From Principle to Practice:
Security, Risk, Justice and the Operationalization of R2P

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Editor's Introductory Note:

A gem for the academic reader (see the pdf version with references), and also worthwhile for general readers who want at least to sense the profound efforts many intellectuals and government leaders are making to give our suffering world a new concept of global security. Thus, see R 2 P, a major new concept created by a former Australian Foreign Minister and a Muslim diplomat.

Abstract

A stronger foundation for making genocide prevention a foreign and defence policy priority should, in my view, rest on appeals to the maintenance of an international system of norms, justice, and laws grounded in the utility of this system for states, and the maintenance of states' reputations, rather than strictly national-level security considerations. This is particularly true if the goal is to encourage the robust implementation of R 2 P for the purpose of preventing and stopping genocide and other atrocities in countries that are considered by the major powers in the international system to be either of little strategic value or of "hyper" strategic value such that intervention is considered to be too dangerous a proposition for all involved.

Prescriptions for genocide prevention spend little to not time contemplating the possibility that acting to ameliorate risk may unintentionally create greater risks and harm. While there recommendations sound attractive in many ways they essentially require that societies vulnerable to genocide must be remade not only in the west's imagination, but better. Most western countries, including the United States and Canada, would not live up to the proposed standards.

In Syria, action will come not because the murder of innocents threatens the west militarily, economically, socially, or its populations' health and physical wellbeing. It will come, if it does, because the Assad regime has violated peremptory norms against the

wholesale slaughter of civilians including the deliberate targeting of children for summary execution. As in Kosovo, this violation will be seen as an act that erodes (but does not destroy) fundamental values and, if left unanswered, will further damage the reputations of powerful bystander states that already have the blood of Bosnian Muslims, Rwandan Tutsis, Sudanese, Darfurese and others on their conscience.

Introduction

Formulated at the turn of the millennium, the Responsibility to Protect doctrine (R2P) moved away from the notion of humanitarian intervention by outsiders to prevent atrocities, to an emphasis on the responsibility of states and the international community as a whole to prevent and stop atrocity crimes. Although the central principles of R2P - that states must uphold the human rights of populations under their control, that the continued recognition of the sovereignty of states is contingent on fulfilling this function, and that the international community can act to safeguard vulnerable populations if host states cannot or will not do so - has become widely accepted, *R2P has not found its way into the actual practices of most states and international organizations*.

Two reports focusing on genocide prevention, *Preventing Genocide: A Blueprint for U.S. Policymakers* by the Genocide Prevention Task Force, co-chaired by Madeleine Albright and William Cohen, and the *Will to Intervene Project* by the Montreal Institute of Genocide and Human Rights Studies co-chaired by Frank Chalk and Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Romeo Dallaire, try to make R2P generally, and genocide and mass atrocity prevention specifically, a foreign policy priority by eschewing what the authors believe have been ineffective moral appeals and instead conceptualizing genocide prevention as not just a pressing national security issue but a security threat.

While W2i has not received much attention, what is commonly referred to as the Genocide Prevention Task Force Report (also known as the Albright-Cohen report) has been the subject of debate and analysis amongst genocide and other scholars. In a 2009 symposium published in the journal *Genocide Studies and Prevention*[1] for instance, the Genocide Prevention Task Force Report was both praised as a pragmatic first step toward institutionalizing R2P and genocide prevention (Straus) and criticized as a sterile exercise in recycling old ideas and personnel (Hirsch), as ethnocentric and a possible veil for American neo-imperialist ambitions (Feierstein), and as a set of recommendations that ride roughshod over international law (Mennecke). For this article I will leave aside the question of whether the Genocide Prevention Task Force Report and W2i are "good" or "bad" reports, and instead ask the question: can framing

genocide prevention as a national security threat lead to prevention and generate the political will for governments to take up their respective "responsibilities to protect"?

On the face of it, the answer would seem to be yes. After all, purely moral or humanitarian appeals have not produced consistent and robust genocide prevention. To get the attention of political leaders and foreign and defence policy-makers do we not need to "speak their language" by appealing to national security? What better way to motivate planning and action than to tie genocide prevention to one of the most basic functions of the state: warding off external threats to the state's survival and way of life.

The problem with this approach is that framing genocide prevention as a security issue/threat does not conform to the way in which security is conceptualized in international relations as either traditional military security threats, processes of "securitization," or as risk and uncertainty. If the security logic of the Genocide Prevention Task Force and W2i reports are not grounded in prevailing understandings of security, then the case for genocide prevention as an on-going foreign policy concern will necessitate the use of both *security and moral considerations*, particularly if considerations of morality and justice can be harnessed to the utility of the international system of norms and law as Thucydides and Grotius suggested long ago.

A stronger foundation for making genocide prevention a foreign and defence policy priority should, in my view, rest on appeals to the maintenance of an international system of norms, justice, and laws grounded in the utility of this system for states, and the maintenance of states' reputations, rather than strictly national-level security considerations. This is particularly true if the goal is to encourage the robust implementation of R2P for the purpose of preventing and stopping genocide and other atrocities in countries that are considered by the major powers in the international system to be either of little strategic value or of "hyper" strategic value such that intervention is considered to be too dangerous a proposition for all involved.

The Responsibility to Protect Doctrine, The Genocide Prevention Task Force Report, and the Will to Intervene Report

Responsibility to Protect

Born in the aftermath of the international community's complete failure to prevent or stop the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, the initial definition of the international community's "responsibility to protect" crafted by the International Commission on International and State Sovereignty (ICISS) argued that while the responsibility to protect a given population lies "first and foremost" with the state which controls that population, there is a "residual responsibility" to protect shared by all states in the international system. This residual responsibility is triggered "when a particular state is clearly either unwilling or unable to fulfill its responsibility to protect or is itself the actual perpetrator of crimes or

atrocities, or where people living outside a particular state are directly threatened by actions taking place there." Further, "the substance of the responsibility to protect is the provision of life-supporting protection and assistance to populations at risk."[2]

The responsibility to protect is said to be comprised of three separate "sub" responsibilities: to react, prevent, and rebuild. Drawing on the ICISS report the three paragraphs directly related to R2P in the World Summit Outcome document passed unanimously by UN members states in October 2005 reaffirmed that each member state has a "responsibility to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity" and from incitement to these crimes. If states "manifestly" fail to protect their own populations from these crimes, UN members states are committed "to take collective action in a timely and decisive manner through the Security Council in accordance with the Charter."[3]

More recently the United Nations Secretary General has outlined three non-sequentially and equally important pillars upon which R2P is based: that states must use appropriate means to protect their own populations from the perpetration and incitement of the four crimes, that states are committed to help each other protect their populations through building capacity and providing relevant assistance in times of crisis that may precede the outbreak of mass atrocities, and that states have assumed a collective responsibility to intervene if necessary under Chapters VI, VII, and VIII of the UN Charter as appropriate when a state fails to or cannot protect populations under their control.

Much has been written, praiseful and not, about the R2P doctrine. I will not interrogate the R2P doctrine itself here or this body of literature but rather how the doctrine has been operationalized in the Genocide Task Force and Will to Intervene reports, focusing on the security logic that underpins the reports.

Preventing Genocide: A Blueprint for U.S. Policymakers (The Genocide Prevention Task Force)

As its title demonstrates, the Genocide Prevention Task Force Report is a set of recommendations aimed exclusively at American leaders, civilian and military policy-makers, and institutions. Noting that R2P is in part the inspiration for the report, the authors suggest that "there is a growing understanding...that states have a basic responsibility to protect their citizens from genocide and mass atrocities" and that "[n]o government has the right to use national sovereignty as a shield behind which it can murder its own people. The challenge for the world community is not only to state this principle, but to implement it."[4]

To make the case for transforming R2P from principle into practice and thus making genocide prevention specifically a foreign and defence priority for the United States, the co-authors state on the very first page that their report is inspired by three key considerations. The first is a normative one, with the report noting that "[p]eople of conscience rightly demand: 'never again'" as such crimes constitute "a direct assault on universal human values, including, most fundamentally, the right to life." One of only a few explicit references in the report to the normative argument for genocide prevention, the report immediately goes on to evoke a second and much more central concern found explicitly and implicitly throughout its pages: that "[g]enocide and mass atrocities also threaten core U.S. national interests" since genocides "feed on and fuel other threats in weak and corrupt states, with dangerous spillover effects that know no boundaries." The third concern is reputational. If the United States fails to plan for and engage in successful genocide prevention around the globe, U.S. "credibility and leadership" will be at stake.[5]

The report fleshes out the genocide prevention as security argument later in a section titled "Making the Case," asserting that genocide "fuels instability" in weak and undemocratic states and that these kinds of states engage in terrorist recruitment, human trafficking, and experience civil strife, all of which have "damaging spill-over effects for the entire globe." Further, the report identifies refugee flows and the humanitarian responses required to deal with persons fleeing genocidal violence and other atrocities as another national interest issue, noting that the United States often ends up footing much of the bill to feed, house, and care for refugees. It is in the United States' own interest to pay less up front to prevent genocide than more later to deal with its aftermath the report argues. Finally, the report links the United States' national interest and security again to the maintenance of *America's reputation internationally, warning that if the country does not establish the capability and will to prevent genocide, the international community will come to see the United States as "bystanders to genocide"* which would in turn undermine the United States' ability to be a "global leader" and "respected as an international partner if we cannot take the necessary steps to avoid one of the greatest scourges of mankind."[6] Appeals to national interest and security are explicitly invoked here as a means of generating the necessary "political will" to take genocide prevention seriously and to overcome what the report characterizes as political (namely Congressional) and bureaucratic obstacles and inertia.

Having made the security argument for genocide prevention, the main sections of the report proceed to outline institutional and funding reforms designed to integrate genocide prevention into US foreign, defence, and development policy-making. Co-chaired by two senior Clinton administration officials with input from other former analysts and policy-makers from the United States foreign and defence communities, the report is grounded in the unstated assumption that if the correct institutional

structures are created a robust capacity for and commitment to genocide prevention will follow. In very general terms the report recommends the following: political leaders, specifically the American president, must make genocide prevention a top priority and that relevant Congressional committees do the same while also making stable and adequate funding available for genocide prevention and intervention to stop genocide when needed; the creation of early warning strategies and intelligence capabilities within existing intelligence agencies, the State Department, and USAID needed to identify possible outbreaks of genocidal violence; the implementation of a rather broad set of development assistance policies focused on democratization (including protection of human rights and minority rights) and economic development in vulnerable states as an early prevention (as opposed to intervention) strategy; the use of a carrot and stick "preventive diplomacy" strategy by State Department and other agencies with potentially genocidal regimes in order to halt and reverse escalation toward exterminationist violence; the crafting of plans by the Defence Department for either the unilateral or multilateral use of force to stop genocide once the killing has already begun; and cooperation with allies and international organizations to strengthen anti-genocide norms and institutions designed to prevention and punish genocide.

Mobilizing the Will to Intervene: Leadership and Action to Prevent Mass Atrocities

Unlike the Genocide Prevention Task Force Report which retains, albeit in muted form, normative along with security rationales for genocide prevention, the *Mobilizing the Will to Intervene: Leadership and Action to Prevent Mass Atrocities* (W2i) report explicitly rejects a strategy for building political will for genocide prevention on moral and legal considerations (although the authors embrace such considerations in principle) saying such *initial appeals have repeatedly fallen on deaf ears from Rwanda, to the early days of the Bosnian conflict, and more recently in Darfur*. Instead the report makes a sustained and forceful claim that genocide prevention, or what they more generally call humanitarian intervention to prevent mass atrocities, must be conceptualized and articulated to and by politicians, policy-makers, and the public in terms of rational and national self-interest in the form of a series of national security threats, broadly construed, at home and abroad.[7] Based on brief reviews of why the international community failed so miserably in Rwanda[8] but managed to act decisively in Kosovo[9] gleaned mostly from interviews with numerous American and Canadian officials, the authors argue that if we want governments to get serious about genocide and mass atrocity prevention, we need to stop appealing exclusively to the injustice of mass atrocities and instead appeal to cold, hard *Realpolitik*.

Part I of the report argues at length that mass atrocities and post-atrocity/conflict situations in far off lands pose real threats to Canadians, Americans, (and by extension other western societies) and their respective governments all of which are articulated in the report as "costs" including: medical/health/social costs from the risk of pandemics

emanating from atrocity-torn countries and regions; national security costs resulting from the creation of safe havens for piracy and terrorism in countries and regions that experience genocide and other atrocities; financial and social costs produced by refugees flows; economic costs resulting from loss of access to strategic resources; and the political cost of alienating electoral constituencies at home. To eliminate or diminish these costs and thus protect ourselves from the fall-out of any or all of these scenarios, governments and civil society must work together to prevent atrocities in the future or stop mass atrocities that are already occurring in order to ensure our own health, security, and economic prosperity.[10]

The report identifies four pillars around which the "will to intervene" should be mobilized: enabling leadership in government particularly at the Presidential/Prime Ministerial and cabinet levels; enhancing coordination between government departments and ministries; building capacity for effective prevention and intervention within government; and ensuring knowledge through a bottom-up process in which Canadian and American civil society groups as well as the media inform government of, and press for, the need to engage in humanitarian intervention.[11] Similar to the Genocide Prevention Task Force Report, the first three pillars of W2i involve the introduction of new roles, structures, and processes in the executive, legislature, and the civil service to make R2P a priority both in terms of policy importance and capacity to act.

The Problem of Appealing to a Logic of Security

There is a certain attractiveness to the idea that we need to speak to government in the security-oriented cost-benefit language to which it is most accustomed and to which the Genocide Prevention Task Force and W2i authors hope government may be more likely to listen. But what, exactly, is the conception of security to which the reports appeal? Each say in a rather perfunctory way that in a globalized world they take security not just to include military security but also economic, physical/health, and even reputational security, but beyond this the key concept upon which each report rests its case is left curiously undefined. More problematically, if we read each report through the lens of three conceptions of security found in the security studies literature - traditional security, the process of securitization, security as risk and uncertainty - we can see that the logic of security articulated in both reports fails to make a compelling case for genocide/atrocity prevention and the more general operationalization of R2P along national security lines.

Traditional Security

This conception of security is based on the existence of threats to security "out there" in the real world that must be discerned through rational calculations of what does and does not objectively pose a threat to the survival of the state and society and that must

be confronted through the application of power (mostly military) resources. Although neither report makes clear what conception of security it relies upon, it is evident that the GPTF and W2i reports see the threats posed by unrestrained genocidal violence around the globe as objective threats that must be countered with the application of policies and the resources of the state. To be sure, while traditional security sees security threats as military and political only, the two reports take a more expansive view of the source of objective threats such that the follow-on effects of genocide in far of lands can pose objective threats at home. Further, both reports see genocide not as a military threat or a threat to military assets (although military assets and personnel may be put in harms way to stop genocide and thus may impose costs on military institutions and personnel), but as a threat to other sectors such as the economy, the health and well-being of citizens, or the political fortunes of Canadian and American politicians.

Let us now examine how the logic of linking genocide prevention to an expanded understanding of objective security threats fit with the arguments and evidence provided by the authors. Since W2i makes the strongest and most detailed security argument, I will concentrate on this report specifically.

If we look at recent history, we can see that the kinds of security threats to Canada and the United States that the W2i report outlines may either not exist or at the very least may not be severe enough to convince government that a robust implementation of R2P is warranted. Take the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide in the Democratic Republic of Congo for example. W2i's thesis would predict that the on-going conflict in the eastern part of the DRC (which at one time involved not just the remnants of the Rwandan army that perpetrated the genocide in 1994 but several neighbouring African states and now has devolved into warlordism across various local and regional armed groups) would have sparked local epidemics and then pandemics that reached North America and elsewhere, a serious security crisis that involved the strategic interests of Canada and the United States, a safe haven for transnational terrorists, economic hardships here at home due to the loss of access to economic resources, and the alienation of diaspora communities from the Great Lakes region of Africa that would take out their frustrations over the inaction of federal-level parties and politicians in the United States and Canada at the ballot box.

But if we look at the impact of over a decade of misery experienced in the DRC on the vital interests of the Canadian and American governments and ordinary Canadians and Americans, the effect is almost negligible. While the immediate post-Rwanda genocide period in eastern DRC did see a terrible cholera epidemic in the refugee camps, the epidemic did not spread outside the region even in the era of international air travel, largely because refugee flows were concentrated in the states surrounding Rwanda (DRC, Tanzania, and Uganda). Further, since cholera is a water-born disease which

can be easily treated, this particular kind of illness does not pose the kind of threat to populations the report envisions. The report, of course, cites the possibility of the spread of other diseases such as typhus, typhoid, influenza, or HIV, but the authors leave out the fact that in western countries infants and children are vaccinated against many diseases that are endemic in the developing world (e.g., typhoid, measles). HIV, meanwhile is a blood-born disease that is transmitted either through sexual intercourse, infected needles and other medical equipment, or blood transfusions that has now, thanks to public education about transmission and advances in medical treatment, become a containable and manageable condition in most western countries.

To be sure, it is indisputable that the Great Lakes region of Africa is beset by insecurity and the perpetration of atrocities, but none of this has put Canadian and American national security and strategic interests at risk because of the geographical remoteness of the conflict zone. Similarly, eastern DRC has not become, as in the case of Somalia or Yemen, an outpost for anti-western jihadi terrorist groups. As for economic interests, while it is true that the DRC has vast quantities of valuable mineral resources, so does North America, which is why lack of access to resources from central Africa does not seem to be hurting the economic performance of the United States or Canada (the recent recession was mostly self-inflicted). Even the mineral coltan, which is used in the manufacturing of cellphones, is still ending up in our abundant supply of hand-held gadgetry even though several armed groups are vying for control of this particular resource.

Next, diaspora communities from Central Africa, just like diaspora communities from many other parts of the world, have not had an appreciable effect on electoral outcomes in either the United States or Canada whether or not they vote according to their preference for greater humanitarian intervention in their countries of origin. Voting behaviour in general is not usually motivated primarily by foreign policy or international humanitarian issues. And even when it is, most diaspora and immigrant communities are too small and thinly dispersed across geographically defined electoral ridings/districts/the electoral college to affect federal and/or presidential elections in Canada or the United States.

Finally, the two cases examined in the W2i report - Rwanda and Kosovo - unwittingly reconfirm that what I will call the "Goldilocks thesis." Countries that experience genocide and which are of geo-strategic or economic value and thus lie within the "Goldilocks zone" are much more likely to capture the attention of the international community (e.g., Libya); while countries that are not strategic (e.g., Rwanda) or are too strategic, in that they have very powerful friends and neighbours (e.g., Syria), lie outside the Goldilocks zone and are thus unlikely to be seen as pressing national security issues no matter how badly behaved the regime in question may be. It is made painfully clear in the report that neither the American nor the Canadian governments were motivated to

intervene in Rwandan for moral or strategic considerations. The report repeatedly references comments by American and Canadian officials that Rwanda was of no value and therefore of no strategic interest, or by the logic of the report, threat.

By contrast the report cites officials and politicians in both countries claiming that Kosovo required intervention because of its strategic location in Europe, the need to make NATO effective and relevant in a post-Cold War world, and in the Canadian case, the need to appear relevant within the NATO alliance and to be seen as an admittedly small but important team player. None of the reasons offered by interviewees in the Kosovo case suggest a wider conception of security advocated in the report. Of course, one of the goals of the report is to change perceptions of what constitutes a challenge to national security. But to make this kind of argument the report needs to offer clearer evidence that such larger risks exist or that governments have in the past responded to security threats, foreign and potentially domestic, from mass atrocity situations. Neither the Kosovo case nor the occurrence of atrocities and genocidal violence in the DRC or Darfur, for example, suggest that the kinds of threats the report argues leaders and bureaucrats should be worried about really do menace the North American continent or are seen by these same leaders and bureaucrats to be important. Governments may be persuaded to intervene to prevent or stop mass atrocities in far-off places but only if those places, like Earth in our solar system, lie within the Goldilocks zone because they are already of strategic and economic interest to us. What the case studies in the W2i report make clear is that if genocide is occurring, or is in the offing, in some corner of the world where Canadian or American interests are not already engaged, or if the target population is poor and doesn't travel much internationally thereby keeping the risk of a global pandemic low, the cavalry is not likely to be coming.

The Securitization of Threat

If traditional conceptions of security do not work particularly well to make the case for operationalizing R2P and genocide prevention in the Genocide Prevention Task Force and W2i reports, perhaps a critical security approach would be more appropriate. As formulated by Buzan, Waever, and de Wilde in their seminal book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis,*[12] securitization eschews an understanding of security as exclusively military "objective" threats "out there" posed mostly by other states. Instead, security is conceptualized as an intersubjective process by which *perceived* threats are constructed as threats to the military, political, economic, or social sectors of a state. For Buzan and his co-authors, the process of securitization involves the articulation of a perceived threat through a "speech act" or security discourse in which a particular issue is said to pose an existential threat to a "referent object" (e.g., the state, society, or a country's territory), and that responding to the threat must involve extraordinary measures above and beyond the usual rules and procedures of "normal" politics.[13] While an almost infinite variety of non-traditional security issues across any or all

sectors of society can be articulated as existential threats to a referent object (e.g., the so-called "war on drugs" and the threat drug trafficking and use causes to society or environmental security and the threat it causes to all of humankind), a threat is not successfully "securitized" until an audience accepts that the issue is indeed a threat. Without the acceptance of the audience we only have what Buzan et. al. call a "securitizing move."[14] Arguing that threats are not objective and that there is no metre-stick by which we can measure objective threats, the authors emphasize that securitization is all about the construction of shared meaning.

> In security discourse, an issue is dramatized and presented as an issue of supreme priority; thus, by labelling it as *security*, an agent claims a need for and right to treat it by extraordinary means. For the analyst to grasp this act, the task is not to assess some objective threats that "really " endanger some object to be defended or secured; rather, it is to understand the processes of constructing a shared understanding of what is to be considered and collectively responded to as a threat.[15]

There are three discernible areas in which the Genocide Task Force and W2i reports conceptualize genocide prevention as a security threat that appear to fit the securitization approach. First, an expanded view of security that includes the fall-out of unchecked genocidal violence such as refugee flows and the costs of funding humanitarian aid, possible economic costs resulting from loss of access to resources, regional instability, and epidemics and pandemics, is consonant with Buzan and his co-authors' assertion that securitization ranges across several sectors beyond the military-political. Even within the political sector, Buzan et. al. argue that political security threats include - along with threats to sovereignty, governing legitimacy and authority - threats to international regimes, "international society" (left undefined) and the rules, norms, and institutions that underpin international regimes.[16] Although both reports only say so in passing, genocide is clearly a violation not only of international criminal laws prohibiting what Churchill once called "the crimes of crimes," it also violates a central peremptory norms that unpins human rights and international legal regimes.

Second, both reports can be read as a sustained exercise in securitization, or more accurately in pleading with the Canadian and American governments, and the Canadian Prime Minister and American president in particular, to securitize genocide prevention. Specifically, the authors of both reports call on the Prime Minister and President to use their respective offices to engage in what Buzan et. al. call "speech acts," in some cases quite literally as in the Speech from the Throne and the State of the Union Address, to communicate the threats associated with genocidal violence a world away to government actors and institutions and the public at home. Moreover, the bevy of institutional procedural and funding reforms meant to embed the will and capacity to prevent genocide in government institutions mirrors Buzan et. al.'s argument that securitization can be *ad hoc* but also institutionalized when a threat is securitized as persistent or likely to reoccur with some regularity. Once an issue as been securitized

as an on-going threat with which the state must regularly deal, institutions are created or altered and rules and procedures are implemented to deal with the threat. The institutionalization of a securitized threat means that henceforth the simple speech act of uttering the word "defence" implicitly means for the speaker and audience "security" and "priority." The authors of the Genocide Prevention Task Force Report and W2i hope that the institutionalization of "genocide" as a securitized threat will also come to mean "security" and "priority," or as the reports would say, the "political will" to prevent and stop genocide.

Finally, Buzanian securitization would seem to dispense with the criticism I raised earlier about the lack of objective threats posed by genocides in countries outside the "Goldilocks zone" to the security, even broadly construed, of Canada and the United States. As a constructivist framework, successful securitization needn't, and in fact cannot, constitute an "objective" measurable threat. So long as a speech act can successfully construct an issue as an existential threat to a referent object requiring extraordinary measures to neutralize it and this threat construction is accepted by the intended audience as such, the issue becomes a security threat. Thus so long as Canadian and American government leaders and policy-makers can *frame* genocidal violence elsewhere as an existential threat to the Canadian and/or American state, economy, or society, *and* other policy-makers, institutions, and the Canadian and American publics *accept* this message, then genocide, whereever it happens, *is* a threat. But within this very same process of intersubjective meaning construction lie two compelling problems with reading the reports through the lens of securitization.

The first problem is posed by the requirement that threats be securitized as "existential." Consciously drawing on traditional security studies, Buzan and his colleagues assert that international security "is about survival." There is, however, no universal standard for assessing whether a threat is existential or not since threats "can only be understood in relation to the particular character of the referent object in question."[17] What constitutes an existential threat, i.e., a threat to survival, varies across different sectors: the survival of the state or the armed forces, for example, in the military sector; the sovereignty or ideology of the state, or international regimes in the political sector; the viability of a sector of the economy or the economic system itself; collective identities, cultural and other practices in the societal sector; specific referent objects in the environment (e.g., whales, air quality, rain forests) or a habitable planet in the environmental sector.[18]

Despite the fact that threats are perceived and constructed in the securitization school and that there is variation in what constitutes an existential threat relative to the referent object across different sectors of the state and society, the threat cannot simply be of any magnitude, it must be about survival. As noted in my critique of the W2i report within a traditional security framework, it would be hard to credibly argue, or in the

words of the securitization approach, to "securitize" through a speech act the consequences of genocidal violence abroad as reasonably constituting an existential security threat to the military, political, economic, social or environmental security of Canada and the United States, particularly in countries that fall outside the Goldilocks zone. In fact, with respect to the military sector, Buzan et. al. specifically say that peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention cannot be constructed as existential threats because they do not imperil the survival of the state or its armed forces and because they occur as "support for routine world order activities."[19]

Which brings us to the second problem. Aside from constructing threats as existential, securitization also requires that the response to securitized threats be "extraordinary," going beyond the established rules and procedures of normal politics. Sensibly, neither report argues that the Canadian or American governments should pursue R2P or genocide prevention through some equivalent of the Bush Administration's legally suspect approach to the so-called "war on terror" replete with extraordinary rendition and "enhanced interrogation" techniques (aka torture), or President Obama's policy of selecting human targets on "kill lists" and authorizing their subsequent liquidation via Predator drone or Seal Team Six. The authors of the Genocide Task Force Report and W2i firmly ground their recommendations either in already existing agencies and procedures or the introduction of relatively few new institutions and processes that are meant to be integrated into existing institutional frameworks and designed to regularize R2P and genocide prevention as standard, not extraordinary, operating procedures. What the reports seem to be recommending is not so much securitization (existential threats and extraordinary responses) but what Buzan et. al. call "politicization": making an issue "part of public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocations…"[20] That the Genocide Prevention Task Force and W2i authors do not call for extraordinary measures is not a failing of the reports. Indeed it is a strength as it shows great respect for the democratic process and the rule of law. It does, however, undermine our ability to make sense of the security logic contained within the reports according to a securitization model and calls into question whether we can say that there is a coherent security, as opposed to a political logic, underpinning the reports.

Risk and Uncertainty

Given the inability of traditional and critical security conceptions of threat to make the security logic of the GPTF and W2i reports comprehensible, perhaps we should abandon the notion of threat altogether and instead think about the reports as grounded in risk and uncertainty. While the reports themselves speak of "threats" and "costs" linked explicitly to national "security," is it possible to read the reports as framing the need for robust genocide prevention as a way of reducing risk and uncertainty in an increasingly interconnected world? A relatively new approach in security studies, the risk and uncertainty literature is a direct response to two developments. The first, and

most general, is globalization in the form of increasing interconnections and interactions between states and other international and transnational actors across a number of different sectors coupled with the blurring of the line between domestic and international economics, politics, cultural and social practices such that multiple actors can be effected, positively and negatively, by changes and problems elsewhere in the world. The second development is the advent of transnational terrorism perpetrated by diffuse networks of non-state actors operating with or along side so-called "home-grown" terrorists, both of whom operate in, and exploit the interconnectedness of, a globalized world.

What we face in the post 9/11 world is not threats or insecurity in the present, but what sociologist Ulrich Beck coined a "risk society" faced with an almost limitless array of often incalculable risks in the future that flow from and engender uncertainty. Threats, like those encountered during the Cold War, occur in the present, are rooted in time and space, and involve a specific identifiable danger posed by an equally specific and identifiable actor (usually a state) that has the capacity to inflict, and the intent to cause, harm.[21] Risk in a globalized late modern world, on the other hand, transcends time and space forcing political leaders and policy-makers to "foresee and control the future consequences of human activity."[22]

The empirically or policy-oriented literature on risk sees risk as harmful outcomes ranging in severity, irreversibility, uniqueness, numbers affected, and temporal, spacial, and knock-on effects.[23] For constructivist scholars, risk, as with security and threat in the securitization literature, cannot be objectively defined. What constitutes a risk and the probability of that risk is constructed through meaning attached to the interaction of actors and intersubjective knowledge grounded in cultural beliefs, norms, and biases,[24] or epistemic communities.[25] In addition, for Kessler and Daase, risk and uncertainty are the prelude to catastrophe.[26] Thus a mass casualty terrorist attack, for example, remains a risk, the certainty of which we do not know or sometimes cannot even conceive, until the attack occurs. Once the attack occurs it ceases to be a risk and becomes a catastrophe.

The concept of risk is inextricably linked to uncertainty to such an extend that the two concepts cannot meaningfully stand alone. *Since the risks the world faces in the post-Cold War, post 9/11 period are fed by the interdependencies of a globalized world in which space (both distance and borders) no longer presents the barriers it used to, and in which non-state transnational terrorists can exploit the vulnerabilities of an interconnected world*, calculating what risks we face and how likely they are to occur involves a considerable amount of uncertainty. This is what former US Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld likely meant when he publicly referred to what he called "known unknowns" and "unknown unknowns." Such "unknowns" are produced by the unknowability and thus uncertainty of a complex globalized modern society[27] in which

late modernity itself produces untold benefits and risks. How we respond to risk and uncertainty is equally difficult to calculate because the very nature of globalized late modernity means that responding to risk, however conceived, may itself be risky since we cannot know with certainty the results of our actions. Here the law of unintended, and possibly very negative, consequences looms large.

Thus we are faced with an unenviable choice: either we can respond to what we think is or might be a risk without knowing in advance if we will make things worse and in what way(s), or we can respond by not acting and then face the harm that a potential but not certain risk may inflict without knowing what harm(s) will be inflicted or if harm will be inflicted at all. Thus, not only do we face risk in the future, our very actions and inactions in response to risk are fraught with further risk and uncertainty. The American invasion of Iraq to find fictitious weapons of mass destruction and protect the United States from future attacks by Al-Qaeda, for example, produced by the mid-2000s one of the largest jihadi terrorist training grounds on the planet. Moreover, the way in which we think and talk about risk can itself be dangerous, turning fairly improbable events (so-called "wild cards" or "discontinuous scenarios") into the possible or even probable.[28]

The GPTF and W2i reports do not consciously ascribe to a risk and uncertainty approach. Indeed the authors write with much certainty about the threats or risks, present and future, that they think are the byproducts of unfettered genocidal destruction. Nonetheless, there are echoes of the risk and uncertainty approach in the reports. First, the list of negative outcomes associated with genocidal violence that are said to affect Canada, the United States, and by extension other western states include many of the general risks the uncertainty and risk literature identifies as possible future problems that states will need to confront in the future. These include refugee flows, epidemics and pandemics, regional destabilization resulting from intra-state conflicts, and terrorism. Second, the risk and uncertainty literature and the GPTF and W2i reports all trace the ability of these negative outcomes to reach our shores to the structures and technologies of late globalized modernity that, in the words of journalist Thomas Friedman, "shrink the globe." One example is transcontinental travel via commercial aircraft which can spread infectious diseases, refugees fleeing genocidal violence, and terrorists around the globe in a matter of days. Another is highly interconnected and interdependent trade and financial systems that can bring economic hardship as the result of downturns in the business cycle, financial mismanagement, or the loss of access to resources and markets in societies riven by conflict and genocide.

As with the traditional and critical security approaches, however, the security logic of the GPTF and W2i reports does not conform to the logic of risk and uncertainty. First, the reports do not see the negative effects of genocide on Canadian and American society to be potential risks in the future but actual tangible threats in the here and now. This is so despite the dearth of current or historical evidence in the reports that genocides

outside of Goldilocks zone have/do or have been/are perceived to have such an effect. Interestingly, if the reports had adopted the risk and uncertainty perspective, they would each stand on a firmer logical foundation since much of what the reports say by way of the effects of genocidal violence on Canada and the United States is speculative. The authors wager that in a globalized world there are future risks to North America of the negative effects of genocide in far off lands without knowing if the risks are really there, how serious the risks are, or being able to calculate the effects of Canadian and American prevention and intervention strategies and whether they will ameliorate or exacerbate these risks. In short, GPTF and W2i treat the global effects of genocide as Rumsfeldian "known knowns" (i.e. things we know we know), not "known unknowns" or "unknown unknowns" as the risk and uncertainty approach would suggest.

Second, risk and security scholars are clear that risk in a globalized world transcends time and space. But as I have already noted, the W2i report's own case studies of Rwanda and Kosovo unwittingly demonstrate that when it comes to genocidal violence against defenceless civilians and its effects on the Global North, space does matters. Western states only see genocide elsewhere as a threat or risk to themselves if the society in question is geographically close enough or strategic enough for the knock-on or secondary effects of genocide or other atrocities to reach us. The 2011 UN-backed NATO intervention in Libya is a case in point. The European members of NATO were the most keen to confront Gaddafi's regime because they feared an influx of refugees across the Mediterranean (i.e., a regional, not global flow or refugees) and loss of access to the top supplier of oil to Europe. Geographically insulated from these effects, the United States was slower to respond and when it finally did so it was primarily to reconfirm its commitment to its European allies but only just, choosing to "lead from behind." Canada, likewise, participated for reputational reasons: to show Canada's continuing relevance to NATO and its ability to be a fighting, not peacekeeping, middle power.

Similarly, the United States engaged in what some R2P enthusiasts call an R2P mission in Kenya following the post-election violence in 2008. At first blush one might say that in this case space surely mattered far less than in Libya. But we must remember that Kenya has become a strategic regional ally of the United States and other western governments in the fight against the Al-Qaeda affiliated Al-Shabab in neighbouring Somalia. The quick restoration of political stability in Kenya was a crucial part of a the larger "war of terror." While ethnically motivated political violence in Kenya had no demonstrably direct negative effect on the United States and other western countries (i.e., a primary effect of atrocity), its strategic location near the Horn of Africa and its role as an ally in the fight against transnational terrorism likely led American policy-makers to conclude that should Kenya devolve into internal ethnic conflict, Al-Shabab would go unchecked regionally and perhaps even globally (i.e., a secondary effect of atrocity) in a way that very well could reach North American shores.

Third, as noted, some scholars in the risk and uncertainty literature argue that risk is the prelude to harm which, when it actually occurs, is not just any level of harm but catastrophe. While the GPTF and W2i reports tells us in varying degrees of specificity what they think the harms are for Canada and the United States of genocide committed abroad, neither report claims that these harms would be "catastrophic." As the Hebrew word "Shoah" signifies for the destruction of the Jews of Europe, genocide is literally a "catastrophe" for its victims. It is not for the rest of us, or if it is, it is a moral catastrophe usually linked to our own lack of response as in Rwanda in 1994. That states and other actors in the international system ought to prevent genocide or stop the catastrophic destruction of the victims once it begins is absolutely an important matter but one which cannot be credibly framed as a catastrophe for those of us beyond the society or possibly region in which it occurs. The logic of the risk and uncertainty literature in this regard is too tightly tied to mass casualty terrorism aimed at the west to apply to the after-effects of genocide executed elsewhere.

The Real Risks of Prevention Causing More Destruction

Finally, while the authors of the GPTF and W2i reports offer several well-meaning policy prescriptions for genocide prevention, they spend little to no time contemplating the possibility, identified by the risk and uncertainty approach, that acting to ameliorate risk may unintentionally create greater risks and harm. The potential for an unhappy ending to genocide prevention and R2P more generally is two-fold. First, both reports, but particularly the GPTF, suggest that long-term prevention to avoid outbreaks of genocidal violence in the first place requires foreign development assistance that should include democratization, robust legal and policy protection for human rights and minority group rights as well as economic development strategies to foster economic growth, the redistribution of wealth, and equitable access to economic opportunities for all groups in society.[29] While recommendations for prevention sound attractive in many ways they essentially require that societies vulnerable to genocide must be remade not only in the west's imagine, but better. Most western countries, including the United States and Canada, would not live up to the proposed standards set out in the GPTF report. More importantly, the steps needed to be taken to bring about such wholesale changes might require what would effectively amount to slow-motion regime change or what could turn out to be, or at least look like, serial meddling in the political, legal, economic, social and cultural affairs of other states in the name of long-term genocide prevention. Not only does long-term prevention strategies risk actual or perceived neo-colonialism, as the risk and uncertainty literature points out, we cannot be sure that our efforts will produce the outcomes we hope and may in fact risk unintended consequences beyond our control that either do not prevent genocide in the long-run or may make it more likely.

As genocide scholar Michael Mann and others have argued, the beginning phase of democratization can increase the potential for genocidal violence, particularly if the democratic idea of the "demos" (the people") becomes intertwined with the "ethnos" (race or tribe).[30] Interestingly the GPTF report acknowledges this possibility but then proceeds to make the case for democratization despite these concerns. Second, short-term diplomatic, economic, and military interventions face a similar problem in that they may unintentionally inflame potential or actual genocidal situations. Further, exits are risky since there may be no guarantee that the killing, either as the resumption of the genocide itself or reprisal killings if the perpetrator regime has been removed, will not begin anew once international forces leave.

Justice as Utility: A Possible Solution

Given the foregoing analysis, we are faced with a conundrum. If the case for operationalizing R2P and genocide prevention set out in the Genocide Prevention Task Force and Will to Intervene reports cannot logically rest on appeals to self-regarding insecurity, threats, or risks and uncertainty, particularly in societies that fall outside of the Goldilocks zone, and if the invocation of moral duties to protect human rights and human life imperilled by abusive regimes continues to fall on deaf ears, how do we make the case for genocide prevention? The answer is to retain the idea, found in both reports, that appeals should be made to politicians' and policy-makers' concern with threats to national interests, but change what is identified as being threatened by unfettered genocidal violence. We also need to bring the normative back in but in a way that, again, appeals to national self-interest.

Specifically, I suggest that genocide prevention based on appeals to national self-interest should be tied not the west's own safety and security since these things are not really at stake, but to international norms, institutions, laws, and regimes, similar to but shy of the securitization argument about existential political threats to international values. Norms and institutions are of value to most state in the international system since they are necessary for the functioning of the globalized world in terms of regulating interactions and fostering cooperation between states which in turn benefits states themselves. Moreover, the practice of upholding, or at least trying to uphold human rights norms, laws, and regimes, which genocide clearly violates, are important to liberal democracies' reputations as good international citizens and because they reflect liberal democratic values and "way of life."

While this may seem like another way of making a purely normative argument that states should stop genocide because upholding human rights norms are the morally right thing to do, what I am suggesting here is that genocide prevention should be pitched to leaders and policy-makers as necessary to protect important self-interests, namely, international reputational concerns[31] and the continued existence and

functioning of key international institutions that governments consider to be of benefit and value to themselves. Evidence presented in the W2i report concerning the successful intervention in Kosovo will help to illustrate the point.

In their review of Canadian government decision-making in the Kosovo case, the authors make mention of the perceived importance of showing NATO's relevance and capacity to act in the immediate post-Cold War world and Canada's concern that its own and NATO's reputations were at stake. Bill Graham, MP for Toronto-Centre and Minister of Defence under Jean Chretien, recalled that "intervention in Kosovo became a 'Canadian imperative' by virtue of European and U.S. interests in the Balkans" while Art Eggleton (MP at the time for York Centre) is reported as suggesting that since the conflict in Kosovo was occurring in NATO's backyard, "intervention...was a matter of protecting the prestige of the alliance. NATO's reputation would have suffered from a failure in Kosovo."[32]

In terms of Canada's own reputational stakes, the Canadian government felt compelled to support and participate in NATO's bombing campaign over Serbia to halt human rights abuses in Kosovo because senior Canadian politicians "also wanted Canada to be seen as a reliable international ally, to strengthen alliance solidarity, and to guarantee Canada a seat at the post-conflict negotiations."[33] As for upholding human rights norms, the same officials interviewed for the W2i report expressed genuine humanitarian concerns that Kosovo not become a repeat of the massacre at Srebrenica or Rwanda, the latter of which Louise Frechette, UN Deputy Secretary General during the Kosovo crises, said "engendered a sense of shame."[34] Once NATO came to frame Serbian actions in Kosovo as yet another instance of Balkan ethnic cleansing, NATO took the stand, according to Art Eggleton, that "we couldn't allow this to continue."[35] Without going into the details of specific cases of (non)interventions the GPTF report also references the importance of upholding human rights norms and laws, flagging them in a final section of the report as central to effective genocide prevention.[36] Further, the report rues at various points the failure in many cases of the United States and its allies to protect the human rights of threatened populations. The authors characterize genocide as "unacceptable" and a crime that "threatens" not just American national security but "our values."[37] Failure to stop it is said to undermine the United States' ability to be a "global leader" and "respected as an international partner."[38]

In both the W2i and the GPTF, and despite the flawed national security arguments forwarded by the authors, we can identify within the reports themselves what really is a stake. It is, as the reports' authors suspect, national self-interest, but a self-interest linked not to threats to national security however broadly understood, but non-existential threats to valued institutions, norms, and national reputations. Thus if we want to make a claim in favour of genocide prevention that will work with respect to Goldilocks and

non-Goldilocks zone countries alike - that is, where direct and indirect effects are and are not at issue respectively - we need to marry normative appeals to utility.

It is here that we turn briefly to Thucydides and Hugo Grotius who construct conceptions of international justice and international law respectively as utility. Part of Thucydides' narrative of the Peloponnesian War, the Melian dialogue involves the militarily weak Melians making the case for their continued neutrality in the conflict between Sparta and Athens while Athenian military envoys try to induce Melos (Spartan island colonists) to become subjects of Athens or face siege and ultimately destruction at the hands of Athens' powerful navy. To the Melian's complaint that the Athenians' demand of unconditional subjugation is unjust, particularly since the Melians have no quarrel with the Athenians, the Athenian envoys reply that justice is not at issue in this case since "on the human plane questions of justice only arise when there is equal power to compel." As the much more powerful of the two players Athens was free to dictate terms claiming that "in terms of practicality the dominant exact what they can, the weak concede what they must."[39] Unconvinced, the Melian authorities make an argument in favour of the "common good" which they link to utility in that respect for the common good will benefit not only themselves, as they will be able to retain their independence and neutrality, but also Athens in the long run. The Melians thus argue that

> there is advantage in your preserving the principle of the common good: this is, that any one who finds himself in danger should receive fair and equitable treatment, and be able to improve his position if he can make a strong case for something less than the full rigour of what could happen to him. This principle is proportionately in your interest much more than ours, given the massive retaliation you would face as an example to others should you fall from power.[40]

Later the Melians proclaim their cause to be just, telling the Athenians that their resistance is a "righteous stand against injustice [that] will not disadvantage us in divine favour," adding that "Spartan help will make up for our deficiency in strength" and will be motivated by, at the very least, a sense of "kinship" and "honour."[41] The Athenians reject Melos' logic, arguing that Sparta will not come to Melos' rescue since Sparta makes "the most blatant equation of... expediency with justice." It is here that the Melians agree, making the point that justice between nations is in fact expediency and utility. Thus the Melians counter that they are willing to place their "greatest trust" in "Spartan's perception of their own interest." Prefiguring Canadian and American concerns about their reputations vis-à-vis countering human rights abuses, the Melians continue that the Spartans will not wish to abandon Melos "their own colony" since "[a]mong the Greeks at large this would brand them faithless in the eyes of their friends and provide ammunition to their enemies."[42]

With both sides unyielding the dialogue ends, followed by Thucydides' recounting of the siege and eventual sacking of Melos, the execution of the men and the selling of the women and children into slavery. Although clearly the Melian's argument about justice as utility fell on deaf Athenian ears, and Sparta failed to live up to Melos' expectations about defending their own kin and colony, the logic of the Melian's argument was correct in the end. By treating neutral islands like Melos unjustly, the Athenians made many enemies where none previously existed, forcing the naval power to fight numerous far flung battles with unnecessarily aggrieved islands that drained manpower and resources from the main fight against Sparta; a fight that Athens would ultimately lose. Had the Athenians treated the Melians and others justly by finding utility in doing so as part of Athen's overall military and diplomatic strategy against Sparta, things might have turned out differently.

In a very brief section in his *On the Rights of War and Peace*, Hugo Grotius echoes the Melian position but with respect to international law specifically. Grotius begins by suggesting that domestic laws, or what he calls "the Laws of each Community" are fashioned with "regard [for] the Utility of that Community." The same, he believes, can be said "between different Communities." Grotius continues that "it appears that Laws have been established, which enjoined the Utility, not of special communities [i.e. of individual nations] but of that great aggregate System of Communities," what he says "is called the Law of Nations, or International Law." Conceived of as utility, international law is not, Grotius insists, grounded in, and should be distinguished from, natural law[43] in which law is derived from morality, custom, and ultimately, the Divine.

We have in the Melian dialogue and Grotius a philosophical foundation for advocating for genocide prevention and R2P more broadly as a policy grounded neither on strictly moral imperatives to which policy-makers are unlikely to respond, nor narratives of threats to national security which, in reality either do not exist, or only exist in the case of genocides and other atrocities committed in the Goldilocks zone. As we may see in Syria, action in this "hyper-strategic" non-Goldilocks zone country will come not because the murder of innocents threatens the west militarily, economically, socially, or its populations' health and physical wellbeing. It will come, if it does, because the Assad regime has violated peremptory norms against the wholesale slaughter of civilians including the deliberate targeting of children for summary execution. As in Kosovo, this violation will be seen as an act that erodes (but does not destroy) fundamental values held dear by would-be intervenor states and institutions and, if left unanswered, will undermine the rationale for the continued existence of these institutions and further damage the reputations of powerful bystander states that already have the blood of Bosnian Muslims, Rwandan Tutsis, Sudanese Darfurese and others on their conscience.

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