and identity-oriented socialization as explanatory factors, the International Relation (IR) literature unfortunately falls prey to the rigid material-social binary. Thus, through a rational institutionalist-constructivist eclectic lens, this process-tracing with critical discourse analysis of China's variant response to R2P from 2000 to 2022. It elaborates on three cases: China's endorsement of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, acquiescence to the UN Security Council Resolution 1973, and ten vetoes on the Syria conflict since 2011. The finding attributes this behavioral/attitudinal inconsistency to a strategy of norm containment: China's self-directed conformity with presumably inconvenient R2P to restrain this norm's legitimacy and application. Theoretically, this research moves beyond the norm taker/breaker dichotomy and brings together norm contestation, rising powers' two-way socialization in global governance, and a post-realist reading of power politics. Empirically, multi-archival and bilingual records and elite interviews reconstruct historical contexts of China's evolving perceptions of sovereignty, intervention, and human rights, three key concepts in IR and international law (IL).

### *China's approach to the Responsibility to Protect (R2P)*

#### **Ruolan Gan**

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is generally understood as a multi-layered and highly contested international norm relevant to humanitarian intervention. As an emerging non-Western power, China is often seen as a veto-er and a non-conformist, yet it may more consistently engage in R2P actions and respond more to the R2P norm than other norm takers. However, the problem with extant literature is portraying China's approach in an over-generalised way, which presupposes it is static and in an ahistorical veto fashion, does not change according to the context or evolve. Neither it does not take into account the path of becoming a norm-shaper, so that leaves questions about how China calls for attention to its normative preferences and persuades other states.

To challenge over-simplified portrayals of China's approach, this current research seeks to take a more complex, dynamic and relational perspective, in keeping with recent developments in norm theory which call for the embrace of a non-linear process and a potential circulation of international norms. Critically examining the Chinese source, this research will take a broader and comparative approach, containing China's vote in favour of the R2P resolution than previous studies. It will also look at the process of China's legitimization for its normative argument through its use of languages.

### *The rise of non-Western powers and human protection: Mapping China's contestation in the norm cluster of prevention*

#### **Qiaochu Zhang**

How do states contest the cosmopolitan underpinnings of the norms in the issue area of human protection? The norm literature offers important insights into the contestation practices, such as validity and applicatory contestation and behavioural and discursive contestation; nevertheless, they dominantly focus on the contestation toward an individual norm and pay inadequate attention to the fact that most norms do not exist in isolation but are interlinked to other conceptually aligned norms in a common issue area. To address this, I examine how China contests a cluster of prevention norms. I identify three types of prevention norms in the cluster, structured by three different logics: (1) conflict prevention based on a stability/peace logic; (2) atrocity prevention based on a humanitarian logic; and (3) root cause prevention based on a long-term capacity building logic which notably includes economic development, democracy promotion, and rule of law. Drawing on English- and Chinese-language official documents and elite interviews with Chinese diplomats and UN officials, I argue that the existence of the norm cluster enables China to twist atrocity prevention into conflict prevention and root cause prevention according to its interests and ideological beliefs and to dilute the cosmopolitan visions of the prevention norms with limited reputational costs. Empirically, to the

best of my knowledge, it is the first systematic study on China's prevention policy, as most scholarly attention has been given to intervention rather than prevention.

## **II. 11:20-12:40 PM: New Challenges for R2P Implementation and Responsibility**

### *Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGS) and the Responsibility to Protect*

**Adrian Gallagher and Helena Hinkkainen**

The RtoP is a state-centric agreement that sets out to address the threat of mass atrocities perpetrated by governments. Non-state armed groups, therefore, pose a 'new challenge' as they play an increasing role in the perpetration of mass atrocity crimes in the 21st century. The reason for this is multifaceted with factors such as a) the proliferation of armed groups, b) changes in aims and methods, and c) state-non-state dynamics all playing a critical role. Building on calls for a greater understanding of the Responsibility to Protect and non-state armed groups (Loyle 2018; Dieng, 2016; Welsh, 2016) the paper sets out to do three things. First, reflect on what the RtoP discourse has to say about non-state armed groups. Second, critically analyse the state of this discourse by juxtaposing the claims made with studies on non-state armed groups. Third, highlight unanswered questions, unresolved issues, and research gaps which need to be addressed through further interdisciplinary studies that go beyond the RtoP literature in order to advance the RtoP agenda.

### *Non-State Armed Groups and the Responsibility to Protect: Addressing New Challenges*

**Pinar Gozen Ercan & Caglar Acikyildiz**

Over the last years, the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), has been formally placed as an item in the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly. While R2P's normative framework and implementation requires the consideration of various actors and factors involved, in the practices of states and in political discussions, the approach to R2P implementation has been state-centric, and focused on state-led crimes. Addressing a gap in the literature, in this article, we challenge the state-centric focus on R2P, and study the impact of non-state armed groups as perpetrators of atrocity crimes and question the role they play in shaping the R2P responses of the international community. To this end, we examine the actions of Boko Haram and the Islamic State, and the national and international responses to them. We argue that extremist violence by these armed groups is a fundamental challenge to R2P's practice, and hence is to be addressed in defining the existing framework and tools of R2P. All in all, we aim to contribute to the broader discussions by identifying how these actors impact implementation and what we need to reconsider about R2P to meet this new challenge.

### *Localizing the Responsibility to Protect in Civil Society: Paving the Road to Norm Degeneration?*

**Chloë M. Gilgan**

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is the relevant framework for state responses to mass atrocities, which are ongoing in Syria. This article examines how that framework has been localized by civil society and the effects of that localization. Using an empirical case study of the UK's responses to Syrian refugees during 2014–16, the research demonstrates how state practice of a norm can affect civil society advocacy, which may have a deleterious effect on a norm's life cycle. The research also revealed that civil society is resisting a link between R2P and refugee protection in practice, despite states' international commitments to both and despite how both overlap in some cases. Two

conclusions are reached. First, the research found a complex, iterative relationship between states and civil society. How the UK has understood and practiced R2P has directly affected how civil society contests and modifies R2P in response, despite the norm's relevance to the Syrian case. Rather than using advocacy and engagement with states to reconceptualize the norm to fit its broader remit, some civil society actors have rejected or modified the norm instead. This has effectively helped entrap R2P within a narrow understanding and has made it politically expedient to show support for the norm's aspirations implicitly rather than explicitly in the organizational discourse. Second, based on the results of this interdependent relationship, the political resistance against R2P is further entrenched, even when based upon the state's narrow understandings, which serve to marginalize the norm.

### *NGO roles in the implementation of Responsibility to Protect (R2P): Navigating the boundaries of international law in the Rohingya Crisis*

#### **Mafruza Sultana**

This paper explores the role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the implementation of Responsibility to Protect (R2P), using the case study of the Rohingya in Myanmar and Bangladesh. The role of NGOs in global justice is contested, with critical perspectives suggesting that NGOs can act as intermediaries of Western hegemony. Yet, they are also critical players in efforts to secure justice and accountability. While previous research has examined the role of NGOs in peacebuilding efforts for the Rohingya, less attention has been given to their impact on the R2P, specifically through their engagement with Transitional Justice (TJ). This paper analyses NGO work in relation to two important mechanisms relating to Rohingya: the case at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the investigation by the International Criminal Court (ICC). The analysis rests primarily on an extensive study and review of secondary sources, analysis of statements and reports to examine how NGOs reconstruct and apply the concepts of TJ. The paper also benefits from qualitative interviews and personal insights from the authors. Drawing on the theory of localization, this analysis reveals two main aspects of the role of NGOs: localizing international TJ norms for Rohingya groups; and identifying and promoting the interests of those groups at the ICC and ICJ. The paper thus demonstrates R2P into practice through the work of NGOs, with potential avenues for the ICC and ICJ to adjust their engagement with NGOs seeking justice and accountability so as to better resonate with the realities of the Rohingya.

### *Diffusing R2P: a role for multinational corporations?*

#### **Bola Adediran**

The role of state institutions and international organisations in implementing R2P is widely researched and debated, however there is a lack of serious academic consideration of multinational corporations as agents in advancing R2P despite their growing economic and political influence. In this paper, I argue that beyond their negative duties to do no harm, increased capabilities place unique moral responsibilities on them to act in advancing human rights and by extension the R2P. This paper explores the pragmatic case for extending protection responsibilities to multinational corporations by extending four arguments that foregrounds their positive duties and four counter objections. The paper concludes by outlining a framework of how multinational corporations can operationalise their responsibility to protect.

### III. 14:30-15:50 PM: The Intersection between R2P and other Protection Norms and Neglected Contexts

*Norm clusters and the challenges of peacekeeping withdrawal: The case of UNAMID (2018-2021)*

**Blake Lawrinson and Jason Ralph**

This article assesses the challenges of peacekeeping withdrawal. It focuses on the United Nations – African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). Using a content analysis of 314 UN, AU, and Member State documents and statements discussing UNAMID’s withdrawal, we find an extensive emphasis on peace and democratic transition as a justification for the withdrawal. However, since the mission’s departure the country has witnessed a military coup, reports of intercommunal violence, insecurity, and challenges in civilian protection. The findings show that the UN, AU, and Member States acknowledged, but underestimated, the fragility of peace and the humanitarian challenges which remained in Sudan amid the withdrawal. What can explain this misjudgement? We draw on work that explains similar misjudgements by pointing to the operation of a ‘norm cluster’, a concept that identifies the existence of distinct but overlapping norms. We demonstrate how a misplaced emphasis on ‘democratic process’ at the expense of ‘atrocities prevention’ led to a premature withdrawal of UNAMID. We argue that a greater emphasis on atrocities prevention within the R2P norm cluster would have given UNAMID more time to work on enhancing Sudan’s capacity to protect civilians and stabilise the security situation. The article is an important contribution to debates at the intersection between norm theory and practice and the challenges of UN-led, and joint, peacekeeping mission withdrawals.

*Prioritising Global Responsibilities: Which Atrocities? On Saving the Most Lives*

**James Pattison**

We consider how states should prioritise their various global responsibilities, when faced with numerous ongoing global issues and crises, from mass atrocities to forced migration, from communicable and noncommunicable diseases to climate change. This paper focuses particularly on how states ought to prioritise where to act when confronted, as they so often are, by a plurality of atrocity crises beyond their borders. To which atrocities should states direct their attention and resources? We argue that, contrary to current practice, states should be focusing on saving the most lives when considering which atrocities to tackle. This is what we call the ‘basic maximisation principle’. That is, decision makers ought ideally to take as their guide the principle of seeking to prioritise in a way that saves the most lives. In making the case for the basic maximisation principle, we explain why ethical prioritisation decisions matter, why it is not enough to simply aim to do some good somewhere, and, as a result, why there is a duty to prioritise justly. We also emphasise that the basic maximisation principle, although a useful starting point, is a not sufficient guide to how states ought to prioritise their global responsibilities – it should be only one element of a theory of just prioritisation of global responsibilities.

*Sharing the Responsibility to Protect: Peacekeeping Partnership as the UN’s Legitimation Strategy*

**Daeun Jung**

The principle of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), frequently operationalised through the ‘protection of civilians’ mandate, has been invoked in many of the United Nations’ (UN) peacekeeping operations (PKOs) over the last few decades. Despite a broad international consensus on the principle, the success of its implementation remains debated and often contested. Recognising the challenges in delivering

the protection mandates, the UN has been institutionalising its partnerships with regional organisations (ROs), particularly with the African Union (AU), to share the responsibility and burden in PKOs that increasingly demand robust actions. Recent literature hence studies the efficacy of these UN-RO partnerships, but less attention has been paid to understanding them as part of the UN's broader legitimisation strategy. In response to this gap, my research primarily asks: How does the UN's peacekeeping partnership operate as a legitimisation strategy? I aim to answer this through a mixture of qualitative methods – document analysis, interviews, and media content analysis. Preliminary document analysis has suggested that the UN communicates its efforts to address the legitimacy gaps highlighted in recent years through the institutional partnership with the AU. Building on this, I will conduct a series of elite and local interviews, which will be supplemented by local media analysis, to examine how different stakeholders perceive the partnership. By doing so, the research will contribute to the broader literature that addresses the contemporary challenges – both normative and empirical – in peacekeeping and inform the debates on the implementation of the R2P principle.

### *Reimagining the principle of R2P within the Framework of the Protection for Refugees and IDPs*

**Elif Çetin**

The principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) has been facing a number of major criticisms ever since its unanimous adoption in 2005 by the United Nations General Assembly. Among these critical approaches towards R2P, claims that it is an ambiguous concept, lacking jurisprudential evidences and *opinio iuris* (Payandeh, 2010), and pursues a hidden agenda of political regime change to impose Western notion of democracy have recently come to the fore in connection with the Libyan crisis and Syrian conflict. These works appear to conduct an evaluation of the R2P by concentrating on its third pillar, namely, the international community's responsibility to take collective action to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity when a state fails to do so.

Seeking to bridge the gap between the literature on R2P and international protection of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), this paper argues that while R2P can be subject to certain political and ideological blockages that prevent intervention when it does not serve to the interests of major world powers, its first two pillars can be further instrumentalised to complement the already existing international protection regime. In particular, R2P as a norm can offer the benefit of avoiding the risk of mass atrocities through the development of preventive responses, which would limit both the loss of lives and the number of IDPs and refugees. R2P can also to encourage international community to uphold the principle of non-refoulement while also fostering the creation of a burden sharing mechanism among states regarding the granting of asylum, and temporary protections.

### *Desire, But Not Yet a Duty: The Ukraine War's Revelations About Our Commitment to the 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P)*

**Josephine Jackson**

**Abstract** The 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P), enacted in the U.N. by unanimity in 2005, still faces many challenges of a practical nature. First, though the R2P was intended to be a framework for the international duty to protect against major humanitarian crimes, it does not provide standardized solutions for every crisis, partly because assessments of facts and circumstances are often unclear. Nowhere is this more evident than the use-of-force provisions under the R2P's third pillar. This under-researched area is of major importance in discussions about the national capabilities, cooperation between intelligence units, burden-sharing mechanisms, military operations, and funds that make third pillar interventions possible. By simultaneously drawing on the experiences of Libya and Syria during 2011 and generating insights into the ongoing Russia-Ukraine War, this paper makes three arguments. The first is that the interaction between values, interests, and politics determines whether



and how states choose to militarily intervene (or not) to protect civilians from atrocities. The second is that the challenges of R2P implementation in Libya and Syria are significant factors in shaping discussions of minimum/maximum intervention strategies in Ukraine. The third is that, when analyzed together, the cases of Libya, Syria, and Ukraine cast doubt on the ability of the U.N. Security Council to recognize what is required under the R2P commitment and act accordingly

#### **IV. 16:10-17:30: Meeting New and Unresolved Challenges**

##### *An invisible genocide? Atrocity crimes against indigenous peoples in the Brazilian Amazon*

**Lucas de Belmont**

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is the most recent consolidation of an international responsibility to protect vulnerable populations outside a state's own borders. It affirms a duty by the international community, through the United Nations and regional organizations, to prevent, assist and take collective action to protect populations from genocide, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and war crimes, the so-called atrocity crimes. The commission, or the risk, of atrocity crimes, then, is a necessary condition for international action under Pillars 2 and 3 of R2P.

Within this framework, this paper will approach the classification of the violent acts committed against the indigenous peoples in the Brazilian Amazon in order to verify if they can be considered atrocity crimes or, otherwise, mere human rights violations that, although unable to be framed under the R2P concept, would be under scrutiny and action by the international community nevertheless. Firstly, the paper will briefly describe the historical background of the indigenous situation in Brazil since the invasion by the Portuguese in 1500 until the first decades of the 21st century, when, in different occasions, the indigenous peoples in this territory were victims of atrocity crimes under various governments, even after these crimes were internationally outlawed. Secondly, it will explain what is the current situation of the indigenous peoples in the Brazilian Amazon regarding the violent acts committed against them by the state and powerful economic actors. Thirdly, it will analyse how this violence should be classified according to the international definition and jurisprudence of each atrocity crime. The approach chosen here is to adopt the definitions accepted internationally in various legal documents, given that it was upon these definitions that the international community affirmed and reaffirmed its commitment to act, and that civil society groups may effectively apply pressure on international actors to respond to atrocities. Finally, the paper concludes that the indigenous peoples in the Brazilian Amazon are victims of crimes against humanity and genocide and international action is necessary for their protection.

##### *UN and the Responsibility to Protect: An Examination of the Rwanda Catastrophe*

**Renu Keer**

Since the inception of the study of international relations, peace and stability have invariably been the central concern of the scholars of IR. Consequently, it led to the creation of international organizations such as the United Nations Organization, aiming to safeguard human lives and promote peace worldwide increasingly. Furthermore, the UN General Assembly endorsed the principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) in 2005, legitimizing the humanitarian intervention and use of force to protect civilians from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Unfortunately, however, the 1994 Rwanda catastrophe presents a nasty side of the International community- the UN, which undeniably ignored the killing of thousands of people and let the massacre happen. This paper seeks examine why the UN- the proponent of global peace and human rights- did not intervene in Rwanda, visibly failing to serve humanity and to fulfil its objective of 'peacekeeping'. Moreover, the paper focuses on the UN non-response to the Rwanda genocide, one of the most

horrifying chapters in human history. It also tends to study the role and impact of 'R2P', one of the major initiatives of UN, to guard human rights through humanitarian intervention.

### *The R2P's Evolution in a Contested Global Order: Change Through Consensus Building?*

**Samuel Jarvis**

The evolution of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) over the last decade has seen the norm linked to a much more expansive list of human protection initiatives such as the supply of humanitarian aid and the use of quiet diplomacy techniques, the majority of which place a much greater emphasis on the importance of prevention and non-interference. Yet despite this greater emphasis on redefining the parameters of the R2P norm, there has been only limited discussion around the specific drivers of this change over time, as well as the extent to which the greater use of less coercive and consensus-focused approaches may impact on the R2P norm's long-term effectiveness and validity. In addressing this lacuna, this paper examines key global trends, actors and events that have shaped the R2P's more expansive and less coercive focus over time, highlighting, in particular, the role of rising and middle powers in this process. Through building on constructivist norm research, the paper therefore works to challenge claims as to the dominance of Western preference setting in the R2P's recent evolution and thus provides a more complex picture of the competing interests that continue to shape the implementation of the R2P norm in practice. Consequently, it is argued that a reduced emphasis on coercive responses to R2P situations has simultaneously created an R2P norm that is now less contested but increasingly less effective in terms of its ability to limit the impact of mass atrocity crimes on populations across the globe.

### *Halting Genocide in a Post-Liberal International Order: Intervention, Institutions, and Norms*

**Thomas Peak**

This article considers the implications of a post-liberal international order (LIO) for genocide prevention. It identifies a broad scholarly consensus which anticipates that a more realist form of order might be emerging. Drawing on history and IR, the article outlines a framework to interpret how states might respond to genocide within such an emergent realist international order (RIO). This article argues that even within an RIO that downgrades normative commitments to fundamental human rights, unchecked genocide will often continue to pose a threat to international peace and security and that states will be interested in halting and preventing it. Within an emergent RIO, many of the non-coercive tools for halting genocide made available by liberal order will be rendered defunct or constrained in their scope and effectiveness. Yet, genocide scholars have in any case found that where genocidal-type violence has already begun, non-coercive tools are rarely effective (Bellamy and McLoughlin 2022; Broache and Cronin-Furman 2021). This article suggests that within an RIO which encourages greater amounts of self-help, regional and local actors will have real politic motivations for undertaking military interventions which halt genocides occurring in their neighbourhood. Whilst such dynamics are observable in the Cold War and also during earlier period of international history, an emergent RIO will also benefit from the persistence of fundamental norms such as the prohibition on genocide. Given these factors, and whilst it will be highly non-ideal, an emerging RIO might retain the possibility of effectively responding to some genocides.

### *Re-Imagining and Re-Inscribing IR2P policy and practice to meet new challenges: 'Knowledge learning' and AI*

**Neil Renwick**

This paper assesses the role of 'knowledge' in IR2P governance; policy and practice in the context of emerging global challenges. It considers three main questions: (i) 'What constitutes 'knowledge' in the IR2P policy domain? (ii) 'To what extent and in what ways can IR2P be 're-imagined' as a 'knowledge construct' in response to emerging security challenges? (iii) How can stakeholder policy responses to these emerging challenges be strengthened through a 're-inscription' of IR2P? The study utilises the perspective of Harvard's Tina Grottier. 'Knowledge is defined as both 'conceptual and 'procedural', i.e. how we construct information in our head and how we do things, each is relevant in defining what is 'knowledge' and 'know-how' in a policy domain such as IR2P. The paper evaluates the 'knowledge agencies' that produce 'knowledge', act as intermediaries or brokers or are the users of knowledge. It focuses on 'knowledge learning', facilitated by networks that bring together a wide spectrum of agencies including governments, sub-national authorities, scholars, business and civil society organisations. Reflecting the rising importance of emerging technologies as Janus-faced potential sources of insecurity and of effective response, the study focuses on Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a case study of IR2P policy 'knowledge learning'. The paper argues that 'Knowledge' forms a pivotal modality as an 'order-shaper' in today's global system, that AI is an emerging challenge, but that IR2P can be strengthened through an effective 'knowledge learning' governance culture and by harvesting potential positive policy benefits of AI to meet emerging global challenges.

### *Responsible Digital Sovereignty: Regulating Online Content during Crisis.*

**Sophie T. Rosenberg**

What should the duties and responsibilities of states be with respect to the Internet? In other words, what responsibilities should come with digital sovereignty? Given the link between harmful content online (hate speech, disinformation, extremism, terrorism...) and serious human rights violations and atrocities, this article explores these questions by focusing on one aspect of digital sovereignty: how states shape and control harmful online content. It reviews the way states used and abused digital communication technologies in the crises in Ukraine, Myanmar, and China/Xinjiang. This article offers a novel analytical framework that illuminates how states' common commitment to curbing 'harmful' content online can justify not only protective but also repressive policies, including facilitating the commission of atrocities. It argues that the range of states' approaches to content control stem from two contrasting and increasingly competing visions of digital sovereignty, with each featuring a corresponding view of the state's appropriate role in controlling content. On one end of the spectrum, approaches based on the vision of digital sovereignty as a shield promotes 'information security,' or the condition of a population that is protected from exposure to what the government perceives to be harmful content online. Yet, such policies are often used by governments to justify repression, facilitate the commission of atrocities, block accountability, and disrupt the population's conception of truth and falsehood. On the other end, approaches based on the vision of digital sovereignty as responsibility promote 'epistemic security,' or the condition of a population that is able to generate, distribute, and access reliable information as well as assess the veracity of information. Indeed, given the crucial role of information during crises, a population's epistemic security is integral to its physical security. Digital sovereignty as responsibility thus incorporates, at a minimum, the responsibility to take measures online to prevent the incitement to commit mass atrocities, protect populations from abuses, and hold perpetrators accountable. More broadly, it entails protecting a population's epistemic security. This article coins the concept of 'digital sovereignty as responsibility' and couches the emergent concept of 'digital sovereignty' within recent shifts in how states have conceptualized sovereignty.

## List of Contributors

**Caglar Acikyildiz**

**Bola Adediran**

**Alex Bellamy**

**Lucas de Belmont**

**Shreejita Biswas**

**Elif Çetin**

**Pinar Gozen Ercan**

**Kate Ferguson**

**Adrian Gallagher**

**Ruolan Gan**

**Chloë M. Gilgan**

**Helena Hinkkainen**

**Josephine Jackson**

**Samuel Jarvis**

**Daeun Jung**

**Renu Keer**

**Andrea Knapp**

**Blake Lawrinson**

**James Pattison**

**Thomas Peak**

**Jason Ralph**

**Neil Renwick**

**Mafruza Sultana**

**Zikun Yang**

**Qiaochu Zhang**

**Sophie T. Rosenberg**