Check for updates

Article

SECURITY DIALOGUE

Security Dialogue
2022, Vol. 53(1) 38–56
© The Author(s) 2021
Article reuse guidelines:
sagepub.com/journals-permissions
DOI: 10.1177/09670106211027801
journals.sagepub.com/home/sdi
SAGE

Decolonizing the Responsibility to Protect: On pervasive Eurocentrism, Southern agency and struggles over universals

Coralie Pison Hindawi
American University of Beirut, Lebanon

Abstract

Many postcolonial or critical scholars are rather sceptical of the Responsibility to Protect principle. In most of the critical literature, Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is presented as a product from the West, whose liberal ideal relies on a perception of Southern states being potentially dysfunctional, which in turn justifies an interventionist discourse with neocolonial overtones. The problem with this interpretation of R2P is that it essentially ignores non-Western, particularly Southern, inputs on the concept, falling precisely into the trap that, many authors claim, vitiates Responsibility to Protect: its West-centrism. Building upon a mix of critical, decolonial, postcolonial and Third World Approaches to International Law scholarship, this article proposes a number of additional steps to decolonize R2P in an effort to avoid what Pinar Bilgin describes as 'conflating the critiques of the particularity of universals with critiques of the idea of having universals'. What successive decolonizing layers expose is a negotiation process in which the agency of states from the global South in shaping the – still controversial – principle has proved particularly obvious. Decolonizing Responsibility to Protect, this article argues, requires critical scholars to engage in a contrapuntal analysis in order to acknowledge the concept's mutual constitution by the West and the 'rest' and the deeper struggles over universals hiding underneath.

Keywords

Critical security studies, decolonizing, Eurocentrism, global South, Responsibility to Protect

> 'Brazil has just as much of a right as any Western norm-maker to proclaim what R2P is or is not, and how it should be applied.'
>
> (A Brazilian diplomat, cited in Stefan, 2016: 101)

Introduction

Many postcolonial and critical scholars are rather sceptical of the Responsibility to Protect principle (hereafter R2P). In most of the critical literature, R2P is presented as a product from the West,

Corresponding author:
Coralie Pison Hindawi, American University of Beirut, P.O. Box 11-0236, Riad El-Solh, Beirut, 1107 2020, Lebanon.
Email: chindawi@aub.edu.lb

whose liberal ideal relies on a perception of Southern states being potentially dysfunctional, which in turn justifies an interventionist discourse with neocolonial overtones.

The problem with this interpretation of R2P is that it essentially ignores non-Western inputs on the concept, falling precisely into the trap that, many authors claim, vitiates it. Building upon a mix of critical, decolonial, postcolonial and Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) scholarship (section 1), this article questions what decolonizing a concept such as R2P implies. After acknowledging critical scholars' important denunciation of the colonial legacies embedded in a supposedly progressive doctrine (section 2), this article proposes a number of additional steps to decolonize R2P further. These require, first, to track down unwitting forms of Eurocentrism in the critical literature on R2P (section 3). Second, decolonizing R2P also requires us to write the 'rest' back into the genesis of R2P (section 4) and into the negotiation process that has been unfolding since the concept's emergence in 2001 (section 5). Engaging in a contrapuntal analysis that will write the 'rest' back into the shaping of R2P is not about 'bring[ing] the regions in' and assessing their reception of R2P (Gruffydd Jones, 2006: 16). It allows, more fundamentally, to 'bind [. . .] "things" [. . .] back together' (Blaney and Tickner, 2017: 308) and acknowledge the doctrine's co-constitution by West and 'rest', as well as the deeper struggles over universals hiding underneath the R2P debates. This, the article asserts, is what successive decolonizing layers allow us to expose.

Decolonizing at the crossroads of critical, decolonial, postcolonial and TWAIL scholarship

What does it mean to decolonize a concept?

Antony Anghie proposes decolonizing the concept of 'good governance' through the use of two complementary techniques: providing a postcolonial analysis of the emergence and the use of this concept, and contesting the conventional accounts of its development and utility (Anghie, 2006: 79). His '*critical* [his emphasis] engagement with existing histories of international law' allows him to 'excavate the connection of the good governance initiative with earlier, colonial enterprises and [. . .] illustrate how the use of the concept may serve to further what are, in essence, colonial relations' (2006: 81). Despite the concept's appearance to be 'a modern project originating in international human rights law', Anghie's analysis exposes its old, essentially colonial, lineage (2006: 83).

Revealing a concept's omissions and biases, as Anghie does for good governance, is perhaps the most frequent form of decolonial analysis. This is not, however, where decolonizing necessarily stops. One may go a step further and seek to replace the exposed biases by non-imperial histories or values. Gruffydd Jones writes: 'What is most important about decolonized knowledge is not simply that it might be about or written by non-European peoples. It is the possibility of revealing nonimperial histories, values, struggles, ideas, and ways of being' (2006: 17). Decolonizing thus involves a 'refus[al] to treat the European myth as a universal standard' (Ayers, cited in Gruffydd Jones, 2006: 18). This refusal may quite naturally translate into an overall suspicion of universalist claims, whose 'liberatory potential [. . .] must be viewed with skepticism' as they rely on idealized European standards that Third World people and nations will always be found wanting, which, in turn, may serve to justify interference in the name of humanitarian virtues (Anghie, 2006: 88, 85). But refusing to treat the European myth as a universal standard may also imply appropriating rather than rejecting universals: contesting the position of the West as 'foundation and principal agent of international order, morality and knowledge' (Grovogui, 2006: 29) opens the door to an exploration of other regions' moral and normative agency, which this article will aim to provide.

Decolonizing, in sum, is to a large extent about overcoming 'the enormous difficulty of according legitimacy to alternative modes of thinking and behavior' (Pasha, cited in Gruffydd Jones,

2006: 18) and critically engaging with these alternatives. In that sense, there is a substantial overlap between efforts to decolonize and efforts to overcome Eurocentrism, understood as a tendency to take 'Western agency and ideas as the only serious site of politics' and 'see the world in terms defined by the ontological distinctiveness of the West' (Sabaratnam, 2013: 270, 274).

Eurocentrism, as Wallerstein accurately warned, has many avatars, which are not easy to recognize, unpack and overcome (Sabaratnam, 2013: 259, 274). Attempting to expose the unwitting Eurocentric biases of critical scholarship, Muppidi (2005) shows how critics explicitly committed to rejecting imperialism may actually be as complicit in the production of a colonial order of governance as many of those they criticize because of their implicit silencing of the (non-Western) Other, whose designation as political objects with little agency they do not question.

Among the methods and strategies to fight what Wallerstein coined 'anti-Eurocentric Eurocentrism' (cited by Bilgin, 2017: 30) and decolonize the critique, one may thus think of efforts to write the 'rest' back into a history of political presence and relevance. Barkawi and Laffey's reinterpretation of the Cuban Missile Crisis, for example, highlights the largely discounted Cuban agency in the crisis, which serves to back their call for scholars to 'wak[e] up to the significance of the Melians and their kin', and study the ways in which the supposedly weak actually shape world politics (2006: 352). A decolonial and positional critique thus 'requires a careful engagement with the experience and critical political consciousness of those who are rendered as "objects" of power', (Sabaratnam, 2013: 272) the supposedly passive targets of Western interventions. It should be further noted, as Muppidi warns, that '[s]ubalterns might not just accept or reject [. . .] but also misread, misunderstand, appropriate and rearticulate the carefully defined scope of their putative responsibilities' (2005: 283).

Contrapuntal reading: Bridging the gap between the postcolonial critique and TWAIL

Engaging seriously with the experience and interpretation of the supposedly weak is one of the ways in which scholars could follow Pinar Bilgin's advice – inspired by Edward Said – to aspire to 'raise their contrapuntal awareness' (Bilgin, 2017: 66). While Said's 'contrapuntal reading' requires us to extend our reading of texts 'to include what was once forcibly excluded' (1993: 66–67), Bilgin proposes using this method in international relations in order to inquire 'into the constitutive relationships between Europeans and non-Europeans and locate in these relationships the beginnings of the ideas and institutions of humankind' (2017: 29). It is through this exposure and juxtaposition of connected histories that Bilgin argues international relations can become less Eurocentric. This focus on our 'intertwined and overlapping histories' (Bilgin, 2016: 140) in turn resonates with Barkawi and Laffey's call to 'analyse events, developments and processes in core and periphery together' in order to recognize the 'mutually constitutive character of world politics' that is lost when erroneously assuming that 'real, historically significant agency [. . .] only resides in the great powers' (2006: 349, 348, 337). As Bilgin explains in a paragraph most relevant to our case: 'Drawing on contrapuntal readings of the history of civilizations [. . .] would allow recognising the beginnings of these ideas and institutions that are presently viewed as almost exclusively "Western" inventions' (2017: 168).

According to Blaney and Tickner, 'taking difference seriously' requires acknowledging the existence of multiple reals, of multiple worlds, and 'reconceiv[ing] politics and science as among and between worlds [. . .]' (2017: 303, 309). Whereas this could be taken to imply that a concept such as R2P is bound to artificially construct a universal norm through the effacement of alternative, much richer realities and worlds, this article chooses a different path, inspired by Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL).

TWAIL scholarship has focused on the denunciation of international law's colonial heritage and the deconstruction of international law's uses that perpetuate a 'racialized hierarchy of international norms and institutions', on the one hand, while trying to propose an 'alternative normative legal edifice', on the other (Mutua, 2000: 31). As such, TWAIL has been examining precisely whether normative universality can be detached from imperial projects and subjugations. TWAIL scholars, such as B.S. Chimni, who consider that, its colonial legacy notwithstanding, 'international law also offers a protective shield, however fragile, to less powerful States in the international system', have been searching for a third way between liberal optimism on the one hand and 'the trap of legal nihilism', i.e. the temptation of 'a general and complete condemnation of contemporary international law' on the other (2006: 26). TWAIL scholars may do so by 'exploit[ing] the contradictions that mark the international legal system' in order to expose the hypocrisy of the first world, and ultimately, 'to prevent [it] from occupying the moral high ground' (Chimni, 2006: 24, 26; see also Badaru, 2008). At its core, therefore, TWAIL sees 'the sites of international law as spaces for endless negotiation [. . .]' (Baxi, 2006: 715), as spaces where alternative histories and agencies can be reconquered in an attempt to decolonize international law. TWAIL's denunciation of colonial legacies coupled with the search for a more just, alternative, legal framework and for a negotiated definition of universals seem very close from postcolonial efforts to write the 'rest' back into international processes and acknowledge that core ideas and institutions are born from humanity's 'intertwined and overlapping histories' (Bilgin, 2016: 140, quoting Edward Said).

Envisioning efforts to decolonize international relations, international law or concepts such as R2P as complex and perhaps endless endeavours, this article proposes a number of steps towards decolonizing the R2P concept more systematically than has been done so far. This requires not only confronting R2P's colonial heritage and biases – what many critical and postcolonial scholars have eloquently engaged in so far – but also tracking down Eurocentrism both among proponents of R2P and among its critics. The article will also draw on contrapuntal analysis to counter the widespread perception that R2P is an almost exclusively Western invention (Bilgin, 2017: 168) and show, on the contrary, how it has been shaped by the 'rest' as much – if not more – as by the 'West' (Acharya, 2016).

The R2P, humanitarian intervention and the first decolonizing efforts

Rise of a concept[1]

A widespread account of the R2P concept presents it as a remarkably successful instance of norm engineering: following the heated post-Cold War debate on the concept of (military) 'humanitarian intervention' that came to a head in 1999 over NATO's unauthorized intervention in Kosovo, a Canadian-funded initiative oversaw an international panel of academics and practitioners tour the world and ultimately come up in 2001 with a report that proposed the notion of 'Responsibility to Protect' (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, ICISS, 2001). The concept was presented as a way out of the conflict that opposed – primarily Western – proponents of a right to use military force in third countries for humanitarian purposes and the – more typically Southern – states and scholars worried about the ease with which such a right might be instrumentalized. And indeed, despite some states' initial reluctance,[2] the concept of R2P was endorsed unanimously at the 2005 World Summit and it has since become an inescapable phrase within the UN world; in addition to the frequent references to R2P in UN texts (at the time of writing, more than 80 Security Council and 13 General Assembly resolutions have referred to it),[3] a Secretary-General Special Adviser on R2P has been in post since 2007 and the Secretary-General has been, since 2009, drafting annual reports on R2P, seeking to 'operationalize' the concept and encouraging states to

participate in the debate. After an initial debate at the UN General Assembly in 2009, annual so-called 'informal interactive dialogues' took place the following years, and after much debate, R2P was once again discussed in the formal setting of the UN General Assembly in 2018 and 2019.

In its 2005 iteration, the most authoritative to date given its mode of adoption, the R2P concept focuses on the protection of populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. The responsibility for the protection of populations from those crimes is considered to lie first and foremost with the individual state. However, if needed, the 'international community' is also expected to step in to 'encourage and help States to exercise this responsibility'. It should primarily do so using 'appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means'. In the event that peaceful means prove 'inadequate and national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations [. . .]', the 2005 document specifies that the international community may take 'collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case-by-case basis' (United Nations, 2005: paragraph 139). The reference to Chapter VII of the UN Charter indicates the possibility of resorting to coercion, notably military action, but only with the approval of the Security Council.

In the Secretary-General's first report on R2P, (United Nations Secretary-General, 2009), Ban Ki-Moon proposed a three-pillar strategy that has since become an integral part of the R2P vocabulary. Under pillar 1 ('the protection responsibilities of the State'), the Secretary-General discussed the ways in which states could prevent the occurrence of the crimes covered by R2P. States should notably be party to existing legal 'instruments on human rights, international humanitarian law, [. . .] refugee law', or international criminal law (par. 17) and implement those texts in good faith. Under the second pillar ('international assistance and capacity-building'), the report discusses how and by whom states could be encouraged or supported to build 'specific capacities within societies that would make them less likely to travel the path to crimes related to the responsibility to protect' (par. 44). Such assistance encompasses dialogue, education, training programmes on human rights, conflict resolution activities and consent-based preventive deployment of peacekeeping forces (par. 41) to name just a few. The third pillar ('timely and decisive response'), generally considered to cover coercive responses to mass atrocities, notably the use of military force if authorized by the Security Council, continues to be the most contested dimension of the doctrine.

While neither the provisions of the World Summit Outcome document nor the Secretary-General's pillars could be considered to create new legal obligations, many states consider them to be a reminder and a reaffirmation of existing norms (United Nations General Assembly, 2009: 24–25). From such a perspective, while R2P remains a political concept, it is also a 'common sense concept' or 'a powerful political call for all States to abide by legal obligations already set forth in the Charter, in relevant human rights conventions and in international humanitarian law and other instruments'.[4]

R2P vs 'humanitarian intervention': Persistent confusions

R2P has already generated an impressive amount of academic literature, including several exhaustive handbooks and a journal entirely dedicated to its study (*Global Responsibility to Protect*). At the same time, the persistence of frequent references to the concept of 'humanitarian intervention' by a wide range of scholars (see for example Hehir, 2013; Koh, 2016; Pape, 2012; Pattison, 2010; or Stahn, 2014), as well as claims made in the literature that military interventions could or should at times take place without UN Security Council authorization (Koh, 2016: 1005–1006; Pattison, 2010: 196; Pape, 2012) – in clear violation of the 2005 document – speak to the difficulty of moving beyond the cleavages that the R2P concept was precisely supposed to overcome.

Typically, such arguments come from authors who do not seem to have fully accepted the version of R2P that has emerged from states' discussions, a version they think has been

disadvantageously watered down and stripped of its most effective feature – the possibility to use military force, with or without Security Council approval. Such positions are disproportionately present in the Western scholarship on R2P.

A number of critical and postcolonial scholars have also been routinely replacing R2P with the concept of 'humanitarian intervention'. They are not doing so as a way to lobby for a more muscular version of R2P. These authors' tendency to see R2P as a synonym for the earlier humanitarian intervention concept relies on their conviction that R2P is merely mimicking the concept it was supposed to supplant. In denouncing what they argue are implicit biases in the concept of R2P and in highlighting its colonial heritage, these scholars engage in what we may consider to be the first stage in the process of decolonizing R2P.

Decolonizing step one: Denouncing R2P's colonial heritage

Mahmood Mamdani, for example, argues that once violence has been named as genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, 'these crimes are said to justify a "humanitarian intervention"' (2010: 53), which he connects to the 'history of modern Western colonialism' (2010: 55). Fierke criticizes the choice that she considers R2P to present us with: action in the form of (usually military) intervention, or inaction. She regrets that '[t]he emphasis on the use of force to respond to security and humanitarian crises diverts attention away from questions about the extent to which policies of international institutions themselves, or the longer history of imperialism, have contributed to the conditions that gave rise to the crisis' (Fierke, 2015: 169). Tara McCormack also tends to use R2P and humanitarian intervention interchangeably. She considers that changing the terms of the debate leaves the core problem intact, which is 'the lack of consensus on the basic issue: when is it right to use force for humanitarian reason?' (2010: 76–77).

Overall, numerous critical authors consider that R2P 'continues to bear the weight of [colonial] legacies' and 'needs to be treated as part of an older and much wider global history of interventionism' (Mallavarapu, 2015: 306, 319). Analysing with postcolonial lenses 'the substitution of ideas of humanitarian intervention with the newer language of the "responsibility to protect"', Jessica White contends that R2P is erroneously portrayed 'as a break with previous norms of non-intervention' because 'for much of the world, non-intervention in internal affairs was never the norm'. In her view, similarly to the earlier/precolonial notion of 'standards of civilization', 'R2P can be seen as a reiteration of this attempt to develop standards against which the "non-civilized" will be found wanting' (2017: 309, 315, 316).

Robin Dunford and Michael Neu further deconstruct the notion that R2P contrasts with an international practice of non-intervention. R2P, they argue, 'does not bring into the picture potentially damaging practices of intervention that exist *already*', and it 'ignores the atrocity of mass avoidable death and suffering that takes place as a matter of routine' and is 'produced politically, in part by the actions of the "international community"' (2019: 4). Once these omissions are exposed, 'seemingly progressive' (2019: 16, citing Stavrianakis) R2P reveals itself as an actually 'regressive norm that serves to legitimise a moralistic form of militarism which hinders, rather than helps, attempts to address mass atrocity' (2019: 15). R2P, Dunford and Neu assert, 'pays attention only to the violence of purportedly barbaric others'. In so doing, it not only 'hid[es] from view the ordinary and everyday violence of would-be-saviours'. It also normalizes the 'belief [. . .] that virtue and militarism can somehow be made to work together to promote a better world' (2019: 17). This implicit assumption of 'good faith and innocence from the supposed moral custodian of the international community' establishes, according to Siba Grovogui, a 'central moral dualism', a 'contrast between victims and deliverers' that 'erroneously assumes that the international community is never responsible for the plight of those in need of deliverance' (Grovogui, 2019).

Such exposure of some of the R2P concept's erroneous assumptions and implicit biases lead many critical or postcolonial scholars to consider R2P a dangerous doctrine (Dunford and Neu, 2019), one that 'needs to be withdrawn' (Prashad, 2019).

Decolonizing step two: Tracking down Eurocentrism's avatars

The critical literature that analyses R2P's colonial biases is of crucial importance. Yet, one may supplement this critique – and thereby decolonize the concept further – by tracking down Eurocentrism's avatars not only among R2P's proponents, but also among its critics.

Tracking omissions in the critique

In this regard, the fact that most of R2P's critical or postcolonial detractors tend to equate R2P with the older concept of humanitarian (military) intervention reveals that these authors tend to grant little attention to the diplomatic process and political negotiations leading to the progressive construction of the R2P concept. As a result, many such analyses rely on a partial understanding of the concept, often based upon the 2001 ICISS report rather than more recent – and more authoritative – versions.

For example, in her 2009 article, Patricia Weber proposes a sophisticated Foucauldian analysis of R2P. One of her main arguments is 'that the doctrine changes what is political by making life political, in particular non-Western lives' (2009: 588). Weber's analysis, however, relies on the initial 2001 ICISS proposal rather than on the R2P concept as it has since evolved. In an otherwise erudite analysis of the 'practices of war that shape the Responsibility to Protect' published in 2013, Benjamin Meiches also uses the initial ICISS 2001 proposal. Just as Weber, Meiches seems to ignore the successive steps through which the R2P concept evolved over more than a decade. Similarly, in an otherwise excellent piece, Stephanie Fishel's (2013) understanding of the concept's construction seems – astonishingly – to have stopped in 2004. Even Navid Pourmokhtari, who acknowledges that the ICISS report first coining R2P 'signaled a departure from the principle of humanitarian intervention', fails to refer to any development of the doctrine post-2001 (2013: 1773), and the subsection he dedicates to the Responsibility to Protect essentially reads as a prolongation of his reflections on the concept of humanitarian intervention. It comes as no surprise that he, like many other critical or postcolonial scholars, ends up dismissing R2P as a Euro- or West-centric concept that 'neatly reproduces the exhausted colonial legacies of the past and, like new wine in old wineskins, reconstructs the same colonial underpinnings that have historically made sovereignty a conditional and discriminatory virtue for the non-West' (Pourmokhtari, 2013: 1785).

Dunford and Neu's work (2019) does acknowledge the Secretary-General's three pillars, and appears to be built on a more accurate understanding of the concept's various aspects. Yet in their urge to criticize the proponents of military interventions for humanitarian purposes, Dunford and Neu also neglect to mention the 2005 Outcome Document and end up focusing primarily on the concept's military dimension.

Writing the 'rest' out of the R2P narrative

In light of these omissions in the critique of R2P, it is important to recall that in international legal terms, the initial ICISS proposal of 2001 has little value. If one considers R2P to be an emerging norm of customary international law or even a – more vague – principle,[5] what counts is what a majority of states understand R2P to be, and how their belief in what R2P is or what it ought to be influences their policies and practices, both at the domestic and international levels: R2P is shaped

by states each time they refer to it both in the abstract and in connection with specific situations, as it is 'through constant contestation that [norms] are formed, challenged, and endure' (Williams, 2017: 538). As Christopher Daase points out in an analysis that would equally fit a TWAIL-ian or contrapuntal approach, this 'normative development is neither finished nor predetermined', and in order 'to assess the normative status of R2P in a [. . .] balanced way, critical voices have to be integrated into the analysis' (2015: 316). This article argues that the same could be said if one considers R2P to be a political – rather than a legal – commitment to protect individuals from a range of well-established international crimes.

Accordingly, the 2005 Summit Outcome Document (United Nations, 2005), rather than the ICISS report of 2001, is the primary document to consider when aiming to define what states understand R2P to be: the document's three R2P paragraphs represent the version of R2P that was adopted in 2005 without a vote by *all* UN member states, overcoming significant divergences. While being the concept's lowest common denominator, it is this initial consensus that states have continued to refer to until today.

Subsequent state discussions on R2P – be it during the yearly 'informal interactive dialogues' where they discuss the Secretary-General annual reports on R2P or in any other instance where states share their interpretation of the concept – should also be considered as they allow us to identify how a majority of states interpret R2P, and assess the principle's evolving scope and legal value. Most remarkably, despite a handful of states' recent denunciation of the 2005 consensus as no longer valid due to politicization and abuse,[6] debates reveal an overall 'widening consensus' on R2P, including countries 'that had previously been reticent or even hostile' (Mani and Weiss, 2011: 6). This evolution is often attributed in the Western scholarship to the success of R2P advocates. But as Oliver Stuenkel remarks in the case of Brazil, if this country came to accept the notion of R2P after having expressed scepticism towards the ICISS proposal, it is not because Brazil radically changed its position, but rather because the concept of R2P that was adopted in 2005 was significantly different (Stuenkel, 2016: 621). As we shall see below, the same is true for other Southern countries that initially opposed R2P, and it would therefore seem that, to a large extent, the 'widening consensus' on R2P is the result of the rest's ability to shape the concept.

Yet the postulation upon which a wide range of critical scholarship on R2P is based, that of a Western-engineered concept designed to justify new forms of domination, suggests that those critics have precisely fallen into the trap that they say perverts R2P: a form of West-centrism that assumes 'Western initiation of the original or base ideas and institutions' and omits non-European imaginaries of value, society and institutions (Grovogui, 2006: 30, 36). The fact that numerous critical scholars ignore actual evidence of non-Western agency in both the foundations and development of R2P implies that these scholars rely excessively on Western narratives of the concept, indirectly granting them more weight than their non-Western counterparts. The irony is that this scholarship's partial understanding of R2P not only affects the relevance and accuracy of their analysis: it ends up reinforcing the very aspect of the concept that these scholars claim is so problematic: its West-centrism.

Decolonizing step three: Writing the 'rest' back into R2P's genesis

Having identified unwitting forms of Eurocentrism in the critique of R2P, one may wish to correct these unintended biases. This article thus proposes, as a third decolonizing step, writing the 'rest' back into the genesis of R2P, in an effort to 'include what was once forcibly excluded' (Said, 1993: 66–67). Such an approach may help us to 'raise our contrapuntal awareness' in order to better grasp the intertwined beginnings of an idea such as R2P (Bilgin, 2017).

The presence of the 'rest' in R2P's early days

A frequent argument stresses the 'unique African role in the genesis of R2P', which in Edward Luck's words (former Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on R2P) even 'emerge[d] quite literally, from the soil and soul of Africa' (cited in Mabera and Spies, 2016: 211). This argument is generally backed up by a list of individual Africans who played 'key roles in conceptualizing the norm' (Mabera and Spies, 2016: 210), such as Francis Deng, Sudanese diplomat and scholar, who proposed the notion of 'sovereignty as responsibility' in a 1996 co-authored book and is sometimes designated as the 'intellectual father of R2P' (Adebajo, 2016: 1193); Algerian diplomat Mohamed Sahnoun who was the co-chair (with Australian Gareth Evans) of the ICISS that came up with the initial R2P proposal in 2001; South African and Nigerian Presidents Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Olusegun Obasanjo, each of whom contributed to the redefinition of sovereignty on the continent (Acharya, 2016; Adebajo, 2013, 2016); and the first two African Secretaries-General of the UN, Boutros Boutros-Ghali and Kofi Annan, who both promoted the reflection on sovereignty and intervention for protection purposes during their tenure.

Most authors are also keen to stress that the African Union (AU) was the first intergovernmental organization to turn from the notion of 'non-interference' to that of 'non-indifference' and to use language evocative of R2P in its Constitutive Act of 2000. The document outlines in Article 4(h) 'the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity' (Aning and Okyere, 2016: 339).

Thomas Jaye's work on ECOWAS (Economic Community of West Africa States) interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone (2008, 2016), as well as Kwesi Aning and Fiifi Edu-Afful's study of the Malian, Ivoirian and Libyan cases (2016), document well how African states have been, for several decades, wrestling with 'the practical meaning of, and the limits to, state sovereignty' (Jaye, 2008: 165). As Adebajo notes, 'the responsibility to react [has been] practiced by states such as Nigeria and South Africa along with Africa's regional bodies' well before 2005 and 'regional groups like the AU and ECOWAS were "in the vanguard of international efforts to develop both the principle of protection and the practical tools for achieving them"' (2013: 172, 173). Within these two main regional frameworks, African countries have been reconceiving sovereignty and regional security through successive treaties, mechanisms and documents, almost all of them adopted prior to the 2005 international endorsement of R2P, as well as in practice, through diplomatic and military interventions (Aning and Edu-Afful, 2016). These interventions have raised questions of ethics and legitimacy, along with reflections on the most appropriate means to protect (Jaye, 2008). The overall strong African preference for inter-African dialogue and mediation – i.e. peaceful and consent-based means – to prevent and react to conflicts and mass atrocities (Ifediora, 2016) has not precluded African states from engaging at times in more intrusive and coercive forms of intervention. In those instances, the motivation and credentials of intervening countries have been questioned (Aning and Edu-Afful, 2016: notably 121), showing that inter-African dynamics are not devoid of the ambiguities and accusations of double standards that have plagued interventions elsewhere. In any case, these debates and the practices that inspired them unmistakably point to a prominent African agency in these questions of sovereignty and interventions, which are at the heart of the discussion from which the R2P concept emerged.

Listing R2P as an 'idea from the rest' that is 'reshaping global order', Amitav Acharya asserts that

> while R2P is often cast in media and policy circles as a Western idea that is often rejected or viewed with hostility by much of the Global South, in reality it reflected the advocacy of limited sovereignty and humanitarian intervention by several prominent African leaders and diplomats aside from Deng in response to African problems. (Acharya, 2016: 1165)

That Africans have received little credit for the R2P idea despite the major role that they played in developing the concept is, as an ICISS insider told Acharya, '"a bit of intellectual racism"' (2016: 1165).

Expanding the geographical scope of the argument, Siba Grovogui claims that 'neither China nor African states consider the responsibility to protect to be essentially Western' (cited in Creutzveldt, 2013). Referring to a series of non-Western interventions that effectively stopped mass atrocities in Bangladesh (1971), Uganda (1979) and Cambodia (1979), Grovogui recalls that 'it wasn't the West' that intervened, but, respectively, India, Tanzania and Vietnam. This, for Grovogui, suggests that 'those kinds of understandings of responsibility, in the way they are framed today in the post-Cold War period, superimposes ideas of responsibility that were already there and were formulated in Bandung in 1955: differences between intervention and interference, the latter of which today comes coded as regime change, were actually hardly debated' (Creutzfeldt, 2013).

The relevance of the 'rest' as an agent of international ethics and morality

What Grovogui alludes to is the broader relevance of the 'rest' as an agent of international ethics and morality in ways that encompass but are not restricted to the R2P principle. The core tenets of R2P are indeed embedded in values that are neither new nor specific to the Western heritage. As Sahnoun rightly stresses, 'the value of helping one's neighbor', 'offering hospitality to strangers and solidarity with the weak and suffering' are inherent in all cultures, and 'not helping a person in distress is considered a crime in many societies' (2011: xxi). Rama Mani and Thomas Weiss agree that 'solidarity is the rudiment of all cultures', and conclude that R2P is not a project that started from scratch, but 'rather has built on this solid foundation' (2011: 226). Mutombo Nkulu-N'Sengha surveys a wide range of religious and spiritual traditions across space and time to argue that 'R2P reflects the fundamental spiritual values of universal solidarity, love and compassion that are widespread in ancient Africa and other indigenous spiritual traditions as well as in monotheistic religions' (2011: 51). The golden rule – variations of the theme of 'do for others what you want them to do for you' – in particular, 'powerfully echoes across all major religious and ancient spiritual traditions'; according to Nkulu-N'Sengha, 'it forms the first pillar of the normative foundation for R2P' (2011: 45). Overall, he argues that religions call upon conscience to resist evil (2011: 52) and thus, acting as 'moral compasses', provide the 'mindset [. . .] that gives humanity the conviction of doing the right thing' (2011: 51).

It appears that a great number of values generally cherished throughout the African continent are relevant to R2P and certainly contributed to the adoption of principles very similar to those of R2P in the African Union Constitutive Act of 2000, a year prior to the release of the ICISS report. The South African concept of 'ubuntu', for example, 'may tell us something about how Southern Africans view the international community, and the responsibilities of citizens and states towards one another' (Smith, 2012: 312). Karen Smith (now Special Adviser of the UN Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect) argues that unpacking this concept, which is difficult to translate but may be considered to represent a form of 'collective personhood', in which the individual's existence is intrinsically linked to that of the whole group and where interdependence forms the basis of humanism, 'could inform the notion of "responsibility to protect" and underline the role of morality in international affairs (that many Western theories dismiss as insignificant)' (2012: 311–312; see also Adebajo, 2013).

Investigating African solidarity with the French metropole under Nazi occupation during World War II, Siba Grovogui proposes an explanation of why the colonized, who 'could have abandoned France in a time of defeat and occupation', did not do so (2006: 100): when 'the

barbarism of war [. . .] confirmed flaws in European values, institutions and science' (2006: 142), people in the colonies acted upon a certain understanding of republicanism and humanism (Félix Eboué's 'humanisme sincère'), and they invested postwar ideals 'with new meaning, and thus new standards, rules and norms' (2006: 233). Whereas 'French republicanism was suffused with colonial and historicist views of others, their cultures, traditions, and habits, Eboué and other anti-colonialists revealed different philosophies and politics that dispensed with historicism, the actualized order, and their structures of subjectivity, morality, and agency' (2006: 144). Such examples allow Grovogui to make the case that 'modern political ideas, practices and their languages have not flown unidirectionally from a mythical Western center to equally mythical non-Western peripheries' (2006: 106). The sacrifice of Africans during the war confirms the fallacy of the appropriation of 'humanitarianism and its manifestations as properties of the West' and offers evidence that 'human solidarity and its axiomatic derivation – including humanitarian intervention [and, one could add, R2P] – are neither essentially modern nor necessarily Western institutions' (2006: 85). On the contrary, Grovogui convincingly posits that 'the moral character of African solidarity toward France during World War II far exceeded the modalities [. . .] of French (and Western) solidarity toward Africans for the entirety of their encounters' (2006: 85).

Decolonizing step four: Contrapuntal readings of a negotiation process

In addition to the R2P concept's non-Western, and more particularly African, roots, contrapuntal readings of R2P's evolution since it was first proposed by the ICISS in 2001 may allow us to continue exploring the 'mutually constitutive character' of the concept (Barkawi and Laffey, 2006: 348) in an attempt to decolonize it further. If, instead of assuming Western agency in the progressive consecration of the R2P principle, we look carefully at the evolving practices in a number of Southern countries, take their discourses seriously and put them in connection with the concept's evolution, it becomes possible to assess how different – at times competing – interpretations gradually and jointly shape the R2P principle in a process that will be quite familiar to students of international law. At this stage as well, this section will argue, Southern agency – which is in no way monolithic – is both obvious and substantial.

R2P's first decade: Shaping a principle

As Alex Bellamy (2009) describes, the R2P doctrine as conceived by the ICISS had to evolve substantially in order to convince reluctant states to accept it on the agenda of the 2005 World Summit. Insisting on R2P's connection to the existing frameworks of peacekeeping or protection of civilians instead of presenting it as a new norm, clarifying that the concept does not allow for military interventions without Security Council authorization and distancing it from the use of force proved essential points without which, Bellamy shows, there would have been no consensus in 2005 (2009: 66–97). These changes allowed a more decisive dissociation of the doctrine from the concept of 'humanitarian intervention' than the ICISS report.

Among the Southern countries that were initially most sceptical of the R2P concept, and largely opposed to its inclusion in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, were BRICS members Brazil, India and China. We agree with Ramesh Thakur's assertion that 'it is precisely the attributes that make [the BRICS] atypical' of developing countries in terms of population size, capacity and resources 'that give them the capacity to represent the views, interests and concerns of the typical developing countries in international forums' (2014: 1795). But although Thakur considers that

'the debate over R2P is not really a North–South issue', this section posits that the evolving Brazilian, Indian, Chinese and South African positions on the concept reveal much about Southern perspectives and dynamics in R2P-related negotiations.

First, Brazil, India and China's initial hostility to the ICISS proposal is connected to a number of traditions and values that are largely shared within the global South: a strong attachment to the principles of state sovereignty and non-intervention; a preference for multilateral, diplomatic, non-coercive and non-military forms of conflict resolution; a great wariness about the use of force as a means of protection coupled with a particular mistrust when such actions are Western-led; as well as an insistence on the development-oriented and long-term forms of mass atrocity prevention (see notably Fung, 2016; Herz, 2013; Kenkel, 2012; Virk, 2013). Kenkel (2012) and Virk (2013) further suggest that it is primarily peer pressure – i.e. the widespread support of states from the global South and emerging powers for R2P – that compelled Brazil and India to engage with the doctrine, accept its endorsement in 2005 and switch from rejection to a discussion over its implementation. Sarah Teitt depicts a similar evolution among countries from the Asia Pacific and South Asia regions, and argues that the progressive acceptance of R2P neither occurred because of a successful *weakening* (our emphasis) of the concept by countries such as China or India, nor because of an overall surrender to a Western-imposed doctrine. Asian countries' position toward R2P evolved, Teitt contends, because of their ability to 'shape [. . .] the scope and meaning of R2P to render it more compatible with regional security norms and practices' (2016: 380).

As a result of these processes, the R2P concept evolved both prior to and since its 2005 endorsement at the World Summit. And the struggle at work in international circles no longer opposes proponents or detractors of R2P: rather, it is a battle over the meaning of R2P in which numerous countries from the 'rest' have been advocating over their preferred interpretation.

Libyan turning points

It is against this background of increasing consensus on a collectively shaped version of R2P that the principle was invoked by the Security Council in March 2011. Expecting an imminent attack of government forces on the rebel-held town of Benghazi in Eastern Libya, which challenged Libyan leader Gadhafi had promised to crush with particular ferocity, the Council authorized member states to use 'all necessary means' – the well-known UN euphemism for military force – 'to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack [. . .]' in Libya (United Nations Security Council, 2011a: paragraph 4). The resolution was adopted by a narrow majority, with five countries abstaining: two of them permanent members (China and Russia), two further BRICS members (Brazil and India) and Germany.

To many self-proclaimed R2P advocates, the Libyan case represented R2P's 'coming of age' (Evans, 2011). Initial compromises faded rapidly, however, as a vast majority of states from the global South expressed their strong rejection of NATO's prolonged use of force in the name of R2P. Several states represented at the Security Council strongly disagreed with the argument – defended by intervening states – that the protection of civilians required the removal of the Libyan autocrat. The only BRICS country to have voted in favour of the resolution, South Africa, soon became one of the most vocal critics of an implementation that 'appear[ed] to go beyond' the resolution's 'letter and spirit'. In particular, it stressed that international actors should 'refrain from advancing political agendas that go beyond the protection of civilian mandates, including regime change' (United Nations Security Council, 2011b: 17–18). China advanced a similar critique, stating: '[t]here must be no attempt at regime change or involvement in civil war by any party under the guise of protecting civilians' (United Nations Security Council, 2011c: 20). Adekeye Adebajo insists that '[o]ne should not underestimate the widespread unease across the

global South caused by NATO's intervention in Libya'. He further recalls that most members of the 'Group of Friends of R2P', about half of them from the global South, 'have specifically opposed interventions such as the one in Libya' (2016: 1196).

Southern proposals

Yet, and this is crucial for our analysis, NATO's stretching of the resolution's mandate beyond what most Southern states found acceptable did not translate into a dismissal of the entire R2P normative enterprise, even among states that had initially rejected the doctrine. A few months into the war, Brazilian diplomats came up with the complementary concept of Responsibility while Protecting (RwP), which proposed a number of 'fundamental principles, parameters and procedures' designed to provide a clearer framework for R2P's implementation, in particular under pillar 3, and prevent its misuse by intervening countries (United Nations, 2011: paragraphs 10 and 11). Although the initiative generated critique from both Western and Southern countries – for opposing reasons – many countries, such as Ireland, Portugal, Luxembourg, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Argentina, Guatemala, Mexico, Egypt, Qatar, Morocco, Malaysia and Singapore, assessed RwP as a constructive proposal that raised important questions (Stuenkel, 2016: 626–627). A mix of domestic and structural factors soon led Brazil to disengage from the active promotion of its brainchild (Stefan, 2016: 103–108; Stuenkel, 2016: 628–630), but not before the RwP initiative had rallied a number of states, including influential ones, such as India and China, and played an important role in addressing R2P's legitimacy deficit at a time of deepening crisis (Stefan, 2016: 102). In addition to Brazil, other countries such as Ghana and Iran continued to refer to RwP during recent debates on R2P.[7]

Beyond its attachment to R2P's first pillar, insistence on the importance of securing 'host state or regional state consent' (Foot, 2016: 937), and care about the positions and cohesion of regional organizations (Fung, 2016: 34), China too has engaged with the doctrine's third pillar. This went beyond support for Brazilian RwP: in 2012, a Chinese scholar linked to the political sphere developed the idea of 'Responsible Protection' (RP) (Garwood-Gowers, 2016: 91–101). In a similar way to its Brazilian sister, 'semi-official' RP relies on the belief that military interventions may create more harm than they were designed to prevent, on the unacceptability of regime change, as well as on the need to truly exhaust all peaceful means before contemplating the use of military force (Garwood-Gowers, 2016: 103–111).

Such arguments have also figured prominently in South African statements post-Libya, notably during the February 2012 discussion on RwP, a concept the South African representative then declared to 'fully associate ourselves with' (Sangqu, 2012). As for India, although it has not itself engaged in normative initiatives, its own position has much in common with that of its BRICS counterparts: it has now accepted the R2P norm, including its third pillar, but continues to be extremely circumspect of the efficacy and desirability of using force for humanitarian purposes, and thus very reluctant to endorse coercive or military implementations (Ganguly, 2016; Virk, 2013).

Mutually constituted R2P

The RwP and RP proposals, along with their endorsement or acknowledgement by numerous Southern states, can be read as an 'affirmation that R2P is not just a norm coming from and used by the West, but one that belongs to the Global South as well' (Stefan, 2016: 101). Moreover, the fact that the Brazilian and Chinese proposals engaged precisely with the doctrine's third pillar – i.e. the dimensions of R2P that these countries, along with a majority of Southern states,

feel least comfortable with – represents a 'constructive contestation to influence the development and evolution of an existing norm toward a framing of this norm that is more aligned with its own values and interests', and indicates a readiness to act as genuine 'norm shapers' (Stefan, 2016: 95).

Similarly, participation of non-Western states in R2P debates should neither be interpreted as a blind endorsement nor as a lip service to a Western-engineered doctrine. As Jacinta O'Hagan rightly argues, this growing participation, in particular by countries initially reluctant, 'signals a desire [. . .] to influence the development of the concept and implementation of R2P, and a willingness to exercise some control over the discourse of R2P itself' (2015: 302). A closer look at these debates, and at the discourse of a number of countries from the global South, may allow us to better grasp the 'unexpectedly different' (Bilgin, 2017: 118) understandings of R2P hiding beneath the surface of a now largely mainstreamed doctrine. As a matter of example, it is interesting to see that one of the countries most sceptical of the concept – Iran – has been the only Middle Eastern state to participate in every single interactive dialogue on R2P, reaffirming, year after year, its position on the doctrine, thereby contributing to shape it. Such participation seems to illustrate not only the mutually constituted nature of the R2P doctrine, but also the guarantees provided by the 'multilateral acceptance of the concept' against abuse in that it 'diminishes the force of those who seek [. . .] to interpret it unilaterally. They lose legitimacy and it is easier to criticize them', as Brazilian diplomat Gelson Fonseca would explain (2010, cited in Kenkel, 2012: 27).

Despite persisting divergences, the recent debates on R2P show a remarkable degree of convergence on the aspects of R2P that many countries from the global South have been insisting on for years: across regions and political systems, state representatives highlight the non-coercive aspects of R2P (pillars 1 and 2) and its connection to the principles of conflict prevention and the rejection of war, to the development of International Criminal Law and the fight against genocide, to the protection of civilians during armed conflicts, to peacekeeping and to the protection of refugees. Such a broad, all-encompassing understanding of R2P clearly departs from the narrow focus on military implementations of the third pillar that continues to prevail in Western academic and diplomatic circles. And it is to a large extend proof of the mutually constituted nature of the concept, which in its most widely shared interpretation, is compatible with the principles of state sovereignty and extreme caution in the use of military force, so cherished in the global South.

Conclusion: Decolonial R2P and struggles over universals

Although a number of Western states and scholars continue to view R2P through colonial lenses, they have not been able to impose their narrow and militaristic understanding of the doctrine on the rest of the world. As the yearly debates on R2P unmistakably attest, the doctrine continues to be a 'site of contestation' (Welsh, 2013), an emerging principle mutually constituted by the West and the 'rest'. Once one stops focusing unwarrantedly on Western narratives, it becomes possible to consider numerous instances where Southern actors and countries exerted significant influence on the concept, both in its genesis and since the ICISS proposal. The endorsement of a modified version of the concept in 2005, Southern reactions to NATO's abuse of R2P in Libya, along with the much more frequent inclusion of R2P language post-Libya, and the fact that inclusion of this language became much easier to negotiate (Gifkins, 2016), are, to a large extent, the outcome of Southern states' agency, an agency they seem to be very well aware of.

What has been at work, in the processes we have described, is a contestation of the notion that Western states are the natural champions of international morality, accompanied by concrete attempts to further develop the R2P doctrine in order to protect it from abuse. Former Brazilian

Foreign Minister Patriota wrote of the reactions to the RwP proposal that 'not everyone seemed ready to accept that an emerging power could call for a higher moral standard in this debate' (cited in Stefan, 2016: 104). Assertions of morality and representations of universals may indeed well be the actual, deeper point of contention in discussions around R2P.

Yet some critical scholarship has overwhelmingly ignored Southern agency along with the struggle over universals at the heart of R2P negotiations. Decolonizing R2P further, this article has argued, requires critical scholars to expose forms of 'anti-Eurocentric Eurocentrism', and write the 'rest' back into the R2P story. R2P so defined (or shall we call it 'decolonial R2P'?) is shaped to a large extent by Southern actors, decisively focused on preventive and consent-based measures – though it does recognize the possible use of coercion and military means when all other means have been exhausted – and is critical of the notion that Western liberal democratic states are good international citizens (Souter, 2016). At its core, therefore, decolonial R2P is part of an effort to rethink and reclaim universals. Critical literature that explores, for example, the much more generous protection of refugees by Southern countries than their Western counterparts, (Souter, 2016: 806; Welsh, 2017), less powerful states' leadership towards implementation of R2P (Ralph and Gifkins, 2017: 630), the applicability of the doctrine to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict (Pison Hindawi, 2019) or the way in which the provision of arms and military support contributes to the commission of war crimes or other mass atrocities, can contribute to this effort.

Acknowledgements

As any such work, this article benefited from countless sources of inspiration and support. I am grateful for all of these. I wish to particularly thank Pinar Bilgin and the anonymous reviewers for their invaluable advice on earlier versions of this piece; *Security Dialogue*'s editors for their encouragements and their trust; Himadeep Muppidi for his help and inspiration; Oum Lina for logistics and so much more; and the Arab Council for the Social Sciences for supporting this work through the attribution of a research scholarship. Special final thanks to JHB, whose provocations helped me begin my journey beyond the 'eurocentrically correct'.

Funding

The author disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This article was made possible (in part) through the support of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences with funding from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the International Development Research Center (IDRC) for the programme on Critical Security Studies in the Arab World. The statements made and views expressed are solely the responsibility of the author.

ORCID iD

Coralie Pison Hindawi https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5981-0241

Notes

1. Although R2P is referred to by numerous authors as a doctrine, disagreements persist among states and scholars as to what R2P actually is. In an attempt to work with an interpretation of R2P that corresponds to what a majority of states consider it to be, this article will follow the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect and refer to R2P as a concept or as a principle following its unanimous endorsement during the 2005 World Summit. On the implications of the label used, see Bellamy, 2009: 4–7.
2. Most prominently China, Russia and the United States, but also Algeria, Egypt and India (Bellamy, 2009: 74–88).
3. Global Center for the Responsibility to Protect, https://www.globalr2p.org/what-is-r2p/, accessed on 12 March 2021.
4. See the statements of New Zealand and Brazil (United Nations General Assembly, 2009: 25 and 13).

5. This refers to a norm of international law created through an informal process – unlike treaties – that is based upon state practice and *opinio juris*. Alternatively, R2P is sometimes seen as a sort of 'catalyst', reminding members of the international community of their pre-existing obligations to protect individuals from a number of mass atrocities (Boisson de Chazournes, 2010).
6. See the statements of Russia, Sudan, Syria and Venezuela during the 2018 and 2019 UN General Assembly Debates on R2P. A/72/PV.105, 2 July 2018: 4; 22; A/73/PV.93, 27 June 2019: 26 and A/73/PV.94: 21.
7. See Iran's statement at the 2017 Informal Interactive Dialogue on the Responsibility to Protect, http://s156658.gridserver.com/media/files/2017-iid-iran.pdf (accessed on 23 March 2021), and Brazil and Ghana's statements to the 2018 UN General Assembly Debate on the Responsibility to Protect; A/72/PV.99, 25 June 2018.

References

Acharya A (2016) 'Idea-shift': How ideas from the rest are reshaping global order. *Third World Quarterly* 37(7): 1156–1170.

Adebajo A (2013) Nigeria and South Africa. On the concept 'every African is his brother's keeper'. In: Serrano M and Weiss T (eds) *The International Politics of Human Rights. Rallying to the R2P Cause?* London and New York: Routledge, 171–191.

Adebajo A (2016) The revolt against the West: Intervention and sovereignty. *Third World Quarterly* 37(7): 1187–1202.

Anghie A (2006) Decolonizing the concept of 'good governance'. In: Gruffydd Jones B (ed.) *Decolonizing International Relations*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 79–93.

Aning K and Edu-Afful F (2016) African agency in R2P: Interventions by African Union and ECOWAS in Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, and Libya. *International Studies Review* 18(1): 120–133.

Aning K and Okyere F (2016) The African Union. In: Bellamy A and Dunne T (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the Responsibility to Protect*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 355–372.

Badaru O (2008) Examining the utility of third world approaches to international law for international human rights law. *International Community Law Review* 10(4): 379–387.

Barkawi T and Laffey M (2006) The postcolonial moment in security studies. *Review of International Studies* 32(2): 329–352.

Baxi U (2006) What may the 'Third World' expect from international law? *Third World Quarterly* 27(5): 713–725.

Bellamy A (2009) *Responsibility to Protect. The Global Effort to End Mass Atrocities*. Cambridge: Polity.

Bilgin P (2016) 'Contrapuntal reading' as a method, an ethos, and a metaphor for global IR. *International Studies Review* 18(1): 134–146.

Bilgin P (2017) *The International in Security, Security in the International*. London and New York: Routledge.

Blaney D and Tickner A (2017) Worlding, ontological politics and the possibility of a decolonial IR. *Millenium* 45(3): 293–311.

Boisson de Chazournes L (2010) Responsibility to protect: Reflecting solidarity? In: Wolfrum R and Kojima C (eds) *Solidarity: A Structural Principle of International Law*. Heidelberg: Springer, 93–122.

Chimni BS (2006) Third World approaches to international law: A manifesto. *International Community Law Review* 8(1): 3–27.

Creutzfeldt B (2013) Theory talk #57: Siba Grovogui on IR as theology, reading Kant badly, and the incapacity of Western political theory to travel very far in non-Western contexts. *Theory Talks*. Available at: http://www.theory-talks.org/2013/08/theory-talk-57.html (accessed 1 June 2021).

Daase C (2015) Security, intervention, and the responsibility to protect: Transforming the state by reinterpreting sovereignty. In: Leibfried S, Huber E, Lange M, Levy JD and Stephens JD (eds) *Oxford Handbook of Transformations of the State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 305–317.

Dunford R and Neu M (2019) The Responsibility to Protect in a world of already existing intervention. *European Journal of International Relations* 25(4): 1080–1102.

Evans G (2011) The Responsibility to Protect comes of age. *Project Syndicate*, 26 October. Available at: https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/the-responsibility-to-protect-comes-of-age (accessed 1 June 2021).

Fierke K (2015) *Critical Approaches to International Security*. Cambridge: Polity.

Fischel S (2013) Theorizing violence in the Responsibility to Protect. *Critical Studies on Security* 1(2): 204–218.

Foot R (2016) The state, development, and humanitarianism. China's shaping of the trajectory of R2P. In: Bellamy A and Dunne T (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the Responsibility to Protect*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 932–947.

Fung C (2016) Global South solidarity? China, regional organizations and intervention in the Libyan and Syrian civil wars. *Third World Quarterly* 37(1): 33–50.

Ganguly S (2016) India and the Responsibility to Protect. *International Relations* 30(3): 362–374.

Garwood-Gowers A (2016) China's 'Responsible Protection' concept: Reinterpreting the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and military intervention for humanitarian purposes. *Asian Journal of International Law* 6(1): 89–118.

Gifkins J (2016) R2P in the UN Security Council: Darfur, Libya and beyond. *Cooperation and Conflict* 51(2): 148–165.

Grovogui S (2006) *Beyond Eurocentrism and Anarchy: Memories of International Order and Institutions*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Grovogui S (2019) Protecting Palestinians: Postcolonial reminiscences. In: Pison Hindawi C (ed.) *Responsibility to Protect and Palestine*. The Beirut Forum. Available at: http://www.thebeirutforum.com/grovogui (accessed 1 June 2021).

Gruffydd Jones B (ed.) (2006) *Decolonizing International Relations*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

Hehir A (2013) *Humanitarian Intervention. An Introduction*. 2nd edition. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Herz M (2013) Brazil and R2P, responsibility while protecting. In: Serrano M and Weiss T (eds) *The International Politics of Human Rights. Rallying to the R2P Cause?* London and New York: Routledge, 107–128.

Ifediora O F (2016) A regional responsibility to protect? Towards 'enhancing regional action' in Africa. *Global Responsibility to Protect* 8(2–3): 270–293.

International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) (2001) *The Responsibility to Protect*. Ottawa: International Development Research Center. Available at: https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/18432/IDL-18432.pdf (accessed 1 June 2021).

Jaye T (2008) The security culture of ECOWAS: Origins, development and the challenge of child trafficking. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 26(2): 151–168.

Jaye T (2016) ECOWAS intervention in Liberia and Sierra Leone: Lessons for the evolving APSA. In: Aboagye F (ed.) *A Comprehensive Review of African Conflicts and Regional Interventions*. African Union and APSTA, 93–108.

Kenkel K (2012) Brazil and R2P. Does taking responsibility mean using force? *Global Responsibility to Protect* 4(1): 5–32.

Koh H (2016) The war powers and humanitarian intervention. *Houston Law Review* 53(4): 971–1033.

Mabera F and Spies Y (2016) How well does R2P travel beyond the West? In: Bellamy A and Dunne T (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the Responsibility to Protect*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 208–226.

McCormack T (2010) The Responsibility to Protect and the end of the Western century. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 4(1): 69–82.

Mallavarapu S (2015) Colonialism and the Responsibility to Protect. In: Thakur R and Maley W (eds) *Theorizing the Responsibility to Protect*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 305–322.

Mamdani M (2010) Responsibility to Protect or right to punish? *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 4(1): 53–67.

Mani R and Weiss T (eds) (2011) *Responsibility to Protect. Cultural Perspectives in the Global South*. London and New York: Routledge.

Meiches B (2013) The Responsibility to Protect and luxurious wars. *Critical Studies on Security* 1(2): 219–237.

Muppidi H (2005) Colonial and postcolonial global governance. In: Barnett M and Duvall R (eds) *Power in Global Governance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 273–293.

Mutua M (2000) What is TWAIL? *Proceedings of the ASIL Annual Meeting*, 94: 31–38.

Nkulu-N'Sengha M (2011) Religion, spirituality, and R2P in a global village. In: Mani R and Weiss T (eds) *Responsibility to Protect. Cultural Perspectives in the Global South*. London and New York: Routledge, 25–63.

O'Hagan J (2015) The Responsibility to Protect: A Western idea? In: Thakur R and Maley W (eds) *Theorizing the Responsibility to Protect*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 285–304.

Pape R (2012) When duty calls: A pragmatic standard of humanitarian intervention. *International Security* 37(1): 41–80.

Pattison J (2010) *Humanitarian Intervention and the Responsibility to Protect. Who Should Intervene?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pison Hindawi C (ed.) (2019) *Responsibility to Protect and Palestine*. The Beirut Forum. Available at: http://www.thebeirutforum.com/responsibility-to-protect-and-palestine (accessed 1 June 2021).

Pourmokhtari N (2013) A postcolonial critique of state sovereignty in IR: The contradictory legacy of a 'West-centric' discipline. *Third World Quarterly* 34(10): 1767–1793.

Prashad V (2019) All member states. In: Pison Hindawi C (ed.) *Responsibility to Protect and Palestine*. The Beirut Forum. Available at: http://www.thebeirutforum.com/prashad-1 (accessed 1 June 2021).

Ralph J and Gifkins J (2017) The purpose of United Nations Security Council practice: Contesting competence claims in the normative context created by the Responsibility to Protect. *European Journal of International Relations* 23(3): 630–653.

Sabaratnam M (2013) Avatars of Eurocentrism in the critique of the liberal peace. *Security Dialogue* 44(3): 259–278.

Sahnoun M (2011) Foreword. In: Mani R and Weiss T (eds) *Responsibility to Protect. Cultural Perspectives in the Global South*. London and New York: Routledge, xx–xxii.

Said E (1993) *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Knopf.

Sangqu B (2012) Statement by Ambassador Baso Sangqu, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations at the Informal meeting hosted by the Minister of External Relations of Brazil, 21 February, New York. Available at: http://cpdoc.fgv.br/sites/default/files/2012%2002%2021%20
Statement%20-%20South%20Africa.pdf (accessed 1 June 2021).

Smith K (2012) Contrived boundaries, kinship and Ubuntu: A (South) African view of 'the international'. In: Tickner A and Blaney D (eds) *Thinking IR Differently*. London and New York: Routledge, 301–321.

Souter J (2016) Good international citizenship and special responsibilities to protect refugees. *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 18(4): 795–811.

Stahn C (2014) Between law-breaking and law-making: Syria, humanitarian intervention and 'what the law ought to be'. *Journal of Conflict and Security Law* 19(1): 25–48.

Stefan C (2016) On non-Western norm shapers: Brazil and the Responsibility while Protecting. *European Journal of International Security* 2(1): 88–110.

Stuenkel O (2016) Responsibility while Protecting. In: Bellamy A and Dunne T (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the Responsibility to Protect*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 620–637.

Teitt S (2016) Asia Pacific and South Asia. In: Bellamy A and Dunne T (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the Responsibility to Protect*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 373–390.

Thakur R (2014) How representative are BRICS? *Third World Quarterly* 35(10): 1791–1808.

United Nations (2005) World Summit Outcome Document, A/RES/60/124, 24 October. Available at: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/556636?ln=en (accessed 1 June 2021).

United Nations (2011) Letter dated 9 November 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil addressed to the Secretary-General, A/66/551 – S/2011/701, 11 November. Available at: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/716109?ln=en (accessed 1 June 2021).

United Nations General Assembly (2009) Sixty-third session, *Official Records 97th plenary meeting*, A/63/PV.97, 23 July. Available at: https://undocs.org/A/63/PV.97 (accessed 1 June 2021).

United Nations Secretary-General (2009) *Implementing the Responsibility to Protect*, Report, 12 January, A/63/677. Available at: https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/blog/document/report-of-the-secretary-general-implementing-the-responsibility-to-protect/ (accessed 1 June 2021).
United Nations Security Council (2011a) Resolution 1973, 17 March, S/RES/1973. Available at: https://www.undocs.org/S/RES/1973%20(2011) (accessed 1 June 2021).
United Nations Security Council (2011b) Proceedings 6531st meeting, 10 May, S/PV.6531. Available at: https://undocs.org/en/S/PV.6531 (accessed 1 June 2021).
United Nations Security Council (2011c) Proceedings 6531st meeting, 10 May, S/PV.6531. Available at: https://undocs.org/en/S/PV.6531 (accessed 1 June 2021).
Virk K (2013) India and R2P's burdens of dissent and accommodation. In: Serrano M and Weiss T (eds) *The International Politics of Human Rights. Rallying to the R2P Cause?* London and New York: Routledge, 129–147.
Weber P (2009) Too political or not political enough? A Foucauldian reading of the Responsibility to Protect. *The International Journal of Human Rights* 13(4): 581–590.
Welsh J (2013) Norm contestation and the Responsibility to Protect. *Global Responsibility to Protect* 5(4): 365–396.
Welsh J (2017) Lecture. At: *Responsibility to Protect Civilians: International and Regional Perspectives Symposium*, American University of Beirut, 26 January.
White J (2017) 'Always on top'? The Responsibility to Protect and the persistence of colonialism. In: Singh J and Kim D (eds) *The Postcolonial World*. London and New York: Routledge, 308–324.
Williams A (2017) The Responsibility to Protect and institutional change. *Global Governance* 23(4): 537–544.

Coralie Pison Hindawi is associate professor at the American University of Beirut and a member of the Critical Studies on Security in the Arab Region network. She has been working on the use of coercion in the Middle Eastern context, notably in the field of disarmament. She has also explored the individual dimension of the Responsibility to Protect doctrine. In addition to her book on Iraq and chapters in edited volumes (*Oxford Handbook on the Responsibility to Protect, The United Nations and the Arab World*), her recent work has been published in *Alternatives, Critical Studies on Security, Global Governance, Journal for Conflict and Security Law* and *Third World Quarterly*. The virtual round table she edited on the Responsibility to Protect's relevance for the situation in Palestine was published on the recently launched *Beirut Forum* website. Email: chindawi@aub.edu.lb