

From Protection to Policing: Military Air Power and the  
Governance of Humanitarian Crises, 1992-2011

by

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## **Abstract**

International military intervention undertaken to protect civilians victimised by civil conflict became increasingly common following the Cold War. Within the increasingly developed liberal global order, the use of force has become a humanitarian tool. The specific politics created by using force in this way, however, have not been systematically studied by either the literature on “humanitarian intervention” or the Responsibility to Protect. This project problematises the United States and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation’s reliance on a particular kind of technology, air power, by asking what humanitarian politics result from this approach. Rather than simply an instrument of global policy, air power transformed how these two actors understood ethnic conflict through the political affordances it does, and does not, allow. In keeping with the technical and doctrinal context provided by air power, such conflict is reconfigured from a practice of directly protecting bodies to managing the circulation of objects as a means of policing conflict spaces. What results is a depoliticisation of conflict and a disjoint between the humanitarian ethos and physical effect of such interventions.

In this way, human protection becomes a second order effect of ordering conflict spaces. The precise political effect of this was a depoliticisation of both civilians, and their politics, because they were indiscernible to this model. As a result, the impact of these interventions was problematic in humanitarian terms. This was obscured and the model allowed to persist because popular, professional, political, and academic discourses all assume the use of military power is purely technical, rather than political in its own right. This dissertation unpacks this dynamic by providing a historical, multi-case study analysis of how the relationship between humanitarianism and air power emerged,

what tactics and strategies result, and how the deployment of these means affects the ongoing politics of global humanitarianism and the Responsibility to Protect.

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# 1 Introduction: From Balancing to Policing in International Engagement with Civil Conflict

The “high politics” of nuclear deterrence and geopolitical balance dominated the metanarrative of Cold War international politics.<sup>1</sup> Civil conflicts erupted within, rather than between, individual states. In the process these conflicts became proxy wars between the United States and Soviet Union. The great powers intervened, in some instances repeatedly and not always consistently in support of the same parties, in an attempt to manipulate the balance of global order. Geopolitically, the United States and Soviet Union understood their spheres of influence to be physically demarcated by the territorial boundaries of states that fell under their direct control or ideological influence. Cold War geopolitics were reflected in, supported by, and then made durable with the creation of a sophisticated military apparatus that helped condition states to operate in this mode. Concepts of deterrence, mutually assured destruction, even the domino theory used to legitimise US involvement in South East Asia in the 1960s and 70s, emerged to help signify the various elements of this social and material relationship. These ways of thinking were artefacts of the interaction between technology and ideas that constituted and recast the conduct of international politics. Then, the meaning making power of this conceptual and technological framework collapsed along with the Berlin Wall.

Of course, civil conflicts continued to erupt and unfold just as they had before, but something changed. The conceptual reorganisation that followed the fall of the Berlin

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Ignatieff, "The Stories We Tell: Television and Humanitarian Aid," in *Hard Choices: Moral Dilemmas in Humanitarian Intervention*, ed. Jonathan Moore (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998), 287-290. Cf. Neta C. Crawford, *Argument and Change in World Politics: Ethics, Decolonization, and Humanitarian Intervention* (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2002).

Wall dissolved the category of warfare that these conflicts had been situated in, thereby stripping them of their symbolic meaning. Images of violence from around the globe, distributed by the new global media, proliferated without a clear ideological context. Such images clashed with and unsettled Western triumphalism related to the perceived creation of what United States President George H.W. Bush called the “new world order.” The juxtaposition between political claims that a new, more humane order had emerged and images of brutality was stark. As a result, calls to action became common. Civil strife was no longer understood through the lens of great power balance or the ideological conflict between capitalism and communism but on new terms. It was not long before a chaos narrative emerged whereby the focal point of international politics shifted from the balance of global order to a series of seemingly novel, unstable, ungoverned, and dangerous spaces.<sup>2</sup> Thomas Keenan points out that this perspective, shaped by the camera and mobilised by images of horror, seemed to lack a political register; or perhaps it brought into existence a space wherein politics had to be set aside in favour of action. By viewing these conflicts through mass media, a specific humanitarian discourse emerged that did not have to account for itself politically beyond providing for its mobilisation of practical means.<sup>3</sup> The deployment of military force, in this context, provided a means to spread Republican concepts of security, which sought to negotiate a balance between hierarchy and anarchy, over an ever-broadening physical space.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ignatieff, "Stories," 289.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Keenan, "Publicity and Indifference (Sarajevo on Television) " *PMLA* 117, no. 1 (2002): 106.

<sup>4</sup> Daniel H. Deudney, *Bounding Power: Republican Security Theory from the Polis to the Global Village* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2007).

Under these conditions, both diplomatic and scholarly discourses came to denote civil conflict as the aberrant rupture of an actual, or at least potential, liberal post-Cold War global system. Presumably, this instability was caused by the inefficacy of states in the decolonised and the developing world.<sup>5</sup> Thus, (re)inscribed with meaning, civil conflicts took on a patina of novelty, and as a result, they were (re)engaged on different terms. Mary Kaldor (in)famously crystallised this transformation with her “new wars” hypothesis. Kaldor argues that economic globalisation, the proliferation of identity politics, and the growing importance of non-governmental bodies (including militias, ethnic factions, and mercenary groups) had wrought a new genre of warfare hallmarked by individual states’ unwillingness or incapacity to provide security for their populace.<sup>6</sup> As a theory of conflict, however, the new wars approach falls under its weight; it is simply not the case that these wars are new.<sup>7</sup> However, the new wars *hypothesis* attests to a semiotic shift in how war is understood that brought forth very real changes in how the international community reacted to it.

Marking civil conflict as new wars entangled them with a host of considerations related to the proliferation, stabilisation, and increasing efficiency of liberal governance

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<sup>5</sup> Mainstream theory was quick to label states unable or unwilling to manage their environment as “quasi-states” which had been given a level of international independence that they were not adequately equipped to handle. See: Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World* (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 1993). Critical theorists argued that this perspective on development was related to the discourse that had been created to account for this instability. See: François Debrix, *Re-Envisioning Peacekeeping: The United Nations and the Mobilization of Ideology* (Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota UP, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> Mary Kaldor, *New & Old Wars*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Polity, 2006), 72-94. For a contrary perspective on the “new wars” see: Mark R. Duffield, *Global Governance and the New Wars: The Merging of Development and Security* (New York, NY: Zed Books, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> For a critical engagement with the new wars hypothesis from a historical perspective see: Edward Newman, “The ‘New Wars’ Debate: A Historical Perspective Is Needed,” *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 2 (2004).

that, by extension, created sensitivity to the risks facing civilians. Currently, the mainstream literature on civil conflict defines it as a function of the absence or ineffectiveness of appropriate governance institutions, a view, in turn, mobilised to legitimate international monitoring and, in some instances, intervention and rehabilitation to ensure individual rights. Development, broadly understood as the creation of sound (read Western-style) social and political institutions, became interrelated with the politics of security, as aid and international intervention became mutually legitimating concerns.<sup>8</sup> Following a trend that began late in the Cold War, scholars and practitioners alike began to think of the new wars as “complex humanitarian emergencies” which required a multifaceted international response including the provision of aid, establishment of development programmes, and coordinated military efforts.<sup>9</sup> The need to police disorder in the name of human rights, rather than the maintenance of geopolitical balance, had become the new metanarrative of global politics.

One of the most controversial elements of this new global politics has been the (re)emergence of the use of military force to protect civilians in conflict zones. Such humanitarian interventions have a history that dates back to 19<sup>th</sup> Century Western European efforts to protect Christians in the Ottoman Empire. The post-Cold War transition to a US-centric unipolar order opened up space for the (re)emergence of such actions.<sup>10</sup> However, during the 1990s these operations were marked by mixed success,

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<sup>8</sup> Duffield’s work in general is a touchstone in this discussion, especially: Mark R. Duffield, *Development, Security and Unending War: Governing the World of Peoples* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2007).

<sup>9</sup> Didier Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi, *Contemporary States of Emergency: The Politics of Military and Humanitarian Interventions* (New York, NY: Zone Books, 2010), 10-13.

<sup>10</sup> For a discussion of how the political legitimacy of intervention at the UNSC increased at the end of the Cold War see: James Mayall, "Introduction," in *United Nations Interventionism 1991-2004*, ed. Mats Berdal and Spyros Economides (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2007). For overviews of the history of

stunning failures, and clearly discernable political (if not moral) selectivity. As a result, the broader vernacular of the victim-focused concept of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), first developed by the 2001 report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), has largely supplanted discussion of humanitarian intervention.<sup>11</sup> R2P situates the use of military force at the “sharp end” of a broad liberal agenda for engaging the new wars in the hopes of streamlining debate concerning its use, but also contextualising it in relation to non-military alternatives.<sup>12</sup> Despite this broadening, R2P mobilises rather than creates a kind of humanitarian militarism; R2P relies upon rather than contrives the humanitarian credentials of armed intervention. The history of this credentialing is investigated here.

The departure point of this dissertation is the question of how, under what circumstances, and to what effect the United States and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) came to see air power as a mode of humanitarian intervention—a specific method for maintaining global humanitarian order. Identifying the conditions under which this relationship was created, legitimated, and is maintained requires avoiding the kind of ontological reductionism inherent to current approaches to intervention and R2P. Constructivist, Liberal, Realist, and to some extent Poststructural

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intervention, and its relationship to media, see: Gary Bass, *Freedom's Battle: The Origins of Humanitarian Intervention*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008). An excellent collection of essays has also recently been published: Brendan Simms and D. J. B. Trim, *Humanitarian Intervention: A History* (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2011). For an engagement with the longer historical trends in international thinking about responsibility for civilians beset by violence in other states see: Luke Glanville, *Sovereignty and the Responsibility to Protect: A New History* (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 2014).

<sup>11</sup> Thomas G. Weiss, *Humanitarian Intervention: Ideas in Action* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> The idea that R2P is a widening concept is most notably advocated by Bellamy, see: Alex J. Bellamy, "The Responsibility to Protect: Added Value or Hot Air?," *Cooperation and Conflict* 48, no. 3 (2013); Alex J. Bellamy, *Responsibility to Protect: The Global Effort to End Mass Atrocities* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2009). The contrary position, that R2P is best understood as a focusing doctrine that helps along debate has been articulated by Evans in several places. See: Gareth J. Evans, *The Responsibility to Protect: Ending Mass Atrocity Crimes Once and for All* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2008).

work is inordinately focused on the legitimation or motivation of intervention, which has the result of reducing the politics of such actions to simply norms, procedures, biased readings of international order, or particular discourses. *Pace* much of this analysis, it is not possible to fully understand the politics of intervention, which is to say the conditions it creates and the decisions it entails, without tracing the specific, individual, and historically situated linkages between discourse, technology, and physical space. The definitions of humanitarian intervention that populate the current literature are all premised on two forms of reductionism.<sup>13</sup> The first form reduces the politics of intervention to singular phenomena—compliance with or contestation of an intersubjective norm for constructivists, institutional politics for liberals, effects of national interests or international structure for realists, or the play and power of discourse for Poststructuralists. The second form reduces the practice of intervention itself, how it is organised, planned, and carried out in and through technology and material spaces, to an instrumental or purely practical consideration. These assumptions make it possible to discuss intervention using broad analytical categories, but at the expense of a close engagement with the politics that emerge from specific configurations of discourse, material objects, and space.

This study overcomes this shortcoming by analysing humanitarian intervention as an assemblage: a set of factors of different qualities that fit together, coming to render possible a mode of behaviour that is not reducible to any one part.<sup>14</sup> Manuel DeLanda's

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<sup>13</sup> This typology of reductionism, and discussion of how assemblages form, is based on: Manuel DeLanda, *Assemblage Theory* (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh UP, 2016). Chapter 1.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 19-21.

ongoing efforts to refine the thought of Deleuze and Guattari is an important touchstone for this approach.<sup>15</sup> Assemblage theory works to balance the seemingly structural nature of social behavior against its equally important ephemeral, unstable, and mutational character.<sup>16</sup> Assemblage theory thereby “generates enduring puzzles about ‘process’ and ‘relationship’ rather than leading to systematic understandings of these tropes of classical social theory.”<sup>17</sup> It rejects the “reified general categories and ill-defined abstract concepts beloved of modernist thought...that have made successful analysis of contemporary crises...problematic.”<sup>18</sup> Nowhere is this more evident in IR’s treatment of technology. Though undeniably important, technology has become an aporia for IR given its predisposition to either accept technological determinist or drown out the role of material via a focus on social constructivism.<sup>19</sup> In all, Assemblage theory is designed to help one break out of conceptual dead-ends by rethinking the various elements that come together to make social behavior possible.

Following Manuel DeLanda, thinking in terms of assemblages requires the dismissal of the smooth categorisations usually found in social science, of which humanitarian intervention and R2P are both examples. Instead, assemblages and their

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid. Cf. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (St. Paul, MN: Minnesota UP, 1987).

<sup>16</sup> George E. Marcus and Erkan Saka, "Assemblage," *Theory, Culture & Society* 23, no. 2-3 (2006): 102.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Michele Acuto and Simon Curtis, "Introduction," in *Reassembling International Theory: Assemblage Thinking and International Relations*, ed. Michele Acuto and Simon Curtis (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 2. The Acuto and Curtis introduction goes on to give a useful rationale for why IR should be interested in assemblage theory. For a more precise treatment of assemblage theory in terms of Security Studies see: Claudia Aradau et al., "Discourse/Materiality," in *Critical Security Methods: New Frameworks for Analysis* ed. Claudia Aradau, et al. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2015).

<sup>19</sup> Antoine Bousquet, "Welcome to the Machine: Rethinking Technology and Society through Assemblage Theory," in *Reassembling International Theory: Assemblage Thinking and International Relations*, ed. George E. Marcus and Michele Acuto (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 91.

politics are immanent to the specific but ontologically diverse factors that are brought together to make them possible. Actor-Network-Theory, a particularly prominent variant of assemblage thinking, is therefore helpful here, given its focus on how assemblages are brought together through the creation of complex relationships between physical and social “things”. Assemblages are, as Law explains, heterogeneously engineered: a process whereby a system of relationships is created between concepts, things, and spaces to make a pattern of behaviour both possible and somewhat stable.<sup>20</sup> In this way, one cannot study humanitarian intervention as such (i.e. with the assumption that it refers to a specific set of political phenomena), or else fall victim to the kind of reductionism that marks the current literature. Instead, one must engage with how particular strategies, tactics, and practices of intervention form and to what effect. It is important to understand that this engineering process is neither linear nor determined, but contested, political, and inflected by both history and materiality.<sup>21</sup>

This kind of study is important because engineering an assemblage, namely humanitarian intervention undertaken through air power, has reconfigured the politics of intervention. Mobilising insights from the “new materialist” literature in International Relations (IR), as well as the Actor-Network-Theory approach of John Law and Bruno Latour, this project contends that realising humanitarian intervention through air power reconfigured its politics and altered how civil conflict is understood.<sup>22</sup> Since assemblages

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<sup>20</sup> John Law, "Technology and Heterogeneous Engineering: The Case of Portuguese Expansion," in *The Social Construction of Technological Systems: New Directions in the Sociology and History of Technology*, ed. Wiebe E. Bijker, Thomas P. Huges, and Trevor Pinch (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987).

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Both Latour and Law are prolific writers whose work is used broadly in this analysis. Of special importance in terms of Latour see: Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford UP, 2005); Bruno Latour, *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality*

are emergent, air power technology does not overdetermine this reconfiguration even though its role is especially prominent. As the case studies that follow attest, relying on air power creates affordances within which discourses emerge and politics plays out, but it does not determine a specific outcome. Nonetheless, focusing on air power provides an orientating point while tracking the relationships between ontologically heterogeneous factors that form the larger assemblage. The folk wisdom of strategic studies holds that the marriage of air power and humanitarian intervention is one of convenience rather than substance. Of course, early in the 1990s reliance on air power was a function of the conflicting imperatives of US foreign policy; a desire to arrest or prevent civil conflicts which undermined claims to the new world order set against an unwillingness to deploy US ground troops to conflict zones. Within the strategic studies and intervention literatures air power is often argued to represent a half measure taken to show resolve without risking much in the way of political capital, blood, or treasure. In the first instance, such contentions are largely correct. Initially, reliance upon air power and no-fly zones, such as in the Former Yugoslavia, was largely instrumental—Western powers were unwilling to risk the lives of military personnel but used air power to show resolve under public pressure.<sup>23</sup>

Once deployed, however, air power provided an important focal point that helped transformed how conflict was understood, and this transformation is what the current literature fails to account for because it does not problematise and historicise the

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*of Science Studies* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1999). By Law, see: Law, "Technology and Heterogeneous Engineering."

<sup>23</sup> This is an oft-argued point. One important example is: Nicholas J. Wheeler, *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (New York, NY: Oxford UP, 2000), Chp. 8.

relationship between political and material artefacts. In engineering a relationship between air power and humanitarianism, particular ways of thinking about civil conflict were highlighted while others were obscured. DeLanda defines this as the “downward causality” inherent to all assemblages.<sup>24</sup> Assemblages are not sites where politics is played out on a passive surface, but are themselves political in the sense that they set the terms of what is (or is not) politically or technically possible. Further, the heterogeneous factors involved—including concepts of global order, intersubjective norms, technical tools, doctrinal schematics—are not welded into a coherent whole. These systems tend to be unruly, resulting in breakdowns or unexpected consequences that must be addressed.<sup>25</sup> In short, these assemblages of factors are not determined but engineered and constantly reaffirmed, but they nonetheless have a political role.

Several important studies have already uncovered how seemingly banal configurations of infrastructure are actually complex assemblages that bring about particular forms of international politics. Mitchell’s study of modern energy politics unpacks how the political and technical nature of the oil economy deprived organised labour of the powers of disruption granted them by coal production.<sup>26</sup> In his introduction to a collected volume on airports, Salter explains that thinking of airports as stable passageways omits their political, ethical, economic, and societal functions and effects.<sup>27</sup> By bringing a similar approach to the study of humanitarian intervention, the issue-

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<sup>24</sup> DeLanda, *Assemblage Theory*, 21.

<sup>25</sup> An excellent work on this “unruliness” can be found in: Andrew Barry, *Material Politics: Disputes Along the Pipeline* (Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2013). This concept of instability is further unpacked in Chapter Two.

<sup>26</sup> Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (London, UK: Verso 2013), 43 ff.

<sup>27</sup> Mark B. Salter, "Introduction: Airport Assemblage," in *Politics at the Airport*, ed. Mark B. Salter (Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota UP, 2008), x.

specific literature is freed from its onto-political reductionism while the growing new materialist literature is widened to include practices of militarised humanitarianism.

In terms of humanitarian intervention, the emergence of a corresponding assemblage meant the nebulous desire to protect civilians in conflict zones was translated into specific strategies for the deployment of air power. What emerged was a new way of thinking about conflict management as the policing of circulation that came to supersede the direct protection of vulnerable civilians. Linking humanitarianism to air power brought downward causality. This means that targeting systems and doctrine relied on by United States and NATO air forces in places like Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Libya foregrounded a specific set of physical objects, like tanks, vehicles, and infrastructure, in an attempt to paralyse belligerents and thereby order conflict spaces.<sup>28</sup> Destroying these objects made conflict management conceivable, but the resulting approach did not provide direct protection for civilians. In fact, relying on air power meant that individual bodies were increasingly indiscernible to, but nonetheless effected by, Western practices of intervention concerned with the circulation of material objects. Thus, a gap emerged between the tactics of intervention and the ostensible humanitarian goal that the current literature does not address.

This transformation resulted in a double-move wherein the politics of conflict and intervention from the perspective of the United States and NATO were reconfigured.

First, rather than a contingent practice that creates particular political considerations, the

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<sup>28</sup> This interest in creating paralysis is a hallmark of contemporary US air power doctrine. See: David S. Fadok, "John Boyd and John Warden: Airpower's Quest for Strategic Paralysis " in *The Paths to Heaven: The Evolution of Airpower Theory*, ed. Phillip S. Meilinger (Maxwell Airforce Base, AL: Air University Press, 1997).

use of air power is defined as form of policing. In defending the use of air power the United States and NATO come to identify it as tool for addressing disorder, rather than a means for either defeating enemies or directly protecting individual civilian bodies. Gone is the political contingency related to seeing bombing as humanitarian, and in its place is left an instrumental logic related to the governance of conflict spaces. In this way, the use of force is meant to bring about a (re)turn to appropriate liberal politics compatible with prevailing concepts of global order, but in so doing such interventions negate considerations of how targeted conflicts are themselves expressions of local politics. This depoliticisation of conflict, which is premised on the liberal idea that hostilities mark the suspension rather than pursuit of politics, supports the idea that military force is itself a technical means of realising goals rather than a more complicated exercise that engenders its own politics.<sup>29</sup> In so doing, the long-term effects of interventions become indiscernible from the perspective of the intervention itself.

The second political reconfiguration relates to the humanitarian politics that are created by this approach. Adopting a banal definition of civilians as non-combatants who are targeted, displaced, or otherwise effected during war allows an important reconfiguration to appear. Though the plight of civilians is often evoked by political and military leaders to legitimate the use of force, their actual physical protection is indiscernible to an intervention assemblage that foregrounds objects as a means of managing circulation. Civilians fall into a zone of practical indiscernibility, which makes it possible to separate operational success from their actual lived experience. This tension

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<sup>29</sup> Stephanie Carvin and Michael John Williams, *Law, Science, Liberalism, and the American Way of Warfare: The Quest for Humanity in Conflict* (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2015).

then becomes a specific focus of official discourse(s) that create a field of social intelligibility wherein the effect of this disjoint is nonetheless considered humanitarian. This disassociation becomes an explicit part of how conflict management is understood by Western geopolitical actors and scholars following the NATO intervention in Kosovo. In this way civilian bodies become objects that are managed rather than individuals with agency, thus creating a blind spot wherein the effects of an intervention can actually come to work against the stated purpose of interveners. Though an important ethical and legal category of interventions, civilians take on a ghostly quality in media representations and political justifications of humanitarian action. We only “see” them as civilians retrospectively, which is to say after they have been killed.<sup>30</sup> In this way, the intervention model can only directly identify bodies as civilians after they have been killed or when they threaten to unravel the political order being policed into existence by moving to new spaces. In this way, as the following Chapters bear out, non-combatants (here understood as civilians) become implicated in the management of conflict in ways that strip away their agency.

It was the precise way in which the air power policing assemblage (or model) was engineered that produces this indiscernibility regarding civilian bodies and the reconfiguration of the politics surrounding intervention. Premised as it is on particular forms of reductionism, this gap is indiscernable to the current academic literature. In this literature, the actual practice—the tactics and associated rationales—of intervention itself

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<sup>30</sup> This discussion of the civilian as a posthumous form of identification in international law is based on the discussion of the war on terror in Mark Neocleous, *War Power, Police Power* (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh UP, 2015), 161. Neocleous’ discussion is in turn informed by his reading of Joseph Pugliese, *State Violence and the Execution of Law: Biopolitical Caesurae of Torture, Black Sites, Drones* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

is not problematised as having or engendering complex politics. Without analysing how interventions assemblages form and function it is impossible to push scholarship on intervention and R2P beyond its current impasse. The equally boistrous claims that the most recent expression of this model, namely the 2011 intervention in Libya, was a success or a failure attest to just how indiscernable the original humanitarian rationales of international interventions have become because of this gap in understanding. The analytical and political liabilities are twofold. First, scholars begin to advocate for or against general concepts like humanitarian intervention or R2P without properly unpacking how, and to what effect, these concepts are translated into practice. The outcomes of intervention are taken as evidencing the (lack of) saliency of particular concepts, norms, or legal schemas, rather than as the result of relying on particular assemblages. Second, the long-term stability of these concepts is not clearly understood within the academic literature because the consequences of realising interventions through specific assemblages are mistaken for evidence that supports either the abandonment of particular practices or their more robust deployment. Instead one must study intervention as a practice differentiated by the technical means through which it is carried out.

The engagement with intervention as a practice here has certain affinities with the current practice turn in IR research. In this literature, practices are understood as “meaningful patterns of action which, in being performed more or less competently, simultaneously embody, act out, and possibly reify background knowledge and discourse

in and on the material world.”<sup>31</sup> However, where the practice turn centres on the socially situated battle for recognition of competence and the emergent power related to it, this work foregrounds competing rationalities of action and their relationship to material elements.<sup>32</sup> In so doing, it brings to light how the play for competence is both rendered decipherable and bounded by its relationship to heterogeneous socio-material assemblages. Claims to competence reference, and when successful help to maintain, assemblages that render action possible. In this way, social appeals to competence are themselves part of a large process whereby background knowledge is translated into actions. In so doing, practices mobilise and help to sustain rather than create assemblages, and in exchange are rendered operable in and through the physical world by way of translation. In short, analysis of the messy process whereby humanitarian intervention is heterogeneously engineered must precede research regarding any battle over who can best carry it out. One cannot understand how humanitarian intervention operates if one does not unpack how technology shapes its conduct and thereby influences its politics. As Shapiro puts it “we can learn as much about the biopolitics of contemporary sovereignty-as-decision making by heeding the minutiae of ballistics and delivery systems as we can from the pronouncements of ‘defense intellectuals’ about what lives are at stake, where danger lies, and who are the enemies.”<sup>33</sup>

This dissertation provides a critical history of how intervention was engineered as part of a humanitarian assemblage. The goal is not an elaboration of an alternative model

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<sup>31</sup> Emmanuel Adler and Vincent Pouliot, "International Practices: Introduction and Framework," in *International Practices* ed. Emmanuel Adler and Vincent Pouliot (New York, NY: Oxford, UP, 2011), 6.

<sup>32</sup> Rebecca Adler-Nissen and Vincent Pouliot, "Power in Practice: Negotiating the International Intervention in Libya," *European Journal of International Relations* 20, no. 4 (2014).

<sup>33</sup> Michael J. Shapiro, *Cinematic Geopolitics* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 27.

of intervention as such, but the development of a history of the assemblage created at the intersection of humanitarianism and air power. Air power is a favoured tool of global governance, but it is not the only one. For that reason, this research does not claim to speak for any truly global process. In so doing, the contingency and politics of using force are exposed. Such an effort should be understood as the chiselling of a cornerstone, which once formed can serve as an orientating point for a more dynamic political debate about the future of militarised practices of intervention. Overall, however, this analysis attests to the need to (re)turn to a more political, specific, micro-approach to the management of conflict rather than beginning with the deployment of general concepts of humanitarian intervention. In preparation, the remainder of this Chapter consists of three main sections. First, the idea of “policing” is further elaborated and contextualised. Second, the scholarly literature on intervention and R2P is summarised and its resistance to seeing technology as an active element in the politics of humanitarianism is highlighted. Finally, the upcoming Chapters of the dissertation are introduced and summarised.

## **1.1 Speaking of Police**

Before moving forward, it is important to define and defend the labelling of humanitarian intervention as a form of “police.” A critical understanding of police will be familiar to those versed in Critical Theory and governmentality studies, but its use here is unconventional.<sup>34</sup> The process under study here—the move from “protection” to “policing” identified in the title—refers to the development of a conflict management

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<sup>34</sup> ‘Critical’ is used here as a proper noun to signal this literature’s relationship to Marxist thought.

logic that subsumes efforts to protect civilians under an elaborate attempt to govern entire conflict spaces by regulating the circulation of objects. This logic is part of the emergent politics of the air power model in that it is an outcome of the downward causality created by the engineered relationship between humanitarianism and air power. By foregrounding objects, protection becomes a secondary effect of ordering: policing. Realising human protection through air power brought about a much broader and more ambitious understanding of the utility of military force as a means of shaping conflict environments. Reshaping the conflict space was undertaken through the carefully calibrated destruction of specific objects meant to influence actors' behaviour, specifically to ensure a re-turn to sound political practices.

The following Chapters investigate how the specific logic of air power policing has emerged from the engineered relationship between air power and humanitarianism, but one should stake out three analytical signposts in preparation for this. First, it is possible to see air power policing as a form of humanitarian intervention predicated on “design by destruction”: the selective targeting of specific physical objects to reorder a conflict space.<sup>35</sup> This is a result of the downward causality of the air power assemblage, meaning also that this strategy of conflict management must be given volume and thought about in ways that go beyond the demarcation of space(s) on the ground.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, the use of air power represents an attempt to (re)order and manage the topography of a conflict by targeting, rather than directly intervening in this space and

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<sup>35</sup> This term is taken from Eyal Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils: Humanitarian Violence from Arendt to Gaza* (London, UK: Verso, 2011), 124.

<sup>36</sup> Stuart Elden, "Secure the Volume: Vertical Geopolitics and the Depth of Power," *Political Geography* 34, no. 5 (2012).

enforcing boundaries. The UN did expand the classic peacekeeping model in Bosnia-Herzegovina to create and sustain such spatial borders, but it amounted to only a short-lived engineering project.

The second signpost is that use of air power under study here can be defined as a liberal governmentality, given that it seeks to create, from a distance, the terms on which actors will behave rather than the more complex biopolitical techniques usually associated with the term.<sup>37</sup> This denotation, however, should not be taken too far. Air power policing tends to overlap with, and relate to, other governmentalities that are focused on the direct regulation of populations. The third signpost is a commitment to unpacking the politics of air power *itself*, in the process resisting the urge to overdetermine how it functions as Constructivist, Liberal, Realist, and most Poststructural work does. Air power policing is an outcome of a specific assemblage which is traced below and does not necessarily spring from or directly relate to other practices. The specific form of this practice—its strategy, tactics, and overall logic—bears the marks of other practices of humanitarianism and air power technology and doctrine, but it is not reducible to either.

Tracing the history of how bombing was credentialed as a suitable method of humanitarian intervention as this study does builds on scholarship regarding the relationship between war and police. Following Foucault, police does not merely reference uniformed officers or the institutional function of modern police services.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Hans-Martin Jaeger, "Governmentality's (Missing) International Dimension and the Promiscuity of German Neoliberalism," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 16, no. 1 (2013): 29, 33.

<sup>38</sup> Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège De France, 1977-1978*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York, NY: Picador, 2007), 366.

Instead, it refers to the techniques and practices designed to order the various interior domains of the state to ensure the proper functioning of its relevant domains.<sup>39</sup> Police is therefore related to an understanding of governance as a diffuse domain which does not need to be formally institutionalised or be an explicit subject of social reasoning. It is instead:

understood in a broad sense, as the set of procedures established and actions conducted in order to manage, regulate, and support the existence of human beings: government includes but exceeds the intervention of the state, local administrations, international bodies, and political institutions generally.<sup>40</sup>

In Dean's formulation, then, we can understand "police as a condition of good or even civilised order in a community and the means of acquiring or retaining it".<sup>41</sup> The question, however, is whether, and to what benefit, this concept can be deployed in the study of international politics generally, and military intervention specifically.

As Neocleous points out, the literature on "international police" is rather sparse, in no small part because Foucault himself separates police and war (the particular activity of the international realm) as distinct domains of power.<sup>42</sup> This reading, however, misses the fact that there are irreducibly "international" elements of Foucault's reading of police

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<sup>39</sup> William Walters, *Governmentality: Critical Encounters*, Critical Issues in Global Politics (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012), 27.

<sup>40</sup> Didier Fassin, *Humanitarian Reason: A Moral History of the Present Times* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), 1-2.

<sup>41</sup> Mitchell Dean, "Military Intervention as 'Police' Action?," in *The New Police Science: The Police in Domestic and International Governance* ed. Markus D. Dubber and Mariana Valverde (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford UP, 2006), 188-189.

<sup>42</sup> Neocleous, *War Power, Police Power*, 12. Neocleous cites three key attempts at theorising an international police: Dean, "Military Intervention as 'Police' Action?"; William Walters, "Deportation, Expulsion, and the International Police of Aliens," *Citizenship Studies* 6, no. 3 (2002); Ron Levi and John Hagan, "International Police," in *The New Police Science: The Police Power in Domestic and International Governance*, ed. Markus D. Dubber and Mariana Valverde (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford UP, 2006).

and governmentality, precisely because it begins to homogenise a plural field of governance activities.<sup>43</sup> Concepts of international police have circulated which, rather than designed to enforce international law, were aimed at the diffusion of proper functioning government. US President Theodore Roosevelt's corollary to the Monroe Doctrine held at its core a desire to realise US stewardship of developing states, directly managing their development in terms prior to, rather than derived from, the dictates of international law.<sup>44</sup> Concepts of international police would shift into plans for an organised force tasked with preventing the outbreak of war by ensuring order, and then into a plan for the diffusion of Western public administration practices.<sup>45</sup> The key here is that these practices are differentiated and imminent to their specific function rather than create a homogenous "global police". However, this concept of police has also been mobilised in a more general sense to study contemporary patterns in the use of force.

Concepts of police have provided a fulcrum for analysing the function of military force in contemporary international affairs. Two thinkers stand out in this regard. Schmitt argues that the spatial construction of Europe within early formulations of international law allowed for the "bracketing" of war as the structured occurrence of hostilities between sovereign nations, which in turn kept military activity in check.<sup>46</sup> The advent of the League of Nations, however, created a tension in that war itself was outlawed, but the bracketing of conflict made possible by the recognition of absolute sovereignty was

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<sup>43</sup> Jaeger, "Governmentality's (Missing) International Dimension and the Promiscuity of German Neoliberalism," 27.

<sup>44</sup> Levi and Hagan, "International Police," 216-218.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 236-238.

<sup>46</sup> Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of Jus Publicum Europaeum* trans. G.L. Ulmen (Candor, NY: Telos Press Publishing 2006), 143-148.

undermined. The result was the proliferation of war as a kind of police (here used in a more pedestrian sense) because the enemy was no longer a sovereign equal but a criminal abrogating international law. This transformation from state to criminal made more violent forms of warfare acceptable.<sup>47</sup> War became unwholesome, but *warfare* was both re-tasked and unleashed as a means of dealing with state criminality; it became a kind of policing.<sup>48</sup> This schematic has been picked up by Agamben and elaborated in connection to his thesis on the “state of exception”. For Agamben, sovereignty operates as a decision on the ultimately unintelligible difference between violence and right; it is a paradox in that it exists within a legal order but nonetheless has the power to decide what does and does not fall under the remit of the law.<sup>49</sup> At the global level, sovereignty manifests and is deployed through the concept of police in that the enemy becomes criminal, and the conduct of war is pacified as “merely” an exercise in the maintenance of order in the face of exceptional circumstances rather than a violent political act.<sup>50</sup>

It is in this vein that war is now often supplanted by the evocation “armed conflict” while discussing trends in international conflict. In attempting to grapple with changes in how warfare is conducted, it has become popular within professional, public, and academic debate to spurn any mention of war as anachronistic. This turn is explicitly

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., eg. 246-247 ff.

<sup>48</sup> Echoes of this can be seen in the current discourse on armed conflict, which generally disparages the declaration or discussion of “war” in favour of an engagement with the tactics and procedures of warfare which are deployed in pursuit of a steadily broadening set of political goals. See: Caroline Holmqvist, *Policing Wars: On Military Intervention in the Twenty-First Century* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 48-50.

<sup>49</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Means without End: Notes on Politics*, trans. Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino (Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota UP, 2000), 112-113; Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1998), 15 ff.

<sup>50</sup> Agamben, *Means*, 103-104.

rejected here because it contributes to the idea that the conduct of military affairs is purely technical, rather than a site where politics both constitutes itself and is played out. War, no matter its guise, is radical and in so being must be treated as productive in the sense that its conduct requires social, institutional, and economic reconfigurations.<sup>51</sup> To draw a distinction between war and armed conflict is to lose sight of this productive register wherein the use of military force (re)creates specific patterns of politics. Further, the notion of armed conflict has helped to obscure the terms on which one can expect force to be effective, transforming it into an end rather than a means to an end.<sup>52</sup> One should follow the example of Latour in his discussion of the 9/11 attacks in denoting the resulting conflict as a war not for any propagandist reasons, but in order to bring to light the contingency and play of forces involved:

it might after all be better to be at war, and thus to be forced to think about the diplomatic work to be done, than to imagine that there is no war at all and keep talking endlessly about progress, modernity, development—without realizing the price that must be paid in reaching such lofty goals.<sup>53</sup>

War speaks to the creation of assemblages that make action possible. Armed conflict, without being properly situated, speaks only to the mobilisation of assemblages, thereby contributing to their maintenance without reflecting on their impact. Unless the term armed conflict is subsumed under an engagement with war it helps to obscure the

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<sup>51</sup> Tarak Barkawi, "From War to Security: Security Studies, the Wider Agenda and the Fate of the Study of War," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 39, no. 3 (2011).

<sup>52</sup> A very good discussion about the materiality of conflict is provided in: Caroline Holmqvist, "Undoing War: War Ontologies and the Materiality of Drone Warfare," *ibid.* 41 (2013). See the further discussion of Holmqvist's work below.

<sup>53</sup> Bruno Latour, *War of the Worlds: What About Peace?*, trans. Charlotte Bigg (Chicago, IL: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2002), 3.

contingency and politics of using force itself, leaving only instrumental considerations to be discussed.

This work provides a foundation for a much broader engagement with war than the narrow interests that predominate in IR. From this perspective, war plays a constituent, if obscured, role in the simultaneous creation and maintenance of global order, which includes economic, political, and humanitarian considerations. Such is the argument Hardt and Negri make in *Empire*, wherein the eponymous global system they outline mobilises the state of exception to rationalise the forced assimilation of nonconforming states into a centralised and unitary logic of regulation related to capital reproduction and corresponding biopolitical logic.<sup>54</sup> In another related but distinct formulation, Neocleous argues that the differentiation between police and war, and with it, the distinction between the domestic and the foreign, can be dissolved and violence reengaged as a means of preparing the ground for and enforcing the standards of “civilisation” across the globe.<sup>55</sup> At play here is a specific reading of police as a process whereby states are deemed nonconforming to common (if implicit) standards, generally due to their inability to govern themselves, and are brought back into line via the use of force.<sup>56</sup> It would seem, given its relationship to post-Cold War concepts of global order,

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<sup>54</sup> Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2000), 8-10, 17. For an engagement directly with ethnic conflict, namely how its (re)creation of new identities makes the global system fluid and thereby provides a ‘malleable material for control’ see p. 37.

<sup>55</sup> Neocleous, *War Power, Police Power*.

<sup>56</sup> Dean, "Military Intervention as 'Police' Action?," 193.

that humanitarian intervention and later R2P would be perfect examples of this kind of war as police phenomena.

Such analysis effectively unsettles how IR thinks about war, thereby opening up important avenues of analysis. But, these readings lapse into a kind of critical universalism premised upon the existence of a single system or hegemonic ideology which is inconsistent with reality.<sup>57</sup> Identifying and outlining assemblages, however, prevents this universalism from taking root. Rather than assume any one actor, network, or hegemonic logic is policing the world it is more instructive to denote organisations as passageways through which various governing logics pass and then turn one's attention to the nature of these logics.<sup>58</sup> Seemingly useful focal points such as the "State", or international phenomena like "globalisation" or humanitarianism, must be disaggregated into a series of governance techniques which are immanent to their objective.<sup>59</sup> Doing so requires identifying the assemblages that makes such action possible. Looking at humanitarian intervention following the Cold War it becomes clear that this practice is immanent to a particular objective, the management of internecine conflict, and operates as a site of materially influenced politics in its own right. It is clear that, rather than a passive instrument of grand processes or ambitions, be they Order, Empire, "civilisation",

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 200-201.

<sup>58</sup> Hans-Martin Jaeger, "Un Reform, Biopolitics, and Global Governmentality," *International Theory* 2, no. 01 (2010): 54.

<sup>59</sup> A useful discussion of the disaggregation of the State can be found in: Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*, 2nd ed. (London, UK: Sage, 2010), 102-104; On global governmentality and globalization see: Wendy Larner and William Walters, *Global Governmentality: Governing International Spaces* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002). Esp. Chp.1, pp. 11 ff.

or even humanitarianism, intervention is a specific kind of governing logic that must be unpacked before any attempt to categorise it is made.

The more detailed analysis provided here is that humanitarian intervention may not be as complex or well developed as a more elaborate and function-specific definition of police would expect, but it does have much in common with it. As Dean points out, police logics are advanced, complicated, and above all purpose specific. This makes police a category of governance logics rather than a single phenomenon. For this reason, he rightly advocates maintaining a difference between police and war in order to keep this specificity in view, but his analysis draws taxonomical lines that are a bit too tight. For Dean, the militarised peacekeeping operations undertaken by the UN, NATO, or other organisations are best engaged as a form of police separate from war.<sup>60</sup> This is because such efforts meet a set of defining characteristics: police confronts disorder rather than an enemy, aims to defuse situations rather than achieve victory, is preventative and developmental, is finely calibrated, and, unlike war, is dedicated to the enforcement and spread of law and human rights.<sup>61</sup> Of course, many definitions of war would not fit these criteria, given that war is itself a disruptive, fluid kind of politics. But, there are nonetheless militarised practices beyond peacekeeping that form around something akin to a police *logic*, and humanitarian intervention is one of them.

It is within this context that one can speak of a move from protection to policing in the sense that humanitarian interventions have become complex processes that include, but are not reducible to, the direct protection of vulnerable groups from attack. Reliance

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<sup>60</sup> Dean, "Military Intervention as 'Police' Action?," 200-203.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 193-197.

on air power has made the protection of civilians a derivative effect of a much broader programme of conflict management that foregrounds physical objects and relies upon precision targeting. Though not as well developed or complex as the policing logics Dean has in mind, humanitarian intervention, at least in its air power mode, fits all of these characteristics and therefore begs a more dynamic analysis that treats it as a derivative of war that has specific similarities to other governmentalities.

To crib from Latour, current research on intervention has gone too far, too fast, and the result has been the creation of concepts imbued with powers over the material world that are simply too far beyond their remit to believe.<sup>62</sup> By unpacking the practice itself it becomes clear that humanitarian intervention, at least in its air power mode, represents an attempt to augment or (re)establish effective police (in Dean's definition) within states beset by conflict. Such an approach is emergent, messy, political, and fluid, however. It is a particular practice that sits within a broader category of humanitarianism—a category, one should add, that will have to be revisited once its constituent practices have been sufficiently evaluated. What is telling about humanitarian interventions is that they are at once separate from the more advanced logics of police, given that they deal with the breakdown rather than function of the everyday operations of the state, but as a form of warfare or warfighting, they are enacted in a way reminiscent of a police logic.

One way of conceptualising this is through Holmqvist's argument that the approach to war-as-policing is a metaphorical artefact; liberal war is engaged the way it is

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<sup>62</sup> Latour, *Reassembling*, eg. 23-25.

because of a metaphorical association of warfare with crime fighting that includes denoting one's adversary as a criminal.<sup>63</sup> This reading does come to some of the same conclusions as the socio-material, assemblage-focused analysis provided here. An important effect of seeing war as policing is a confusion of the conduct of war with its political purpose, resulting in a desire to maintain order rather than achieve victory.<sup>64</sup> As a result, the politics of conflict are stripped away and military operations, like the counterinsurgency efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, endeavor to create power and bestow authority on the state in ways that do not adequately address the politics of these regions—the denotation of disorder is accompanied by a depoliticising view of conflict identical to the one identified here in terms of humanitarian intervention.<sup>65</sup> What is important, however, is that there is a complex process of heterogeneous engineering which is prior to this metaphor becoming intelligible, and which has created a socio-material context within which it can be deployed. Also, by looking directly at practices themselves the metaphor of “liberal policing wars” yields to a more precise engagement with various practices. This in turn undermines any contention that there is a liberal way of war as such in favour of a collection of militarised governance practices that have family resemblances which may be called liberal.

This suggests a productive rather than totalising relationship between police and war. Further, adopting this approach negates any need to choose whether intervention is either war or police; either productive activity or technical practice. Instead, the assemblage can be foregrounding and the interaction between these registers comes

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<sup>63</sup> Holmqvist, *Policing Wars*, 9-13.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 44-48.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 34, 100-101.

plainly into view. This suggests a productive relationship between police and the military technology it increasingly mobilises. Such a relationship is too tenuous, situational, and variable to support either the grand theories of civilising or Empire, but they are nonetheless more productive than Dean's schematic, premised on the strict separation of war and police, allows. It is the interaction between the desire to create order in the interest of protecting individuals which manifested after the Cold War and the deployment of military force itself that must be unpacked if one is to understand how intervention works. This is decidedly not war in any traditional formulation, not least because its motivation, in political and practical terms, is humanitarian (though it falls well short in many instances). For this reason, humanitarian intervention has been noted as a form of police rather than war as such; in practice, such operations are far more closely related to a police logic, without being fully subsumed by this category, than it is to a more expansive understanding of war.<sup>66</sup>

## **1.2 Tactics to Politics: Re-Mapping Scholarly Approaches to Humanitarian Intervention**

Current scholarship has not adequately engaged the productive relationship between humanitarianism and military technology and vice versa. The literature on intervention, as well as the broader fields of security and strategic studies, is built upon a clear differentiation between the politics of using military force, commonly attributed to the

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<sup>66</sup> Of course, this very fact is a source of dismay for classically trained military theorists. In fact, Smith's much discussed tract on modern war specifically discusses the confusion of political aim with military practice as weakening the ability to 'win': Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007).

social and/or political domain, and the technical problems related to its deployment. This approach does not account for the politics that are created by the interaction of these registers over the course of engineering the air power assemblage as a means for realising intervention. In this way, these fields share a common shortcoming because they avoid engaging with the politics of military action itself and instead locate politics within the socio-political context that motivates it.<sup>67</sup> This is by no means a recent phenomenon. Beginning in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the conduct of war has been understood to be a technical enterprise separate from, but mobilised, necessarily shaped, and its conduct explained by politics. It was, following Gros, a “state of violence” that demanded obedience in the name of its assumed technical complexity.<sup>68</sup>

The current literature on intervention mirrors this contention, clearly locating politics outside of and separate from the conduct of military affairs. In this context, Clausewitz’s oft-misquoted maxim that “war is a continuation of politics by other means” must be read as a clarification that war is not, nor should it ever be, fought for its own purposes, but in pursuit of objectives beyond war.<sup>69</sup> War is therefore necessarily subordinate to politics, but this has meant an ongoing engagement with war and military force only in technical terms. Understanding warfare as a technical domain is rooted in the intellectualisation and bureaucratisation of military services during the Enlightenment that resulted in a technical, mechanistic, rational, and instrumental understanding of

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<sup>67</sup> Barkawi, "From War to Security: Security Studies, the Wider Agenda and the Fate of the Study of War."

<sup>68</sup> Frédéric Gros, *States of Violence: An Essay on the End of War*, trans. Krzysztof Fijalkowski and Michael Richardson (London, UK: Seagull, 2010), 47 ff.

<sup>69</sup> This reformulation is built on: Peter Paret, *The Cognitive Challenge of War: Prussia 1806* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2009), 2-3.

military force. Accordingly, the management of war is placed under the purview of expert practitioners considered to have the requisite professional knowledge.<sup>70</sup> The risk here is that if the specific practices associated with humanitarian intervention are not problematised, then critics and proponents will adopt a common technical vocabulary that prevents either from reflexively appraising this phenomenon.<sup>71</sup>

This sharing of technical vocabulary is clear in the intervention literature. As a result, the study of humanitarian intervention and the coercive elements of R2P coalesce around questions relating to the reconciliation of political desire with a military practice that has left aside the politics of warfare itself. Within the scholarly literature on intervention political ambition and technical considerations are generally argued to be in tension for some reason: a lack of will for mobilising a sufficiently robust military endeavour, an overly ambitious political agenda that outstrips what is considered possible via the use of force, or the creation of self-defeating strategies born of a gap between the perception of war in the West and its actualities located elsewhere.

In a practical sense, this debate has left the literature unable to comment on the politics created by approaches to intervention and brought increasing reliance on loose concepts of pragmatism which obscure systematic reflections.<sup>72</sup> The handful of official documents that attempt to create standards for intervention are themselves unmoored

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<sup>70</sup> Gros, *States*, 47-48 ff. .

<sup>71</sup> This point compliments the one made by Weizman regarding the technical vocabulary that has come to obscure debate about the ethics of intervention. Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils*, 134-136.

<sup>72</sup> The call for pragmatism has been developed in both pro-and anti-R2P ways. For pro see: Jennifer M. Welsh, "Conclusion: The Evolution of Humanitarian Intervention in International Society," in *Humanitarian Intervention and International Relations*, ed. Jennifer M. Welsh (New York, NY: Oxford, UP, 2006). For anti-R2P, but not anti-intervention, see: Robert A. Pape, "When Duty Calls: A Pragmatic Standard of Humanitarian Intervention," *International Security* 37, no. 1 (2012).

from the politics surrounding the use of force and, likewise, exist in isolation from the politics of intervention itself; they are technical documents motivated by considerations of efficiency.<sup>73</sup> There are very real problems with this state of affairs. Much like Weizman's study of the increasingly common technical vocabulary of militaries and humanitarian advocacy groups, the risk is a fetishising of current practices that negate real reflection on their humanitarian utility.<sup>74</sup> The instability that this creates for intervention and R2P has been clear; especially in the case of Libya where cries of military effectiveness proved incompatible with, and even damaging to, the long-term political stability of the concept.<sup>75</sup>

### **1.2.1 Norm or Principle?**

The richest literature on humanitarian intervention, at least amongst its proponents, is built up upon this differentiation of the practice and politics of intervention. For better or worse, the effectiveness of intervention is taken as a function of whether, and to what extent, a sufficiently robust political imperative to act can be created. Rather than an outcome of the engineering and mobilisation of an assemblage, the politics of intervention are reduced either to micro- or macro-social reductionist theorising. The macro-reductionist argument, referred to here as "strong Constructivism," is rooted in Constructivist IR theory. In this formulation, the politics of intervention are marked by

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<sup>73</sup> The most important of these is the MARO project and its report: Sarah Sewall, Dwight Raymond, and Sally Chin, "Maro - Mass Atrocity Response Operations: A Military Handbook," (Carlisle, PA: Army War College Carlisle Barracks, Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute 2010).

<sup>74</sup> Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils*.

<sup>75</sup> This is discussed at length in Chapter Five.

the relative power of international norms, and the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of intervention is a function of whether socialising pressure exists within the international system to compel states to devote sufficient resources to such actions.<sup>76</sup> The micro-reductionist argument, here labelled “weak Constructivism,” is exemplified by Liberal Institutional and English School thinking.<sup>77</sup> In this formulation, norms of behaviour influence the decision making of policy makers, but this does not fully supplant other imperatives like state interest, logistical complexity, or geopolitics. These approaches are discussed together because substantial bleeding occurs between these categories given their mutual interest in norms but disagreement on their ultimate causal weight.

What is clear, however, is that both approaches fail to identify the politics that follow from the creation of the air power assemblage. In these formulations, the material and technical elements of intervention are passive given the argument that effectiveness follows from normative (or at least conceptual) clarity that allows for robust military operations. In this way, the IR literature accounts for the emergence of humanitarian intervention by highlighting changes in the ideas or perceptions surrounding the use of military force in international politics, though not all see such a change as beneficial,

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<sup>76</sup> An important early example of this approach is Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2003).. Similarly, a increasingly key Constructivist text on intervention is Weiss, *Humanitarian Intervention*.. For another recent example see: Carrie Booth Walling, *All Necessary Measures: The United Nations and Humanitarian Intervention* (Philadelphia, PA: Pennsylvania UP, 2013).

<sup>77</sup> For an overview of this debate, and an example of the Liberal argument, see: J.L. Holzgrefe, "The Humanitarian Intervention Debate," in *Humanitarian Intervention: Ethical, Legal, and Political Dilemmas*, ed. J.L. Holzgrefe and Robert O. Keohane (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2003). A key English School text on humanitarian intervention is Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*. For a similar treatment of R2P from an English School approach see: Bellamy, "Added Value?."

genuine, or even stable.<sup>78</sup> What is missing, as a result, is an interrogation of the materialisation of intervention as an assemblage that exerts downward pressure on its constituent parts and so troubles or reformulates these social pressures. Intervention can pass as a clear category, rather than a series of assemblages that need to be unpacked. Thus, strong constructivists push for continued normative development, but this development is itself undermined by the politics created by the intervention assemblage they seek to seem more robustly mobilised. Merely pushing for increased normative pressure does not reconcile the gap between practice and principle that follows the reconfiguration of intervention as a means of managing the movement of objects. Liberal analysis, on the other hand, accepts this gap as inexorable. This short-circuits reflection because it mistakes practical effects as an outcome of some inexorable process, rather than a feature of an assemblage.

Within this literature, there are both strong and weak varieties of thought, but both foreground socialised norms or principles as determining the politics of intervention without critiquing the mode of intervention itself. For these constructivists, the practice of intervention is representative of a new international fidelity to basic human rights norms that has come to alter shared standards of behaviour within the international community. Norms, at their most basic, are “standard[s] of appropriate behaviour for actors with a

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<sup>78</sup> A survey of the literature on humanitarian intervention is given by Holzgrefe, "Intervention Debate." Major, mainstream texts in this literature include: Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*; Bellamy, *Responsibility to Protect*; Finnemore, *Purpose of Intervention*. Important Critical studies include: Debrix, *Re-Envisioning Peacekeeping*; Lene Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006); Helle Malmvig, *State Sovereignty and Intervention: A Discourse Analysis of Interventionary and Non-Interventionary Practices in Kosovo and Algeria* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006).

given identity.”<sup>79</sup> Social deliberation occurs between actors as they argue and/or bargain regarding political issues, in the process creating a shared body of accumulated experience which produces a logic of appropriateness concerning behaviour—a pattern which then takes on a moral quality.<sup>80</sup> Scholars have credited the proliferation of print media in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century as providing an avenue for just such a moral debate concerning the use of military force against or within sovereign states for humanitarian reasons.<sup>81</sup> After the Cold War, the creation of the twenty-four-hour news cycle, coupled with a relaxation of the geopolitical climate, created a renewed popular consensus (in the West, at least) concerning humanitarian intervention at precisely the moment that it became geopolitically palatable.<sup>82</sup> The liberal contention here is that the end of the Cold War provided a chance to extend the concept of the social contract to international politics, paving the way for the enforcement of human rights, by force if necessary.<sup>83</sup> Though more neo-Kantian and classically liberal than constructivist, Ignatieff has (in)famously argued that this opportunity to wed military strength and humanitarianism

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<sup>79</sup> Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): 891.

<sup>80</sup> Harald Müller, "Arguing, Bargaining and All That: Communicative Action, Rationalist Theory and the Logic of Appropriateness in International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* 10, no. 3 (2004): 395-397, 400-401. Müller provides an excellent overview of the debate over speech acts and political/social deliberation in this article.

<sup>81</sup> Bass, *Freedom's Battle*, 25-38. This argument is consistent with Habermas' argument that a 'public' capable of collective reasoning via communication and argumentation was created at this time. Cf. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989).

<sup>82</sup> Mayall, "Introduction," 1-31; Bellamy, *Responsibility to Protect*, 8-15; Ignatieff, "Stories."

<sup>83</sup> Bellamy, *Responsibility to Protect*, 10-12. It also bears noting that the 'end of history' thesis is related to this perspective: Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York, NY: Free Press, 2006).

creates the unique opportunity to build an ethical, liberal empire on the foundation of American political and military power.<sup>84</sup>

With the traditional geopolitical discourse of international politics disrupted, the once obfuscated gap between liberal Western rhetoric regarding human rights and the reality of suffering populations became a point of debate—at least selectively.<sup>85</sup> The result, as Crawford argues, is that intrepid advocates were able to convince states to (re)conceptualise the use of military force on the basis of already established ethical norms by linking concepts of human rights with the protective role historically assigned to the state.<sup>86</sup> Norm diffusion, as Acharya outlines, sees these ideas diffused throughout the international system; diffusion here understood as a substantive process of various states, inter-state groups, and regional organisations accepting the basic concept of human protection through debating, resisting, altering humanitarian intervention (and later R2P) into fitting various situations.<sup>87</sup> Assuming a process of diffusion provides a decentred process of norm development that contains a critical, reflexive relationship and continued social reasoning. This, however, is still a clearly social process.

There are both strong and weak understandings of intervention as the product of an unfolding social process. In the stronger sense humanitarian intervention is becoming an entrenched norm that will directly influence how states behave and adjudicate each other's legitimacy.<sup>88</sup> It will, following Wendt, come to alter the ideas that underlie state

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<sup>84</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *Empire Lite: Nation-Building in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan* (Toronto, ON: Penguin Canada, 2003), 50-64.

<sup>85</sup> Crawford, *Argument*, 24, 114-117.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Amitav Acharya, "The R2p and Norm Diffusion: Towards a Framework of Norm Circulation," *Global Responsibility to Protect* 5, no. 4 (2013): 468-469.

<sup>88</sup> Finnemore, *Purpose of Intervention*; Weiss, *Humanitarian Intervention*; Crawford, *Argument*.

calculations of interest and, in turn, shape patterns of behaviour.<sup>89</sup> For those supportive of humanitarian intervention transforming the practice into a norm requires states to internalise it to the point that it becomes an integral part of how they reason.<sup>90</sup> Advocating the practice in particular cases builds up a stock of shared experience that helps alleviate concerns and instil legitimacy for the practice.<sup>91</sup> For fervent supporters of R2P, this process is made possible by the conceptual work laid down by the ICISS report in its capacity to “end mass atrocity crimes once and for all” by locating humanitarian intervention within a larger practical apparatus for protecting human rights worldwide.<sup>92</sup> This progressive narrative is problematic in that it gives little attention to the fact that, at a practical level, the success, failure, or efficacy of intervention is not reducible to effective political reasoning.

As the case studies below will show the practice of intervention itself is a site of contestation and politics where different strategies, tactics, and logics vie for influence. It simply cannot be understood as coherent enough to provide a foundation for elaborate, behaviour altering concepts at the international level. What is missing is the fact that normative reasoning needs to have a material foundation to be stable. Constructivism does not adequately address this fact, leading to an overwhelming interest in ethical or moral considerations. Moving from a discussion of intersubjectively created behavioural standards to practical considerations opens humanitarian intervention to critique from those who endorse a weaker social perspective. In a weaker sense, humanitarian

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<sup>89</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1999), 109-135.

<sup>90</sup> Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change."

<sup>91</sup> Weiss, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 191-141.

<sup>92</sup> Evans, *Responsibility to Protect*, 71-76.

intervention is understood as a shared principle that informs states' reasoning, rather than a norm that shapes state behaviour. These scholars take norms seriously but are unwilling to cast aside the considerations of state interest and logistical complexity that figure so prominently in international politics and make some interventions impossible even if political consensus deems them desirable.<sup>93</sup> Articulating humanitarian intervention within the conceptual apparatus of R2P clarifies principles and helps avoid all or nothing decisions regarding intervention in some instances, rather than a blanket reform with drastic consequences.<sup>94</sup> Discussions of humanitarian intervention and R2P are here not taken as evidence of a step toward an abrupt change in international structure, nor should they be.

These scholars are still proponents of humanitarian intervention, but they worry that attempts to codify and formalise the practice as a norm invite disruption. Calculations of interest, as well as practical military, geographic, and aid provision capacity considerations mean intervention will be impossible in some cases. If intervention is understood as a norm, these cases become failures that will damage the credibility of R2P as they did humanitarian intervention.<sup>95</sup> As Hehir argues, humanitarian intervention has been ensconced as legitimate when, in specific cases, it reflects international consensus. The problem of selectivity, so blatantly shown by the current disjuncture between international responses to the Libya and Syria conflicts, is linked to the fact that little agreement exists on *how* such interventions should be carried out rather

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<sup>93</sup> Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 299-310.

<sup>94</sup> Bellamy, *Responsibility to Protect*, 2-4. Cf. Bellamy, "Added Value?."

<sup>95</sup> Welsh, "Conclusion," 183-188.

than if such practices are legitimate.<sup>96</sup> Therefore, interested actors should focus on advocating the formalisation of institutional practices, but even this argument is far more interested in creating UNSC jurisprudence than a critical engagement with practice.<sup>97</sup> Where stronger supporters of the humanitarian intervention-as-norm perspective push for further socialisation, this approach argues for the adoption of a “pragmatic standard” premised on the institutionalised weighing of moral, logistical, and conflict specific factors (such as regional dynamics, military capacity, and social context) when considering intervention.<sup>98</sup> Even intervention’s legality is problematic given that abuse may be prevented by leaving the practice outside the purview of international law, thereby forcing states to atone for their actions and think carefully in each instance.<sup>99</sup>

The weak position on humanitarian intervention, which situates social factors in a larger practical and material context, provides a firm foundation for beginning to unravel the heterogeneous nature of the practice. That said, the approach leaves under specified and under theorised several key factors, including the influence of technology and other material elements, as well as the changing and mutating strategies of intervention. For this reason, “pragmatism” must be abandoned in favour of a precise, historical engagement with the heterogeneous engineering of humanitarian intervention.

A weak social approach foregrounds all of these considerations, but no theoretical work has yet been carried out to deepen our understanding of them or plumb the various

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<sup>96</sup> Aidan Hehir, "The Permanence of Inconsistency: Libya, the Security Council, and the Responsibility to Protect," *International Security* 38, no. 1 (2013): 148-151.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., Aidan Hehir, *The Responsibility to Protect: Rhetoric, Reality and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

<sup>98</sup> Pape, "When Duty Calls: A Pragmatic Standard of Humanitarian Intervention," 52-61.

<sup>99</sup> Simon Chesterman, *Just War or Just Peace?: Humanitarian Intervention and International Law* (New York, NY: Oxford UP, 2001), 231-232.

shifting linkages which exist between them. The problem then is that weak social approaches to interventionism take a shortcut by evoking terms like “pragmatism” and thereby accept the current technical configuration of such interventions. Professing pragmatism mistakenly depoliticises various practical considerations, in so doing losing sight of the politics of intervention itself. By pleading for common sense, one relegates considerations of appropriateness to technical considerations without appropriately interrogating what constitutes such considerations. The risk here is that without an engagement with the social-material political context of intervention both strong and weak positions can relapse into political activism for practices or strategies that are, rhetoric aside, inherently counterproductive or even complicit in human suffering. As such, unexamined practices pose a danger to the further development of effective means to address violent conflict.

### **1.2.2 The Conservative Rejoinder: Bias**

There is, of course, a rejoinder to the Constructivist argument put forward by both IR Realists and more conservative voices in strategic studies. Of course, Constructivists have already pointed out that Structural Realism does a poor job of unpacking why humanitarian intervention re-emerged and proliferated after Cold War. Simply put, considerations of interest did not account for the emergence, proliferation, and stability of the practice.<sup>100</sup> What must be added to the Constructivist critique is that the Realist assumption, that military force is a tool for forging or maintaining international order, precludes an analysis of how interactions between military technology and other

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<sup>100</sup> A good, early example of this argument can be found in Finnemore, *Purpose of Intervention*, 52.

conceptual frameworks, like global humanitarianism, can create new political effects. Assemblage theory provides a set of tools for seeing military force as a productive element in different constellations of forces that create downward causality. By contrast, Realism entertains a kind of macro-reductionist materialism that renders it unable to comment upon the politics created by the air power assemblage.

Realists insist that state behaviour is determined by the incentive structure created by the material distribution of resources and that humanitarian intervention, in most cases, runs counter to the resultant imperatives. Though realist scholarship has been largely delineated as taking such interventions, when they do occur, to be thinly veiled exercises in *realpolitik*, this is actually more true of critical scholarship that insists state interest obscures humanitarian considerations.<sup>101</sup> Theoretically driven realist work takes the political debate about intervention, and the American experience of engaging in “wars of choice” in the post-Cold War period, as an example of how liberal bias has led to suboptimal foreign policy decision making and the overzealous use of military force.<sup>102</sup> Realists argue that, in the wake of the Cold War, leaders bought into a liberal rhetoric that advocates a militarised foreign policy premised on false assumptions regarding the

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<sup>101</sup> Two examples of this argument, that refer directly to the war in Kosovo, are: Mohammed Ayoob, "Humanitarian Intervention and International Society," *Global Governance* 7, no. 3 (2001); Ken Booth, "The Kosovo Tragedy: Epilogue to Another 'Low and Dishonest Decade'," *Politikon* 27, no. 1 (2000).

<sup>102</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (1994): 48-49. Edward N. Luttwak, "Toward Post-Heroic Warfare," *Foreign Affairs* 74, no. 3 (1995).

efficacy of military force. The net result: fiascos and wrong-headed half-measures that only served to foster global instability and hurt objective interests.<sup>103</sup>

At work here is a more basic formulation of the relationship between politics and the technical function of war. In this formulation, the social pressure to deploy military force in order to protect vulnerable groups is bemoaned as inconsistent with what is considered the appropriate role of force in global affairs. Returning to Clausewitz for just a moment, this reading admits that war is, and should be, subordinated to politics. However, this does not mean that the practice of warfare is best understood through a political rather than technical lens. This tension is brought to the fore in Paret's study of warfare in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In a practical sense learning to cope with the immense changes of this period was rather straight forward in practice, but "...the response of society to new ideas of methods of war, driven less by analysis than by anxiety and assumptions based on class and culture..." is more complicated and necessarily echoes back into the conduct of war.<sup>104</sup> Such an analysis separates the technical question of how best to wage war from politics in order to show how the latter can complicate and shape the former in ways that are counterproductive.

The fallacies of current Western foreign policy can then be registered in two forms. On the one hand, the imperative that states protect themselves in the anarchic global system necessitates that they *always* prioritise their own interests, negating the idea that humanitarian intervention can be anything but a dangerous or hubristic

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<sup>103</sup> Andrew J. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Oxford UP, 2003), 20-22.

<sup>104</sup> Paret, *Cognitive Challenge*, 2-3.

practice.<sup>105</sup> On the other, humanitarian interventions are linked to a simplified understanding of ethnic and civil conflict that fails to address root causes, which Luttwak has argued are best dealt with by letting internal actors resolve their disputes.<sup>106</sup> In both cases, the necessary influence of politics over war has gone too far and created bias, a reading predicated on an understanding of the maintenance of global order, and the conduct of military affairs, as technical rather than political concerns. Luttwak's "post-heroic warfare" hypothesis neatly encapsulates this logic. According to Luttwak, the relative prosperity of advanced industrialised states brought with it lower birth rates and an increased sensitivity to casualties in war.<sup>107</sup> The result was a hamstringing of great powers' ability to manage global order via conflict as well as a reliance on air power to show resolve while obfuscating the inability of Western militaries to fight wars effectively.<sup>108</sup> Much like the constructivist argument, however, this approach accepts the bracketing off of military affairs as a technical domain, but here it is tainted rather than harnessed by social (read democratic) considerations.

As a result, nothing very interesting is said about the politics involved in materialising the specific practices of humanitarian intervention that have emerged, persist, and continue to mutate at a practical and material level—they are all simply dismissed as inefficiencies in the exercise of the military arts. As a result, Realism takes a shortcut in dealing with intervention rather than engaging directly with the material

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<sup>105</sup> Jeremy Moses, "Sovereignty as Irresponsibility? A Realist Critique of the Responsibility to Protect," *Review of International Studies* 39, no. 01 (2013).

<sup>106</sup> Edward N. Luttwak, "Give War a Chance," *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 4 (1999).

<sup>107</sup> Edward Luttwak, *Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace*, Rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 2001), 71.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 71-74.

elements of the intervention assemblage and how they interact with social expectations. For such scholars, lurking below the surface is *the* way to conduct war dictated by the material context of conflict. The analysis offered below specifically rejects such material determinism and opens up the act of intervention as a political space in its own right. It is evident upon closer investigation that a more diffuse, contextually contingent, and historically situated approach is needed to understand how social elements (which do figure in Realist analysis under the heading of “bias”), come to interact with various strategies and material things and result in emergent practices.

### **1.2.3 Situating the Responsibility to Protect**

One of this project’s priorities is to offer a more compelling, complete, nuanced, and useful account of humanitarian intervention by focussing on specific Assemblages rather than abstract categories. In the period following the end of the Cold War, humanitarian intervention and the emergence of an air power assemblage has been crosscut by R2P. Though many scholars argue R2P is different from humanitarian intervention, this argument is contingent on a more normative and legal definition of the practice than simply asking how military force has become compatible with human protection. Since the publication and dissemination of R2P its nomenclature has become integral to the discussion on using military force for humanitarian reasons. In the growing R2P-specific literature there is a cacophony of different perspectives on, and definitions of, this concept that are related to the positions on humanitarian intervention outlined above.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Useful summary texts include: Bellamy, "Added Value?."; Bellamy, *Responsibility to Protect*; Alex J. Bellamy, *Global Politics and the Responsibility to Protect: From Words to Deeds* (New York, NY:

For this reason, it is essential to situate any discussion of humanitarian intervention, even if it has little intention of addressing the concept's much broader remit, in relation to R2P.

R2P was an essential conceptual reformulation of legitimacy for coercive military intervention following international inaction during the Rwandan genocide and the “illegal but legitimate” NATO intervention in Kosovo.<sup>110</sup> In the weak social sense, R2P saves humanitarian intervention from the concerns it had fostered among non-Western states over the 1990s. Taking R2P as a conceptual clarifying move for humanitarian intervention, however, is not a universally accepted position. That said, Evans argues that R2P should be a selectively used piece of political capital that can mobilise international efforts during the most extreme and controversial conflicts.<sup>111</sup> In the tradition of the Copenhagen School of security studies, it becomes possible, from this perspective, to see R2P as a tool used by securitising agents: a concept that, if skillfully and selectively utilised, can spur international action by pushing debate beyond every day global politics.<sup>112</sup>

In practice, R2P has taken on very a different practical and normative character. As Badescu points out, even though the drafters of the ICISS report were initially preoccupied with the issue of military intervention, the finished product clearly deals

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Routledge, 2011); Cristina G. Badescu, *Humanitarian Intervention and the Responsibility to Protect: Security and Human Rights* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2012); Ramesh Thakur, *The Responsibility to Protect: Norms, Laws, and the Use of Force in International Politics* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2010); Evans, *Responsibility to Protect*; Weiss, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 88-118.

<sup>110</sup> Weiss, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 88-89.

<sup>111</sup> Evans, *Responsibility to Protect*, 71-76.

<sup>112</sup> Eli Stammers, "'Speaking R2p' and the Prevention of Mass Atrocities," *Global Responsibility to Protect* 1, no. 1 (2009): 71; Cf. Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998).

with a continuum of policy options and a broader understanding of individual rights that has been confused as synonymous with humanitarian intervention within the scholarly literature.<sup>113</sup> Separating intervention from R2P requires defining the latter as:

a system of protection involving diplomacy, judicial measures, economic measures, peace operations deployed with local consent – albeit coerced – international assistance to help build responsible sovereigns with appropriate capacity and much more besides.<sup>114</sup>

In this way, R2P functions not as a rallying call, or even a powerful norm, but helps habituate states to thinking of their agency in specific terms regarding humanitarian crises, which does not mean such habits in any way determine state action.<sup>115</sup>

This more decentred understanding of R2P, which is in keeping with the weak social perspective outlined above, is a useful point to begin analysis. A broad view provides a perspective on how humanitarianism and its related precepts come to shape larger trends, but it does so at the expense of studying strategies and the social and material network that makes them possible. In trying to broaden the discussion of human protection to salvage legitimacy for international engagement, analysis has become even further removed from the practice of military intervention itself that, regardless of the breadth of the concept, is still important to R2P. This project focuses on humanitarian intervention understood simply as the use of military force in the context of protracted or ongoing conflict for the specific purpose of safeguarding vulnerable groups. This reading helps to clarify analytical confusion surrounding R2P by arguing that the concept resonates with, and in so doing is shaped by, the heterogeneous assemblages that

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<sup>113</sup> Badescu, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 10-11.

<sup>114</sup> Bellamy, *Responsibility to Protect*, 4.

<sup>115</sup> Bellamy, "Added Value?," 335.

materialise humanitarian intervention. The critical point, of course, is to understand how these groups come to be known, how strategies for their protection by military means emerge, and how technology renders possible, and therefore shapes, these other registers. One may even call this the first step toward mapping the networks of humanitarian governance under the banners of a progressive “empire of humanity” or problematic “security-development nexus.”<sup>116</sup>

The analysis provided below is important for two reasons. First, it provides empirical support for critical scholarship that sees the depoliticising effects of such a contextualisation of humanitarian intervention in a broader development agenda linked to the executive authority of international bodies like the UNSC.<sup>117</sup> As such, it supports the contention that intervention, if it is a legitimate policy tool, must be used to foster domestic political debate, even if it does not have the outcome many Western stakeholders would like.<sup>118</sup> The point here is that debate at the international level is shaped by a series of intermediary forces that obscure local politics.

Second, and building on Cohen, assuming that intervention must necessarily be an “exception” of the Schmittian variety results from the lack of clarity with which these strategies are engaged.<sup>119</sup> For those who are critical, and rightly so, of humanitarianism, the idea of exception is used to bring considerations of military action and humanitarian aid into dialogue with each other so as to analyse asymmetries in our collective

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<sup>116</sup> Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2011); Duffield, *Development*.

<sup>117</sup> Anne Orford, *International Authority and the Responsibility to Protect* (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2011), 1-41.

<sup>118</sup> Jean L. Cohen, *Globalization and Sovereignty: Rethinking Legality, Legitimacy and Constitutionalism* (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2012), 205-215.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

reasoning.<sup>120</sup> A disaster is a disaster, and humanitarian reason is humanitarian reason; no matter its guise, it holds the same implicit power hierarchies and depoliticising assumption. Though a productive perspective in many ways, these arguments must be held as tentative while awaiting more empirical nuance. Duffield's "security-development nexus" effectively illustrates the shortcomings of and growing ambiguity between concepts of order, security, aid, and general patterns of global governance, but at the expense of differentiating various strategies and their politics. Foregrounding the relationship between technological artefacts and identity constructs shows that there are specific strategies at work under this banner that may be interrelated, but are not reducible to one another. Using military force creates specific identity constructs, strategies, and tactics for the use of technology that in turn create an exceptionalism all its own. Of course, these logics may be projected on the same bodies identified by NGOs for humanitarian assistance, but the functional differences between these practices create tension and a power-laden struggle over the correct governance of life rather than manifesting a coherent global system. It is as much dissensus as nexus.

R2P, in sum, should be taken as a concept that conditions and habituates state action at the level of discourse and identity construction. To be clear, scholars should heed the argument that R2P and concepts like it contribute to the lack of distinction between war and humanitarianism by obscuring their relationship.<sup>121</sup> Analysis, however,

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<sup>120</sup> Fassin, *Humanitarian Reason*, 181-186; Didier Fassin, "Humanitarianism as a Politics of Life," *Public Culture* 19, no. 3 (2007).

<sup>121</sup> Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils*, 52-53; Dider Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi, "Introduction: Military and Humanitarian Government in the Age of Intervention," in *Contemporary States of Emergency: The Politics of Military and Humanitarian Interventions*, ed. Dider Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi (New York, NY: Zone Books, 2013), 22.

must be pushed beyond this level to include strategies and technology employed to realise these strategies—a broad, critical engagement with the various practices and accompanying assemblages that make up R2P-related operations. In the cases of development, post-conflict peacekeeping, and the management of refugee populations this task has already been accomplished to some extent.<sup>122</sup> What is missing is an understanding of how military interventions themselves are rendered possible by assemblages that are immanent to, and in turn shape, their constituent parts. Providing such an analysis creates a deeper critical understanding of how the various processes of global humanitarianism abut, overlap, and struggle against each other. Accomplishing this task requires tracing the networks of discourse, strategies, and material artefacts that make various forms of governance possible. Power is always “local and provisional.”, However, part of its location is created by the technology used to realise it.<sup>123</sup> To some extent, work related to practice theory has attempted to unsettle this dynamic by adding the concept of emergent power, but even here the focus on the meetings and procedures of the UN Security Council fails to re-centre intervention itself as a focus of study.<sup>124</sup>

### **1.3 Overview and the Content of the Dissertation**

The remainder of this dissertation elaborates the hybrid politics of the air power policing assemblage as a way of materialising humanitarian intervention. It critically engages the

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<sup>122</sup> Duffield, *Development*; Laura Zanotti, *Governing Disorder: Un Peace Operations, International Security, and Democratization in the Post-Cold War Era* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 2011); Jennifer Hyndman, *Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism* (Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota UP, 2000).

<sup>123</sup> Larner and Walters, *Global Governmentality*, 3-4.

<sup>124</sup> Adler-Nissen and Pouliot, "Power in Practice: Negotiating the International Intervention in Libya."

tactics and related political effects of using bombing as a humanitarian tool by providing a history of the process of heterogeneous engineering that created it. In Chapter Two, a firmer theoretical foundation is laid down for engaging practices like intervention as hybrid politics entities. It does so by unpacking the theoretical assertions of the “new materialist” turn in IR before outlining how heterogeneous assemblages are mediated by technology, political in the sense that they privilege specific behavioural patterns, and unstable so as to need constant stabilisation. The Chapter then provides a socio-material backgrounder on both humanitarianism and air power, in the process showing how the spatial characteristics of the former, and the foregrounding of objects by the latter, come to influence the intervention assemblage’s creation. Finally, the Chapter provides an overview of this project’s methodology.

Chapter Three analyses international engagement with the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Rather than the singular failure of international resolve this case is generally taken to represent, this Chapter analyses two competing processes of heterogeneous engineering as accounting for the muddling of international policy. By attempting to reconcile international desire to protect civilians with the material context of the conflict the US slowly developed an air power based policy, while the UN was forced to try to extend the logic of traditional peacekeeping to include human protection. While initially interrelated, these two engineering projects attempted to mobilise different operational logics and were driven apart by the conflict itself, resulting in the collapse of the expanded peacekeeping model and the ascension of the air power model. The Chapter

concludes by analysing the safe areas themselves in order to show how both strategies depoliticised civilian life.

Chapter Four deals with NATO's operations in Kosovo. Here the air power assemblage was unmoored from the physical context of Bosnia-Herzegovina and rendered mobile by its virtualisation. The reliance on precision targeting technology, specifically the disorientating and partial perspective it creates, resonated with the emerging logic of air power policing. The model could then be deployed in this case, but the result was a loose fit between this operational logic and the reality of the conflict. NATO's inability to arrest ethnic cleansing, the incongruity between the operational model and the politics of the case and the civilian deaths associated with the air strikes all had to be explained. The *ad hoc* nature of the discourse surrounding this conflict helped to defend this use of force, just as scholarship came to rearticulate a view of humanitarian intervention as a specific kind of military operation. As a result, the contingency and political effects of the air power policing model were exposed but then obscured.

Chapter Five departs from these first two case studies in that it studies the material politics of the Libya intervention in purely discursive forms. This approach is taken so that R2P, a conceptual element in the current hybrid politics of intervention, can be foregrounded. The inability of the literature to account for this operation as either a success or a failure is overcome by redefining R2P as a concept that resonates with the pre-existing air power assemblage. Without foregrounding the politics of this assemblage, R2P scholars have been left trying to make sense of the status of R2P after Libya when the key reference point should be the hybrid politics of the assemblage. Chapter Six again

summarises this research before situating this specific study of humanitarian intervention in what should be a more plural research agenda regarding peace operations and R2P.

## 2 Outlining and Studying Air Power as a Social-Material

### Assemblage

*In any case, it seems to me that the dimension of what is to be done can only appear within a field of real forces, that is to say within a field of forces that cannot be created by a speaking subject along and on the basis of his words, because it is a field of forces that cannot in any way be controlled or asserted within this kind of imperative discourse.<sup>1</sup>*

What role does a fighter plane, an oil pipeline, a social media website, ocean, or mountain play in international politics? For the “new materialist” literature these various items can be situated in larger human-material assemblages that are at once the outcome of, and foundation for, patterns of international behaviour. A core concept at work here is that social science is anthropocentric and does not pay sufficient attention to the material elements that support patterns of social interaction. Following Latour, one can take technological artefacts and material “things”, when discussed regarding their relationship to social behaviour, as the “missing masses” of current theoretical perspectives; an element of a given theory’s ontological worldview that, while its presence can be felt, is not the focus of analysis.<sup>2</sup> For mainstream materialist theories, namely Structural or Neorealism, material things work in conjunction with the anarchic environment of international politics to create a set of incentives that determine state behaviour. Sociological theories, foremost among them Constructivism, take issue with the inability of such material determinism to account for changes in global politics despite a consistent material backdrop. Such work insists that material context is what we make of it,

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<sup>1</sup> Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College De France, 1977-78* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 3.

<sup>2</sup> Bruno Latour, "Where Are the Missing Masses? The Sociology of a Few Mundane Artifacts," in *Shaping Technology/Building Society: Studies in Sociotechnical Change*, ed. Wiebe Bijker and John Law (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 227.

specifically how we think about it. These positions, however, both operate in a deterministic mode, albeit both represent different forms of reductionism. Organized in this way IR remains a thoroughly modern discipline, even though it is home to numerous epistemological and ontological perspectives. “Modernism” in this sense is understood in the terms outlined by Latour, precisely as the organisation of analytical endeavours around a strict demarcation between material and social “things.”<sup>3</sup> He contends that “we have never been modern,” and that discernable patterns of social behaviour are prefigured and shaped by material and technological influences.

The current literature on intervention and R2P is inherently modernist in that Constructivists and Liberals see the effectiveness of the use of force in socio-political terms, whereas Realists insist that such behaviour is an idealized (or idealistic) reading of material circumstances. In response, this project mobilises actor-network-theory and assemblage theory to chart how such practices are heterogeneously engineered. Following Law, a practice like humanitarian intervention is made possible, and in turn shaped, by the network of social, conceptual, institutional, material, economic, and material elements that are brought together in order to realise it.<sup>4</sup> The conditions and tactics related to forming, legitimating, mobilising, and supporting such networks are what such an approach specifically focuses on.<sup>5</sup> The affordances that are or are not allowed by the resulting network, along with the ways of thinking they either privilege or render momentarily inconceivable, mark its politics. What is important, however, is that

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<sup>3</sup> Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1993), 10-12.

<sup>4</sup> Law, "Technology and Heterogeneous Engineering," 112-114.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

these networks, which are referred to here as assemblages, do not fuse into a coherent whole. They are both fragile, in the sense that they must constantly be reformulated and reaffirmed, and unstable given that they are made up of several moving parts.<sup>6</sup> It is both the need to find ways of creating relationships between concepts and material things, as well as the fact that the resulting configurations do not determine but shape their constituent elements, that makes the politics of system building emergent and mediated.

In becoming part of a network, the nebulous idea of humanitarianism is rendered part of a specific assemblage, but the result is not simply a realisation of a specific ethos but its mediation. It is this mediation, and the gap that is created between the stated purpose of an action and its ultimate effect, that current literature fails to identify.

Labeling the resulting socio-material relationship an assemblage is an analytical rather than lexicographical choice. An assemblage is here used as a short hand for what Foucault called a *dispositif* or “apparatus”: “...a set of strategies of the relations of forces supporting, and supported by, certain types of knowledge.”<sup>7</sup> Agamben argues an apparatus has three key features: it is a heterogeneous network that includes “virtually anything”, it has a concrete strategic function and is therefore located within a relationship of power, and it appears at the intersection of power and knowledge.<sup>8</sup> This marks a specific departure from the current literature on humanitarian intervention that takes the practice as an artefact of a particular causal process. Be it a manifestation of a constructed norm, the outcome of liberal institutional politics, or a response authorised by

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<sup>6</sup> Two excellent studies that unpack the global energy infrastructure in this way include: Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy*; Barry, *Material Politics: Disputes Along the Pipeline*.

<sup>7</sup> Foucault cited in Giorgio Agamben, *What Is an Apparatus?: And Other Essays*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2009), 2.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-3.

discourse (perhaps in ways that are violent), such interventions are taken to be kinds of things that are (not) mobilised. Treating intervention as an assemblage breaks out of the reductionism such readings entail.

Rather than corresponding to broad analytical categories, assemblages are systems that function as both the foundation and product of specific, historically situated, and individual practices.<sup>9</sup> In this light, it makes little sense to talk about humanitarian intervention in broad terms because the specific politics created by such practices are a function of the specific assemblage which bring them into existence. While they can be made up of a broad collection of ontologically heterogeneous elements they can nonetheless be identified by the practices that they render possible and, for a period, durable. Unpacking the precise configuration of any given assemblage is therefore immanent to charting its construction; though we can identify them based on their function, their form and ultimately emergent qualities are only understandable after we have unpacked what makes a practice possible. Doing so requires a rejection of the pre-existing categorisation of a form of behaviour in favour of a deliberate working through of the various factors that come together to make it possible. Rather than develop an ideal type and apply it to reality, assemblage theory requires the identification of a practice, like the use of air power as a form of humanitarianism, and then tracking the network that has invariably formed to make this kind of behaviour possible.

Humanitarian intervention is itself an assemblage of humanitarian concepts, technological tools, and specific tactics. Assemblages do not form naturally but are

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<sup>9</sup> DeLanda, *Assemblage Theory*, 19-21.

actively forged, maintained, and defended against alternative formulations.<sup>10</sup> However, in creating this practice the various material elements that are brought into play not only form but also reconfigure it, resulting in a novel form of conflict management. What is essential here is the fact that the resulting whole shapes its constituent parts, but fails to over determine them. For DeLanda, “[a]ssemblages emerge from the interactions between their parts, but once an assemblage is in place it immediately starts acting as a source of limitations and opportunities for its components.”<sup>11</sup> Rather than transcendent, assemblages are immanent to their parts, resulting in a complex rather than linear causality which ultimately has political effects in that they render momentarily (im)possible ways of thinking and acting. As Rose explains, they set “...the conditions of possibility and intelligibility for certain ways of seeking to act upon the conduct of others, or oneself, to achieve certain ends.”<sup>12</sup> Humanitarian intervention, in the hands of the US and NATO, has become, through the experience of the cases analysed in the following Chapters, a complex assemblage of humanitarianism, spatial management premised on the use of air power, and an ongoing discursive project that identifies the use of force as technical rather than political.

This Chapter provides the theoretical and methodological background necessary for studying intervention as an assemblage. First, it outlines the theoretical edifice needed to explore the materialisation of intervention and the mediating role of technology. Of

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<sup>10</sup> An excellent example of this process is given Mitchell in his analysis of how oil companies actively created the demand, scarcity, and inherent importance of oil to the global economy. See: Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy*.

<sup>11</sup> DeLanda, *Assemblage Theory*, 21.

<sup>12</sup> Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought* (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 1999), 19.

course, the overall point is to outline how the idea of human protection, the desire to protect civilians from conflict, was materialised. The following Chapters outline how air power has mediated this strategy, in turn transforming it into a logic of conflict management premised upon managing the movement of physical objects. Human protection becomes a derivative concern when it is understood in terms of spatial management *qua* order making, which comes with a simplification of the politics of a given conflict and a de-politicisation of civilians. While an emergent strategy that is not reducible to either air power doctrine or other forms of humanitarianism, this approach does bear the influence of both spatial logics of humanitarianism and the mediating influence of air power technology.

The first section of this Chapter outlines what it means to study social patterns and the material “things” they relate to in an emergent, rather than reductionist, way. This more general engagement with the new materialist literature is followed by more specific summaries of socio-material work done on humanitarianism and air power. A careful analysis of the history of military air power brings to light how it has become shaped by strategies of spatial management that foreground specific classes of physical objects and seek to untangle corporeal human bodies from the bombing process. These tactics make thinking about intervention as a form of policing possible, but this also renders civilians’ bodies themselves indiscernible and thereby strips the conflict its politics. With this theoretical edifice intact, the Chapter then turns to an overview of the methodology that supports the case studies presented in Chapters Three, Four, and Five.

## 2.1 Hybrid Politics

US and NATO reliance on air power is generally explained as a half measure taken in the interest of preserving the lives of military personnel. Reliance on air power complicates claims that these interventions are truly humanitarian because it transfers the risks associated with the use of military force to the very people who are being “protected.” The result is a specific moral economy that is both supported and obscured by ethical and/or legal permissiveness.<sup>13</sup> This is exacerbated by the technological systems themselves, specifically because they create ambiguity regarding the ultimate accountability for the use of deadly force.<sup>14</sup> Chamayou goes further, in his work on drone warfare, by arguing that reliance upon sophisticated air power technology reconfigures the ethics of military force, which includes seeing this risk transfer as a virtue. As a result, these weapons become “humanitarian,” not because of their effect, but because they shield intervening forces from the risks of combat.<sup>15</sup> In the constructivist literature on humanitarian intervention (discussed in Chapter One), overcoming legal or ethical permissiveness is best achieved by fomenting normative pressure to use more direct, robust, and efficient means of intervention.

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<sup>13</sup> James Pattison, "Bombing the Beneficiaries: The Distribution of the Costs of the Responsibility to Protect and Humanitarian Intervention," in *The Ethics of Armed Intervention* (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2014); Thomas W. Smith, "The New Law of War: Legitimizing Hi-Tech and Infrastructural Violence," *International Studies Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (2002).

<sup>14</sup> Neta C. Crawford, *Accountability for Killing: Moral Responsibility for Collateral Damage in America's Post-9/11 Wars* (New York, NY: Oxford UP, 2013).

<sup>15</sup> This argument has been made rather clearly through the lens of drone warfare by: Grégoire Chamayou, *A Theory of the Drone*, trans. Janet Lloyd (New York, NY: The New Press, 2015), 135-139. Of course, critical scholars have argued for some time that the Western way of war in general is shaped by an implicit privileging of Western lives over those whose plight so often legitimates the use of force. For example see: Fassin, *Humanitarian Reason*, 223-225 ff.

These are all important considerations, but they miss the more complex politics that are created by the reliance on air power. The air power policing model was the product of a specific, ongoing process of heterogeneous engineering. Subsequent Chapters will unpack the socio-technical politics of realising air power as a mode of policing, in the process outlining how the deployment of these resources actually reformulated how the US and NATO thought about managing civilian conflict. A relationship between human protection and aerial bombing was forged and in the process, a specific rationality for conflict management shaped by the air power technology emerged. Specifically, over the course of its existence air power doctrine has come to represent an approach to warfighting that foregrounds heavy weapons and infrastructure in order to shape the behaviour of belligerents. This transformation is neither purely opportunistic nor technical, nor is it merely the physical manifestation of political opportunism. Instead, this particular assemblage has been actively engineered, is maintained, and through its deployment has actually reformulated how Western countries understand conflict management. Actually, it has made it possible to conceive of conflict as something that *can* be managed, rather than something that requires direct engagement.

What results is a practice marked by both political and material influences—an assemblage as much social as it is material which follows a new logic of conflict management. Studying humanitarian intervention as a socio-material assemblage builds on a growing literature devoted to unpacking the relationship between international

politics and material things.<sup>16</sup> Specifically, technical and physical objects are taken to provide a surface on which concepts and practices of governance take form.<sup>17</sup> However, these objects are not neutral players, nor do they represent a passive conduit between concept and action. Technology forms and operates at the point where material elements and politics meet, thereby lashing the social and physical factors of our world together and rendering them durable—for a time at least.<sup>18</sup> The irreducible Kantian gap between the social Subject and material Object is in this way shrunk to the point where networks can be identified which conjoin the two and influence both. In this way “technologies are not purely technology,” but nor is society purely social.<sup>19</sup> Instead, both technology and the concepts it has created or enlisted to serve are what Latour calls “hybrids”: mixtures of culture, society, politics, and material that allow processes to emerge and operate.<sup>20</sup>

It is for this reason that the various technological, material, human, and social things that influence the unfolding of international politics can be labelled as “actants”; objects implicated in the process of translating abstract thoughts or desires into practices in the material world.<sup>21</sup> Any “thing”—a person, an institution, a mechanism, an object—can be an actant, as long as it plays an irreducible and active role in creating, sustaining, enacting, or translating an abstract principle into a precise practical effort. Of course,

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<sup>16</sup> This is a very general statement of the argument made by: Claudia Aradau and Jef Huysmans, "Critical Methods in International Relations: The Politics of Techniques, Devices and Acts," *European Journal of International Relations* 20, no. 3 (2014).

<sup>17</sup> This point is made in a more general sense by: Seantel Anaïs, "Objects of Security/Objects of Research: Analyzing Non-Lethal Weapons," in *Research Methods in Critical Security Studies*, ed. Mark B. Salter and Can E. Mutlu (New York, NY: Routledge, 2013), 195.

<sup>18</sup> Bruno Latour, "Technology Is Society Made Durable," in *A Sociology of Monsters: Essays on Power, Technology, and Domination* ed. John Law (New York, NY: Routledge, 1991).

<sup>19</sup> Wiebe E. Bijker and John Law, "General Introduction," in *Shaping Technology/Building Society: Studies in Sociotechnical Change*, ed. Wiebe E. Bijker and John Law (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 7.

<sup>20</sup> Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, 10-12.

<sup>21</sup> Latour, "Missing Masses," 231-234.

even understanding technology as a particular kind of actant is tricky. Technology is simultaneously a material outcome of international politics and the foundation on which it is made possible and durable. Logically, technology is created to play an instrumental role in reconciling the desires-ends divide. Phenomenologically, however, technology is an essential factor in constructing the terms under which social processes emerge and unfold.

Actants influence, shape, and render possible particular forms of political practice by promoting forms of reasoning consistent with their material nature and rendering others impossible or (momentarily) inconceivable. If they are used as a means of overcoming a technical problem, like how to realise human protection in a conflict zone without directly intervening in hostilities, these actants “mediate” forms of behaviour. Mediation occurs because actants make a course of action possible by translating one goal into another; the desire to protect civilians into a strategy for bombing several classes of material things. At the same time, this mediation is political in so far as it temporarily limits the suite of other available options.<sup>22</sup> Their capacity to “do” things, resist social claims, and prefigure social action through their role in its larger context serves to constrain actor perception. In short, actants exercise a type of proto-agency.<sup>23</sup> This influence is particularly marked when extant tools are used for new means, like using air power, itself already an established kind of socio-material apparatus, to protect civilians during war. Such (re)deployment does not wholly disrupt the social entanglements which technology is already subject to. The result of deploying these tools

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<sup>22</sup> The concept of mediation is more fully unpacked in Chapter Three. Latour, Latour, *Pandora's Hope*, 174-183.

<sup>23</sup> Latour, Latour, *Reassembling*, 54-55.

in new ways created a novel outcome: air power provides a means for conceiving of humanitarianism in particular political circumstances, but the resulting strategy or “rationality” of this effort is both unique to this task and heavily influenced by established means of warfighting. Specific ethical and political effects result that must be understood as both an outcome of, and foundation for, the international politics of humanitarianism.

Under these terms the need to enlist technological artefacts to “act” means there is simply no such thing as action at a distance that is not mediated in some way. There is no unseen structure that stabilises and determines actor behaviour but instead a material register that makes it possible and durable while also shaping what is or is not feasible or conceivable.<sup>24</sup> In this way the technological element of international politics does not respect the modernist division between physical and social “things”.<sup>25</sup> This requires an enlargement of IR’s focus that brings technical and material elements into the core of analysis rather than attributing to them the character of an apolitical background or a merely technical consideration.<sup>26</sup> As Latour outlines, engaging the inherent dualism of technology, in that it is both a physical and social “thing,” exposes the analytical limits the social sciences place on themselves by separating the material and social at the

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<sup>24</sup> Latour, “Missing Masses.” Latour gives a useful introduction to this model through his discussion of doors. Also see: Sergio Sismondo, *An Introduction to Science and Technology Studies*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 83. The more often-cited theoretical pieces on the agency of materiality include: William E. Connolly, *A World of Becoming* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2010); Latour, *Reassembling*; Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*.

<sup>25</sup> Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, 10-12.

<sup>26</sup> Tom Lundborg and Nick Vaughan-Williams, “New Materialisms, Discourses Analysis, and International Relations: A Radical Intertextual Approach,” *Review of International Studies Online First* (2014): 3-5.

expense of tracing the processes running through and between them.<sup>27</sup> Sensitivity to this has been decidedly lacking in the IR literature as of late, leading to an overly legalistic and abstract critical ethos that misses the everyday, material reality of international politics.<sup>28</sup> Though heterogeneity is likely to be taken as ontologically problematic by many in IR, accepting that international politics is a process rather than a “thing” unto itself easily removes this issue. Further, the incommensurability of the various elements of international politics actually makes it far easier to explain the propensity to change seen within global systems, as well as providing a means for locating more exactly where changes originate, than is currently offered by IR theory.

It is possible to view international politics as a process hallmarked by what Latour terms “chains of transformation”; complex systems that transfer, translate, and enact agency across spaces and times. Intangible concepts are juxtaposed against material context and technological artefacts, which allows for the transference of agency around the network through a series of intermediary nodes of various kinds that substitute or associate concepts and material and vice versa.<sup>29</sup> The use of the term “juxtaposition” is important here because these heterogeneous factors are entangled in what are ultimately unstable configurations, rather than welded into a stable whole. The chain also makes possible a system of “circulating reference” as actors constantly reason through their efforts in terms of manipulating matter to fit a desired form and then rethinking that form

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<sup>27</sup> Bruno Latour, *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2013), 28-35.

<sup>28</sup> This criticism was made directly of Critical theory by: Matthew Fluck, "The Best There Is? Communication, Objectivity and the Future of Critical International Relations Theory," *European Journal of International Relations* 20, no. 1 (2014).

<sup>29</sup> Latour, "Society Made Durable," 104-110.

based on their interactions with matter.<sup>30</sup> As such, patterns of behaviour that appear stable must be linked to some localisable material or technological element(s) which both render it possible and habituate those involved to behave in standardised ways, but the unstable nature of this system facilitates its further development and mutation over time.<sup>31</sup>

Several research agendas help to situate this precise engagement with technology in terms of their irreducible status as irreducible material things into a more general engagement with politics, both international and domestic. In its early stages, work on actor-network-theory (ANT) foregrounded “things” and technologies in order to study how they mutate—that is change, reconfigure, or collapse—over time. Taking a closer look at objects as hybrids illustrated how technological artefacts were formed at the nexus of their irreducible material nature and the politics surrounding both their construction, use, and eventual abandonment.<sup>32</sup> It also provides a foundation for the argument that material and technical artefacts have an irreducible, ongoing, and active presence in both politics and society. In turn, their evolution over time brought changes in social patterns that, while seemingly natural or easily discussed through the shorthand of “pragmatism” or “common sense,” were actually the product of dynamic, heterogeneous, and contingent processes.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Latour, *Pandora's Hope*, 70-74.

<sup>31</sup> Latour, "Missing Masses," 229-231, 248-254; Madeleine Akrich, "The De-Description of Technical Objects," *ibid.*, ed. Wiebe E. Bijker and John Law, 209-211.

<sup>32</sup> Some commonly cited and illustrative examples of this kind of study are: John Law, *Aircraft Stories: Decentering the Objects in Technoscience* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2002); Latour, *Pandora's Hope*. See specifically Chapters Four and Five.

<sup>33</sup> Latour makes this point rather clearly in his discussion of automatic door hinges. See: Latour, "Missing Masses."

The complex relationship between social patterns and the material that makes them possible, conceivable, and executable (to borrow a metaphor from computer science) is generally obscured to us. The objects, and the hybrid politics they help manifest, tend to be obscured by their own success; they are “black boxed” to the point where only their efficiency, which is to say the relationship between their inputs and outputs, is discussed rather than their complex contingency.<sup>34</sup> It is important to restate the variability, nonlinearity, and diffused agency of this process. If one takes, as Latour does, the actor planned attempt at heterogeneous engineering as representing a “script” or “programme,” it is quickly apparent that there are numerous ways to interpret a given script. Other counter programmes exist, and the translation process can have unexpected effects.<sup>35</sup> In this way, by articulating a notion of hybrid politics the idea that agency can be attributed to any one actant, material or human, becomes untenable.<sup>36</sup> Instead, one must chart the assemblages of factors that make action possible in order to unpack how, and on what terms, it operates.

What makes such a study possible are disruptions, collapses, or dramatic shifts that bring the contingency and fragility of these arrangements into view. Foregrounding materiality problematises any consideration that a technical tool “is” anything meaningful in isolation. It also brings to light the fact that objects, technologies, and material backgrounds have a propensity to be “unruly,” and in so being, provoke controversies about how best to govern such material tools or systems.<sup>37</sup> When specific objects or

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<sup>34</sup> Latour, *Pandora's Hope*, 304.

<sup>35</sup> Latour, "Missing Masses," 236-240.

<sup>36</sup> Latour, *Pandora's Hope*, 176-178.

<sup>37</sup> Barry, *Material Politics: Disputes Along the Pipeline*, 12-17.

larger socio-material processes do not work as expected—say a plane crashes, a safe area collapses, or a humanitarian bombing campaign creates civilian casualties—the related black boxing is ruptured. As a result, the immense amount of engineering work that created them, and the ongoing devotion of political resources to their maintenance, comes into view.<sup>38</sup> Crises are moments where political creativity occurs; where stable strategies, desires, subjects, or ways of thinking are uncovered as unstable, ineffective, misguided, inappropriate, and/or contentious.<sup>39</sup> Such events force international politics to engage with, in, and through various material and technological things, in the process either re-black boxing the process at work or creating novel strategies, goals, and social desires. In moments of crisis like this the seemingly natural or practical work of the black box is momentarily replaced by the dynamic, heterogeneous, and unstable assemblage at work within it.<sup>40</sup>

For this reason, the importance of technology to international politics is best analysed by focusing on novel, mutating, and emerging patterns of behaviour which take form at moments of crisis or political controversy.<sup>41</sup> Following Connolly, these changes and the emergent political debates and governance strategies they create should not be taken as an actor directed planned outcome, nor should they be construed as the logical sum of their various aspects.<sup>42</sup> As the social and material elements of international politics interact, they realise a creative potential as unexpected relationships emerge and

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<sup>38</sup> Latour, *Reassembling*, 21-25 ff.

<sup>39</sup> This is a very simple use of the literature on ‘Events’ in IR. See: Jenny Edkins, *Poststructuralism & International Relations: Bringing the Political Back In* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999), 2-6.

<sup>40</sup> Latour, *Reassembling*, 21-26.

<sup>41</sup> William Walters, "Drone Strikes, Dingpolitik and Beyond: Furthering the Debate on Materiality and Security," *Security Dialogue* 45, no. 2 (2014).

<sup>42</sup> Connolly, *A World of Becoming*, 135-142.

recast political debate. The agency of relevant actors is expressed in material terms through the technology they create and use, the inherent material character of which nonetheless serves to shape, influence, and overcome the form this agency takes. This can occur in one of two ways.

On the one hand, crises can change the social context that surrounds technology, in the process creating changes in expectations and an alteration of the political dynamics which existed before. Militarised humanitarian intervention is an excellent example of this: geopolitical changes at the end of the Cold War caused a reevaluation of what constituted the acceptable use of military force regarding civil conflict, precisely from manipulating a global balance to the protection of civilians at risk via policing. The practical result of this was the reimagining of global humanitarianism as linked to the creation of militarised safe areas, aid corridors, and no-fly zones enacted through various forms of military technology.<sup>43</sup> What followed was a virtualisation of the policing logic that allowed for a more general approach to conflict management to both emerge and become mobile. There was no change in the material nature of military technology, nor were new “humanitarian” military tools created. Nonetheless, a shift in the social and political context concerning the purpose and acceptable use of military force occurred which resulted in a new practice of international humanitarianism mediated by the technology.

This reading of technology, however, must be differentiated from the Wendtian, socially reductionist argument that the political capacity of technological artefacts is

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<sup>43</sup> Carol McQueen, *Humanitarian Intervention and Safety Zones: Iraq, Bosnia, and Rwanda*, Rethinking Peace and Conflict Studies (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

purely based on the meaning imparted to them by a social process. Though the limits and possibilities of technology are to some extent fluid and set by social context, they are fixed by the innate material and historical character of the artefacts themselves. The social re-contextualisation of military force is shaped by the pre-existing social and material elements of military technology, the precise terms of which are discussed in an upcoming section. Technological artefacts are created at a certain time and place, and in a particular manner, which imbues them with a slate of limits and possibilities that do not simply cease to exist as their social context changes. Nor is their inherent material nature transient or utterly unstable to the point of being directly manipulated by changes in social context. Employing technology to realise new forms of international action, including humanitarian intervention, does not entirely rupture the social and material status of particular artefacts, meaning their pre-existing nature influences how new foci of political debate are constituted.

Of course, this is a power-laden process where human mediators translate the technical domain back into public discourse, in many cases attempting to either re-establish or re-write the associated script in the face of failure or instability.<sup>44</sup> For this reason, one can directly comment on the political, social, and economic affordances created by these complex hybrid systems. Hybrid politics are the result of engineering, but they nonetheless shape social processes. In IR, interest in how the material and social elements of international politics interrelate to create governance issues and strategies has

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<sup>44</sup> Two particularly good pieces on the role of material things in such political controversies include: Barry, *Material Politics: Disputes Along the Pipeline*; Walters, "Drone Strikes, Dingpolitik and Beyond: Furthering the Debate on Materiality and Security."

been most pointed in the security studies literature.<sup>45</sup> This work has charted how the creation of security logics requires a process of what Aradau, following Barad, calls a “materialisation...a reconfiguration of the world in ways in which differences come to matter.”<sup>46</sup> Engaging questions of security on these terms illustrates how material objects and environments are translated, through a series of material, technological, and conceptual intermediaries, into social concepts that in turn allow for the development of governance strategies designed to intervene back into the material world. Following Law, both the political act and the artefact are stable because they have been brought together as part of a series of heterogeneous elements that make up a larger network which, for at least a period of time, actors take as finished. What must be studied are “...both the conditions and tactics of system building.”<sup>47</sup> It is the bringing together of various facets, which entails the very political process of deciding which elements are most usefully added to the network, along with the mediating influence of the chosen means, that gives the resulting, novel process its particular character. This approach is necessary because, though networks can prove resilient, there is no *a priori* reason that their various

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<sup>45</sup> Anaïs, "Objects."; William E. Connolly, "The 'New Materialism' and the Fragility of Things," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 41, no. 3 (2013); Caroline Holmqvist, "Undoing War: War Ontologies and the Materiality of Drone Warfare," *ibid.*; Peer Schouten, "The Materiality of State Failure: Social Contract Theory, Infrastructure and Governmental Power in Congo," *ibid.*; Claudia Aradau, "Security That Matters: Critical Infrastructure and Objects of Protection," *Security Dialogue* 41, no. 5 (2010); Mike Bourne, "Guns Don't Kill People, Cyborgs Do: A Latourian Provocation for Transformatory Arms Control and Disarmament," *Global Change, Peace & Security* 24, no. 1 (2012); Martin Coward, "Network-Centric Violence, Critical Infrastructure and the Urbanization of Security," *Security Dialogue* 40, no. 4-5 (2009); Tom Lundborg and Nick Vaughan-Williams, "Resilience, Critical Infrastructure, and Molecular Security: The Excess of 'Life' in Biopolitics," *International Political Sociology* 5, no. 4 (2011).

<sup>46</sup> Aradau, "Security That Matters," 494.

<sup>47</sup> Law, "Technology and Heterogeneous Engineering," 113.

elements ought to be related, or that their relationship serves to translate agency in a way consistent with social desires.

Chains of reference can be laced with power and include simplistic or harmful logics which nonetheless prove influential. As Andrew Barry points out, international politics is a historically contingent realm wherein sociological contrivances (be they norms, laws, or discursively created “identities”) as well as reified institutional structures matter greatly.<sup>48</sup> For this reason, the conceptual and institutionalised nodes in any chain of reference must be submitted to sustained, reflexive critique. This can be accomplished by utilising the analytical tools developed by governmentality scholars interested in international politics.<sup>49</sup> Rather than a theory, governmentality is an analytical approach that attempts to defamiliarise concepts, ideas, processes, or political subjects that appear coherent and stable in order to show their contentious, plural, and historically situated nature. Governmentality scholars ask how the agenda of international politics takes form through a complex relationship between thought and practice.<sup>50</sup> For both the emerging approaches to materialism and governmentality, claims to the truthfulness and incorrectness of political claims, as well as assumptions of success or failure, are not taken as unproblematic but instead problematised in order to discern how they are conditioned by various physical and social factors.

Most important for the study of international politics are the repercussions such a network approach has for understanding “space” as a hybrid concept. Adopting a network

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<sup>48</sup> Andrew Barry, "The Translation Zone: Between Actor-Network Theory and International Relations," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 41, no. 3 (2013): 422-428.

<sup>49</sup> Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago, IL: Chicago UP, 1991); Larner and Walters, *Global Governmentality*; Walters, *Governmentality*.

<sup>50</sup> Larner and Walters, *Global Governmentality*, 2-4.

orientated approach to international politics means the (metaphor of) spatial hierarchy between the global and the local collapses as it becomes clear these two categories are inescapably lashed together, in the process further undermining the idea that any “structure” can be said to exist behind actor behaviour.<sup>51</sup> Holmqvist correctly foregrounds what she terms “human-material assemblages” created between both concepts of space and their reflection in physical environments through material intermediaries. In her study of drone warfare, Holmqvist illustrates how acts of intervention are at once social, conceptual, and abstract as well as specific, experienced, and located.<sup>52</sup> For there to be any study of the international one must study how the general is localised in particular spaces in specific ways.<sup>53</sup> The global and local are cohabitant and linked by a network of facets which to some extent conjoins them, but they are nonetheless separate enough to be able to influence each other. In essence, the physical, local, social, and global space international politics “lives” in is a network with a diverse ontological quality.

## **2.2 Humanitarian Objects**

Two critical trajectories must be outlined in relation to this more general hybrid approach. First, this section traces the work already done on humanitarianism and its relationship to technology and material objects. Work in both governmentality studies and the “new materialist” literature have begun to engage directly with how the use of particular technologies influences the outcome of humanitarianism. Valuable insights can be taken from this literature, including the specificity of humanitarian reasoning and the

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<sup>51</sup> Latour, *Reassembling*, 3-8.

<sup>52</sup> Holmqvist, "Undoing War," 541-548.

<sup>53</sup> Latour, *Reassembling*, 173-190.

de-politicisation that is created by the technology and spatial logics which mediate it. In this literature, the logic of humanitarianism as a practice materialised by specific strategies for managing crises is foregrounded. What becomes clear is that humanitarianism is marked by a series of specific strategies that are actually not interchangeable with more general social, moral, or political logics found in international politics. It is this difference, this gap between the general ethos of global liberalism and its practical enactment, which marks the mediating influence of technology and material circumstances.

This analysis is based on a critical reading of humanitarian reason. Fassin argues that humanitarianism should be understood as a political rationality that implicates moral sentiments in contemporary politics, which is both part of, and yet separate from, more general trends in social and moral reasoning.<sup>54</sup> In this way, humanitarianism is intimately related to its stated political goal (providing protection and aid), while its mediated form is now separated from more general social or moral concepts. As a practice, humanitarianism can be engaged as a set of strategies for identifying, monitoring, and maintaining the life of those deemed vulnerable, but these strategies are historically situated, multiple, power laden, and not necessarily helpful if they are judged by non-humanitarian standards. International debate concerning how best to manage the global population, including ongoing discussion of what role the UN should play, can be identified as an intersection where political debates over the character of governance,

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<sup>54</sup> Fassin, *Humanitarian Reason*, 1.

including how to identify, maintain, and calculate various global population(s), vie for influence, rather than a wellspring of any one specific “humanitarianism.”<sup>55</sup>

Reliance upon air power mediated the logic of humanitarianism in specific ways, but useful insights can be taken from the way other humanitarian practices were materialised. But, one must actively resist the urge to see these practices as synonymous with the use of military technology—the analysis provided later shows that military intervention is functionally differentiated and operates through and in relation to a different set of objects than aid programmes, refugee camps, etc., even if they overlap the same physical space in some instances. As a specific example, the realisation of international “responsibility” for civilians in conflict zones requires the translation of this social, moral, and ethical impulse into specific practical strategies carried out by equally specific “things” in a particular space. Even this translation, as the following Chapters show, is a contentious one wherein various approaches vie for inclusion in the chain of reference and attempt to enlist technological artefacts to stabilise themselves, of course not without paying the price of being influenced in return and perhaps having surprising outcomes.

Even so, air power was entangled with other forms of humanitarian practice and had its deployment shaped to some extent by this relationship. In the early 1990s, it seemed that the realisation of humanitarian intervention would be premised on the reorganisation of conflict spaces to include safe areas supported by no-fly zones. Safe areas figured prominently in international efforts in Northern Iraq, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Somalia, and the plans made for an intervention in Rwanda. Such spaces were meant to

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<sup>55</sup> Jaeger, "Un Reform, Biopolitics, and Global Governmentality."

shelter civilians, provide localised stability, and as a result, make the provision of aid possible. These humanitarian “safe areas,” though their militarisation was new, had an established history and international legal precedent. McQueen explains that “safe areas” and neutral zones have a practical history dating back to the Franco-Prussian war and were given legal status by the Geneva Conventions. Belligerents agreed to denote specific spaces, including hospitals, as neutral sanctuaries for civilians (a group deemed to be separate from the warring parties). Such spaces were envisioned as demilitarised, not to be defended by force, and located in areas deemed unimportant to a given conflict (though this last point was expanded to include areas where conflict was taking place).<sup>56</sup> In the 1990s these safe areas took on a new character; they were larger, designed to protect groups who were directly targeted, were to varying degrees militarised, and in many cases were imposed by the international community.<sup>57</sup>

The source of this shift is largely attributed to social factors and not as bearing the marks of technological influence. For McQueen, this mutation in the character and role of safe areas is evidence of states’ calculation of interest becoming informed and constrained by the growing sense of international responsibility for the care of civilian groups during intrastate conflict.<sup>58</sup> Yamashita, drawing heavily on the philosophy of Lefebvre, develops a typology of humanitarian space based on its operational principle.<sup>59</sup> The problem with both approaches is that the material nature of the spaces, the technology used to realise them and along what lines, and how their enactment marked an

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<sup>56</sup> McQueen, *Safety Zones*, 4-5.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-19.

<sup>59</sup> Hikaru Yamashita, *Humanitarian Space and International Politics: The Creation of Safe Areas* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2004), 16-26.

attempt to both create and recreate social order are lost. Indeed, problematising these early cases, wherein air power initially was deployed to support clear demarcations of space, shows that they failed and gave way to more diffuse managerial approaches to managing entire conflicts. Even though explicit safe areas have ceased to exist beyond rhetoric and concept in international politics, it is important to note that the creation of “safety” has continued to mean a practical organisation and reorganisation of space by technical means. It is in this context that objects other than human bodies become the focus of humanitarian intervention.

In terms of humanitarianism specifically, the focus of critical efforts has been analysing refugee camps as socio-technical apparatuses that materialise humanitarianism. However, this particular strategy has been roundly criticised for depoliticising refugees and by making their displacement permanent.<sup>60</sup> Specifically, refugee camps are critiqued at the level of the strategic assumptions that underlie them and the very practical ways in which those residing within them are catalogued and managed.<sup>61</sup> Refugee camps have been identified as a depoliticising space wherein subjects (i.e. the refugees themselves) are engaged and managed in terms of their pure physical existence, a practice which strips them of any political agency and permits forms of international action that are wrongheaded, misinformed, or even complicit in their vulnerability.<sup>62</sup> This approach, which is made politically tenable by the contrived sense of urgency related to such

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<sup>60</sup> A very influential form of this argument, which foregrounds the material nature of such camps, can be found in: Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils*, 56-62.

<sup>61</sup> Hyndman, *Managing Displacement*.

<sup>62</sup> This approach is largely based on Giorgio Agamben’s arguments about “the camp” as a manifestation of modern biopolitics. See: Agamben, *Homo Sacer*. For an overview of the various approaches to management one finds in refugee camps see: Hyndman, *Managing Displacement*. A more recent similar argument is made by: Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils*.

situations, largely assumes that vulnerable groups are a *tabula rasa* which can be written upon.<sup>63</sup>

Critical study of the impact of the refugee camp on the mobility and political agency of displaced people has also recently been expanded to include more banal, physical elements. As Fredriksen argues, humanitarian space does not only apply to the camp writ large but also to the shelter structures created by aid agencies for use within them. The inherent material nature of such structures, which include shelter structures, is to some extent determined by decisions made far away from the camp itself. Once constructed, the materiality of the structures—which are of course hybrid technological artefacts—influences how “aid” is realised as a practice and hence influences the politics swirling around an emergency.<sup>64</sup> Redfield has adopted a similarly critical position on various other “things” which are found in refugee camps, namely the medical equipment that is enlisted by aid organisations in their attempts to provide succour to the suffering.<sup>65</sup> In both cases, the inherent materiality and built in assumptions of various technological objects have a constraining and shaping effect on both the concepts of aid provision and the lived experience of those residing within humanitarian spaces. From this study of everyday, lived in context of aid, abstract concepts of humanitarian ethics and international efficacy in instances of violent human suffering become tied up with

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<sup>63</sup> The depoliticisation of a conflict and its victims because a sense of emergency is created has been heavily theorised elsewhere. See: Adi Ophir, "The Politics of Catastrophization: Emergency and Exception," in *Contemporary States of Emergency*, ed. Didier Fassin and Mariella Pandolfi (New York, NY: Zone Books, 2010).

<sup>64</sup> A. Fredriksen, "Emergency Shelter Topologies: Locating Humanitarian Space in Mobile and Material Practice," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 32, no. 1 (2014): 148-149.

<sup>65</sup> Peter Redfield, "Vital Mobility and the Humanitarian Kit " in *Biosecurity Interventions: Global Health and Security in Question*, ed. Andrew Lakoff and Stephen J. Collier (New York, NY: Columbia UP, 2008).

physical, temporally bounded spaces and technological tools which enact, shape, and in the long run push the re-conceptualisation of international humanitarianism.

Unfortunately, *too much of the literature on intervention is quick to assume equivalence between all forms of humanitarian strategy*. Specifically, the refugee camp has become the Urgrund that grounds the critical literature on humanitarianism but at the expense of close investigation of the unique practical elements of other forms of humanitarianism, including intervention. The result is a failure to re-centre the politics of intervention itself in the same way work on refugee camps has done, leaving intact a rather abstract consideration of intervention as simply a different genre of decision-over-exception.<sup>66</sup> In some sense, this is because the critical literature inordinately focuses on the conceptual side of humanitarian space or the related epistemic tools through which the suffering individual is rendered part of a beleaguered population without charting how this is different when engaged through a military apparatus. For critical scholars the act of humanitarianism is based on a discursively contrived difference between a developed West and an undeveloped space that requires intervention in the interest of human protection.<sup>67</sup> The critical argument is that this concept is not directly linked to reality and helps obfuscate the larger social context of any given conflict, which often includes some level of economic or political culpability on the part of the international community.<sup>68</sup> Where this logic authorises the use of force it ironically ends up “killing to

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<sup>66</sup> For a useful summary of the current critical argument see: Fassin and Pandolfi, *Contemporary States*, 13-15.

<sup>67</sup> Paulo Esteves, "Peace Operations and the Government of Humanitarian Spaces," *International Peacekeeping* 17, no. 5 (2010). Cf. R. B. J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 1993).

<sup>68</sup> Anne Orford, *Reading Humanitarian Intervention: Human Rights and the Use of Force in International Law* (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2003), 110-120.

make life live.”<sup>69</sup> In effect, humanitarian crises, as political and technical problems, are created through language, meaning that there is no essential relationship between how actors understand conflict and why it is occurring.<sup>70</sup> This in effect gives a class of international bureaucrats the depoliticising power of decision over what should be done about a conflict and which side’s claims are legitimate.<sup>71</sup> The failure of such a system to understand truly how conflicts work was put on display by the fall of Srebrenica in 1995 when the bureaucratic reasoning of the UN proved incapable of coming to terms with the reality of the violence.<sup>72</sup>

Such analysis sits within the broader critical literature on the prevailing liberal international order that sees attempts to “secure” and “develop” as both connected and inadvertently destabilising given that vulnerable groups are likely to resist so as to achieve solutions more appropriate to their collective physical and social context. What results are development programmes that instill a climate of instability, thereby creating a cycle of ever more invasion, intervention, more strident resistance, and continued conflict.<sup>73</sup> Equally importantly is that, though such strategies and the spaces they create/manage in such a depoliticised manner are generally taken as transient, they tend to become permanent and thereby define the social and political future of those they were

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<sup>69</sup> Michael Dillon and Julian Reid, *The Liberal Way of War: Killing to Make Life Live* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009).

<sup>70</sup> Ophir, "The Politics of Catastrophization: Emergency and Exception," 63-65.

<sup>71</sup> Orford, *International Authority*.

<sup>72</sup> Gerard Tuathail, "The Ethnic Cleansing of a 'Safe Area': The Fall of Srebrenica and the Ethics of Un-Governmentality," in *Geography and Ethics*, ed. James D. Proctor and M. Smith David (New York, NY: Routledge, 1999), 121-122.

<sup>73</sup> Duffield, *Development*, 223-227; Zanotti, *Governing Disorder*, 75-79.

constructed to benefit.<sup>74</sup> Though this kind of critical work is essential for disrupting deterministic understandings of space and materialism which help spur global humanitarian practices, this approach tends to view material elements as apolitical, treating them as merely the passages through which concepts of order and humanitarianism are simulated and visualised.<sup>75</sup>

There are two important points to be drawn from this engagement with the literature on humanitarianism. First, focusing on refugee camps brings to light the spatial logic of humanitarianism and its negative effects. Second, this critical study shows how the abstract moral principles driving humanitarianism are mediated in specific ways by the camps themselves and the objects implicated in their operation. This material influence results in a complex set of political considerations. Specific strategies of humanitarianism emerge, are enacted, and become stable in relation to several material elements. Focusing on the processes of politics and technology, which is to say the strategies developed to bridge desired ends with means in terms of international humanitarianism all the way down to the use of military technology, provides a historically specific understanding of how such strategies become conceivable and operable.<sup>76</sup> Discourse analysis in IR has already shown how the concept of intervention creates a conceptual bridge between various contrived identities. It creates subjects in political terms, which in turn allows for the creation of strategies to manage them and come to understand their position.<sup>77</sup> What needs to be added is an understanding of how

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<sup>74</sup> Camillo Boano, "'Violent Spaces': Production and Reproduction of Security and Vulnerabilities," *The Journal of Architecture* 16, no. 1 (2011).

<sup>75</sup> For an example see: Debrix, *Re-Envisioning Peacekeeping*, 20-21.

<sup>76</sup> The most direct discussion of this in terms of materialism is given by: Anaïs, "Objects," 195.

<sup>77</sup> Hansen, *Security as Practice*; Malmvig, *State Sovereignty*.

technology helps create a lived-in context for the more abstract concepts particular to military intervention. Such an approach seeks to detail to the more general study of global humanitarianism while also overcoming key shortcomings in the pre-existing literature on humanitarian intervention.

### **2.3 “War among the People” Revisited: Field Notes from a Genealogy of Air Power**

What becomes clear through the study of intervention here is that “protection” is realised by attempting to order the battlespace through precision targeting of heavy weapons and infrastructure. This approach forms and operates based on the juxtaposition of spatial management as a means of humanitarianism and the longer-running history of air power. Legal, doctrinal, and material aspects of air power help bring into existence a novel governing strategy, but the resulting approach is not wholly reducible to either humanitarianism or air power. A result of this is the displacement of the civilian corporeal body by a strategy of human protection that foregrounds particular kinds of targets. What becomes clear, to invert the often repeated argument made by Rupert Smith, former UN Protection Force Commander in Bosnia-Herzegovina and later Deputy SACEUR under General Clark, is that modern war truly is “amongst the people”. War can be understood in this way not only because armed groups form from and disappear into the civilian population, but also because modern war attempts to execute key actions against various material objects and systems that are “amongst” the people.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World*, 267. ff.

Through an ongoing process of heterogeneous engineering air power is first applied to more common understandings of humanitarian space, and then mutates into a specific strategy that is necessitated by, and in turn mobilises, the use of air power. A new strategy of spatial management emerges, which is defended by its denotation as purely technical in nature. The result is a relationship between a particular approach to war fighting as human protection by policing spaces through specific technologies, namely precision targeting systems and the ordnance they deliver. Refocusing the critique of air power by unpacking how its development as a humanitarian technology represents a historically contingent, unstable, and unfolding process of engineering requires an understanding of precisely how air power relates to civilian life. In the era of “modern war,” air power doctrine has come to separate the human, corporeal body from the material infrastructure that becomes the locus of attack. Unpacking the history and functioning of this approach is significant because it illustrates that civilian life, though it is the focus of this kind of warfare, is indiscernible to it.

Criticism of the highly technological and limited character of US military action is not new. In this regard the intervention in Kosovo (see Chapter Four) helped to crystallise limited engagement, a concept made viable (at least politically) by precision weapons technology. However, the idea of limited engagement has been prominent across the history of US military thinking, including about air power. In fact, American grand strategy is often criticised for overestimating the efficacy of limited engagements and therefore under resourcing operations.<sup>79</sup> Precision weapons have come to function as

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<sup>79</sup> For a definition of “Grand Strategy” see: Basil Henry Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Praeger, 1967), 353-360. For a discussion of US grand strategy see: Colin Dueck, *Reluctant Crusaders:*

a means of reconciling the seeming contradiction between the American perspective on war as an abhorrent deviation from politics that must be ended decisively and its avowed liberal regard for human life.<sup>80</sup> Perceptions of the efficacy of precision weapons have lead Americans to desire increasingly “war without ground combat forces; war fought with technology; war carried out by highly skilled, highly trained technicians; war from the air; war from space; war that was clean and neat.”<sup>81</sup> One of the key elements of this, which will become clear in later Chapters, is that such a method of air power is taken to represent an advanced, technical logic separate from politics.

Preoccupation with precision, coupled with the visibility of its very real limitations in recent military operations, has spawned normative, critical, and legal critiques of the dynamics of so-called “modern war”. The technical and material foundation for these limitations, however, is obscured by both official and academic discourses that paint the use of force as purely technical. Though interested in the politics of warfare itself, this body of work is germane to a discussion of human protection because of its interrogation of how civilian life (does not) become(s) a reference point for military action. Importantly, however, while these critiques evoke technology as an important focal point for engaging modern war, none of them satisfactorily implicates the influence of the technological systems themselves or provides sufficient nuance when analysing how air power has mutated, over time, into its current form. There is a sense

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*Power, Culture, and Change in American Grand Strategy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006). A similar, if even more vehement, critique of this state of affairs is found in the work of Andrew Bacevich, see one of his more recent books: Andrew J. Bacevich, *Washington Rules: America's Path to Permanent War*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Metropolitan, 2010).

<sup>80</sup> Carvin and Williams, *Law, Science, Liberalism*, 12-13.

<sup>81</sup> Adrian R. Lewis, *The American Culture of War: The History of U.S. Military Force from World War II to Operation Iraqi Freedom* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007), 387.

here that air power, as a medium of military force, inherently degrades the rights of civilians. But disagreement exists over whether this is inherent to aerial warfare or due to an improper appreciation for technology. Further, the current nature of international law masks this discussion by authorising rather than problematising the use force in these ways.<sup>82</sup> Situating these perspectives within an investigation of how air power practice emerges illustrates the social-technical character of modern air power.

The most effective entry point for such an analysis is an engagement with how military thinkers grappled with the disruptive emergence of air power in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>83</sup> Military thinkers and diplomats quickly accepted the relevance of aircraft to the conduct of war, but they debated the extent of its transformational influence.<sup>84</sup> It was not clear whether air power had simply eroded any hope of isolating civilians from war. Several notable scholars argued that it was better to embrace attacks on civilians in the interest of shortening conflicts and preventing death tolls from swelling.<sup>85</sup> During the Second World War the likes of Hugh Trenchard and Arthur “Bomber” Harris in Britain, as well as Curtis LeMay in the US, became (in)famous for advocating the wholesale targeting of enemy cities as a means to break their people’s will and obliterate their

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<sup>82</sup> The result is a particular economy of life predicated on perceived necessity. See: Smith, "The New Law of War: Legitimizing Hi-Tech and Infrastructural Violence."; Thomas W. Smith, "Protecting Civilians...or Soldiers? Humanitarian Law and the Economy of Risk in Iraq," *International Studies Perspectives* 9, no. 2 (2008).

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<sup>84</sup> Edward Warner, "Douhet, Mitchell, Seversky: Theories of Air Warfare," in *Makers of Modern Strategy: Military Thought from Machiavelli to Hitler*, ed. Edward Mead Earle (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1948), 285. Schmitt also notes the transformation of war that followed the advent of military air power. See: Schmitt, *Nomos*, 313-320.

<sup>85</sup> For example, see: C.Y. Caldwell, *Air Power and Total War* (New York, NY: Coward & McCann, 1943), 100-102. This critical literature argues this has become emblematic of modern air warfare. See: Derek Gregory, "The Everywhere War," *The Geographical Journal* 177, no. 3 (2011).

industrial base.<sup>86</sup> Quips by these leaders are often cited within the literature on air power, perhaps most notably LeMay's explanation for the effect of his air campaign against Japan on civilians. LeMay was clear: "There are no innocent civilians. It is their government, and you are fighting a people, you are not trying to fight an armed force anymore. So, it doesn't bother me so much to be killing the so-called innocent bystanders."<sup>87</sup>

Though seemingly flippant, such commentary reflects a complex debate about the extent to which air power had transformed the nature of war. Italian aviator Giulio Douhet's seminal 1921 book *The Command of the Air* had set the tone of this debate by arguing that air power disrupts, broadens, and perhaps completely dissolves the spatial limits of war. Before the advent of military aviation, the conduct and outcome of war had been conditioned by natural barriers that confined movement to a finite number of routes, thereby situating conflict at key points and bounding its effect to the range of available weapons.<sup>88</sup> Billy Mitchell, the godfather of US air power doctrine, agreed with Douhet on this score, writing in 1924 that: "In a trice, aircraft have set aside all ideas of frontiers. The whole country now becomes the frontier and, in the case of war, one place is just as

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<sup>86</sup> Sven Lindqvist, *A History of Bombing*, trans. Linda Haverty Rugg (New York, NY: The New Press, 2001). Lindqvist's work is deliberately organised as a confusing array of observations. So, citing it requires a bit of an unorthodox set of directions. On Bomber Command see p.5, Section 10 and follow the "labyrinth" from there. As noted above, Lindqvist argues that US interest in precision bombing in Europe was in stark contrast to the racist approach to area bombing LeMay followed in the Pacific theatre. Begin on p.6 with section 12.

<sup>87</sup> Michael S. Sherry, *The Rise of American Air Power: The Creation of Armageddon* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1987), 287.

<sup>88</sup> Giulio Douhet, *The Command of the Air*, trans. Dino Ferrari (Washington, DC: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1998 [1942]), 8-10.

exposed to attack as another place.”<sup>89</sup> According to this narrative, the truly devastating function of air power emerged in the throes of the Second World War.

There is, of course, an alternative to this genesis story. Critical theorists have focused on the use of air power during the inter-war period as a method of colonial administration. From this perspective, rather than merely a departure from prevailing practices of war, air power functions as a mechanism for violently creating while simultaneously maintaining social order. Through air power, war is waged “everywhere” and thereby directly implicates civilians and erodes their protected status.<sup>90</sup> The clearest encapsulation of the Critical perspective on air power has been the work of Mark Neocleous, specifically his book *War Power, Police Power*. Rejecting the idea that modern practices of aerial warfare emerged from the strategic bombing campaigns of the Second World War, Neocleous foregrounds colonial “air policing” during the interwar period. Air policing created strategies of governance that implicated civilians, either directly or by consequence, though discourse obfuscates this effect. Neocleous offers this argument to contextualise his critique of the War on Terror and his insistence that it represents an erosion of protections once offered civilians. The problem is that arguing that air power *is* police power artificially homogenises the relationship between weapons technology and governance rationalities. As a result, the meaningful difference between contending lines of descent in air power doctrine, as well as the substantive and

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<sup>89</sup> William Mitchell, *Winged Defense: The Development and Possibilities of Modern Air Power-Economic and Military* (Pennsylvania, PA: Curtis, 1924), 4.

<sup>90</sup> Neocleous, *War Power, Police Power*; Mark Neocleous, "Air Power as Police Power," in *War, Police, and Assemblages of Intervention*, ed. Jan Bachmann, Colleen Bell, and Caroline Holmqvist (New York, NY: Routledge, 2014).

transformative influence of technological change and political pressure, are cast aside. Neocleous instead makes a linear argument, insisting that drones and no-fly zones are a “perfect” and symbiotic manifestation of air power as police power following directly in the shadow of colonialism.<sup>91</sup>

This is similar to Lindqvist’s argument that the destructive power of bombing has always been unleashed, under the pretext of the lawful use of force, against those whom the powerful have deemed uncivilised, especially brutal, or whose death promises to be convenient.<sup>92</sup> In all circumstances, starting with the “Mad Mullah” in Somalia through to Berlin’s Suburbs and the current battlefield, the destructiveness of air power has always been imagined to serve a social purpose. The broad swath of destruction wrought from the air is always defensible, either through the evocation of the racial inferiority of those who are killed, the need to entrench “civilisation,” or through the ambiguities of international law. Bombing itself is always indiscriminating and violent, but its use is rendered palatable through social, legal, and historical discourses.

The historicity of the critical approach espoused by Neocleous and Lindqvist, however, is problematic. While no quarrel will be taken up here with the idea that air power is itself situated and mobilised by political discourses, one must more carefully unpack the politics that are created by air power rather than focus on only those it is enlisted to serve. Its influence must be more carefully unpacked. There are very real socio-material reconfigurations of the politics that relate to air power that are drowned out by this kind of analysis. To take up with Neocleous, his analysis takes interwar

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<sup>91</sup> Neocleous, *War Power, Police Power*, 153-162.

<sup>92</sup> Lindqvist, *A History of Bombing*.

commentary on air policing, specifically comments by Hugh Trenchard and C.F.A. Portal, as declarative statements on the efficacy of air power. In reality, their comments were animated by inter-service politics (the former) and a largely propagandistic effort to defend the RAF following a series of practical failures (the latter).<sup>93</sup> Air power proved indecisive in most colonial circumstances, even if this failure included stunningly wanton destruction and violence. During the Italian campaign in Abyssinia between 1912 and 1934, itself a touchstone of critical histories of air power, commanders concluded that air power was “largely useless” for fighting the Senoussi insurgency.<sup>94</sup> This could be seen as an experimental event, but the lack of success is important because it pushed the development of air power doctrine in a very specific direction. This is not to say that the campaign was anything but an archetype of colonial violence, but Van Creveld explains the reality of the campaign in rather clear terms:

Either [the guerillas] had hidden in difficult terrain [or] they had dispersed. Unable to distinguish between combatants and noncombatants—not that they tried too hard—Italian pilots often attacked the wrong people. In the end, [The Italian Commander] Graziani’s victory was won by moving 100,000 people, a third of the population, into concentration camps...Needless to say, his main instrument consisted of massive ground forces...<sup>95</sup>

There are two other prominent examples, taken from the 1920s, of how limited air power failed to enforce colonial will: the failed US campaign against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and the Spanish and French responses to the Riff uprising in Morocco.<sup>96</sup> Britain was the most ardent champion of air policing, and its experience is only slightly

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<sup>93</sup> Martin Van Creveld, *The Age of Airpower* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2011), 342.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 341.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 342.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 349-350.

different. Air control, in the British military lexicon, did not refer to an absence of ground forces, but the unification of operations under RAF command—overall ground forces continued to play a key role. Due in large part to the flat and open terrain, air policing proved effective in Somalia, Transjordan, and Yemen, but these same resources proved woefully inadequate in Palestine and India. During riots in Palestine from 1920-1, Royal Marines were sent to Jaffa to quell the uprising—when riots erupted again in 1929 and 1936 the RAF did not participate.<sup>97</sup>

What is important about this history is that it showed that air policing, as exercised, was ineffective. The inability to distinguish targets, which is cited by Critical scholars as a key to understanding the destructiveness of air power, was actually exposed as an operational hindrance that needed to be overcome. Understanding this puts comments made by military commanders, like the ones made by the future Commander-in-Chief of British Bomber Command C.F.A. Portal, into a very different light. Portal argued that policing in the civilised world required the parsing of the innocent from the guilty by the army, but in remote, “wild unadministered” territories the credible threat of force, evidenced by a minimalist use of air power, could deter antigovernment violence without the expense or complexity of garrisoning troops.<sup>98</sup> Portal’s remarks are often quoted, and Neocleous uses this particular piece to support his contention that air power should be understood as a means for shaping the behaviour of groups, in the process authorising individual deaths in the pursuit of creating social order.<sup>99</sup> Though engaging

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 342-350.

<sup>98</sup> C. F. A. Portal, "Air Force Co-Operation in Policing the Empire," *Royal United Services Institution Journal* 82, no. 526 (1937): 344-350.

<sup>99</sup> Neocleous, "Air Power as Police Power," 171-172.

air power as a form of policing is necessary, one must be sensitive to the fact that Portal also argued indiscriminate, massive retaliation against antigovernment activity “...would be utterly useless against any tribe of any spirit,” serving only to complicate colonial administration by ensconcing defiance and ensuring impoverishment.<sup>100</sup> This argument does bring to light how civilians, and their killing, are defined through air policing and its relationship to the process of civilisation. However, Neocleous and other Critical theorists give insufficient attention to how the political desire to make targeting a precise affair sets off a remarkable trajectory of technological problem-solving, which lead to doctrinal and practical changes, that separates the periods he analyses. The key point is that the technical problem that animates the development of air power in contemporary humanitarian practice, leaving aside the question of efficacy, for now, is *precisely* the desire to parse the creation of political order from the destruction of civilian life.

As a result, air power must be engaged as a site of technological problem solving, both regarding a complex, ongoing process of heterogeneous engineering as well as the more common sense of a desire to create mechanisms to aid and refine the targeting process. Normative scholars have proven more sensitive to this, even though they have failed to account for the governance practices that emerge from the use of air power. As Thomas points out, a very real political and moral imperative to respect the sanctity of civilian life has always influenced the use of air power, but technological limitations have meant a breakdown of the norm in practice until recently.<sup>101</sup> US air power doctrine—a far

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<sup>100</sup> Portal, "Air Force Co-Operation in Policing the Empire," 50.

<sup>101</sup> Ward Thomas, *The Ethics of Destruction: Norms and Force in International Relations* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001). For a more explicitly ethical, but still supportive, examination of this relationship see: James E. Hickey, *Precision-Guided Munitions and Human Suffering in War* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012).

more important focal point of the study of current air power practice than the failures of colonial policing—has always spurned wanton destruction of civilian life. As a body of institutionalised professional knowledge, this doctrine was first created, disseminated, and as such maintained by the founding of the US Army Air Corps Tactical School (AACTS) at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama in 1931. The staff of the AACTS rejected Douhet’s ungallant argument for the direct attacking of civilians and insisted upon the path staked out by Mitchell.<sup>102</sup> Though Mitchell echoed Douhet’s argument that air power had transformed the conflict space, he had a different perspective on targeting: “Air forces will attack centres of production of all kinds, means of transportation, agriculture areas, ports and shipping; not so much the people themselves.”<sup>103</sup>

The desire to abstain from killing civilians, which has some resemblance to Portal’s comments, is central to the work of prominent military leaders. USAAF in Europe Commanders H.H. “Hap” Arnold and Ira Eaker echoed Mitchell’s arguments by stating that “...manufacturing establishments, power plants, and lines of communication which are vital to an enemy in its attempt to gird itself for war” were vital targets for modern air power.<sup>104</sup> Directly attacking civilians was understood to be a “tactical mistake”; the most efficient way to break the enemy’s will was destroying essential infrastructure.<sup>105</sup> Following the outbreak of war in Europe, Britain’s inability to do more than wreak havoc upon and terrorise German civilians put American military leaders ill at ease, the latter preferential to precise, daylight targeting of enemy industrial infrastructure

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<sup>102</sup> Van Creveld, *The Age of Airpower*, 54-55.

<sup>103</sup> Mitchell, *Winged Defense*, 16.

<sup>104</sup> H.H. Arnold and Ira C. Eaker, *Winged Warfare* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1941), 133-134.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

at medium altitude.<sup>106</sup> Neocleous addresses such comments, but he argues they are merely a discursive dynamic that obscures and in so doing legitimates civilian deaths following from “infrastructural bombing.” Being attentive to this context, however, provides a far richer analysis for how civilian deaths are themselves technical, and for that reason political in a far different way.

This short treatment of the strategic elements of air power doctrine is important because it unsettles the assumption that air power itself can be understood as a governing logic as scholars like Neocleous assert. Instead air power must be understood as a class of technological, heterogeneously engineered tools that realise governance strategy/ies and as a result influence their emergence and politics. Viewed in this way the rationality and discursive context of air power clearly relate to the technical problem of targeting and in so doing are part of a larger process of mutational emergence rather than a progressive evolution. Normative scholars prove no more sensitive to the substantive influence of technology, however, as they generally frame this discussion in terms of efficiency and precision. They, thereby, obfuscate analysis of mutations in governance strategy, which emerges with advances in technology. Political and social intolerance for civilian casualties during bombing campaigns, as well as the marked decline in their occurrence, are taken to be evidence of a developing norm of civilian immunity made possible by precision weapons.<sup>107</sup> In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, states who had

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<sup>106</sup> Van Creveld, *The Age of Airpower*, 55.

<sup>107</sup> This puts Van Creveld in league with Just War theorists, specifically Michael Walzer, who argue that despite their prominent role in city-bombing, the actions of figures like Arthur Harris have been retroactively condemned as unjust by a population mindful of their inappropriateness. See: Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, 4th ed. (New York: NY: Basic Books, 2006 [1977]), 323-325.

advanced air forces attempted to statutorily prohibit bombing civilians, but “[t]he death of the norm was sealed by technological limitations that left belligerents with little choice but to hit the largest and most accessible targets available: enemy cities.”<sup>108</sup> Imbalances in access to advanced technology, geopolitics, and practical limitations created a strategic context wherein civilian protection could not attain the status of a behaviour-altering norm—a set of limitations which the development and proliferation of precision weapons technology has all but eliminated. Technological capacity has at the very least changed the way civilians are implicated in war because it has shifted the manner in which targets are identified.<sup>109</sup> In terms of OAF the fact that approximately 500 civilians were killed during the operation is certainly important, but these deaths were the result of approximate 16,000 sorties worth of attacks by NATO warplanes.<sup>110</sup> General Clark’s contention that “...[OAF] was the only air campaign in history in which lovers strolled down river banks in the gathering twilight and ate out at outdoor cafés and watched the fireworks” is therefore interesting not because it is incorrect, but because its “correctness” relies upon a very novel organisation of doctrine, technology, and considerations of risk.<sup>111</sup>

It is at this point that the normative logic falls short. Constructivist scholarship does not implicate air power in an ongoing process of heterogeneous engineering that produced historically situated, contentious, and technologically mediated strategies.

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<sup>108</sup> Thomas, *Ethics*, 89.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 173. Nicholas J. Wheeler, "Dying for 'Enduring Freedom': Accepting Responsibility for Civilian Casualties in the War against Terrorism," *International Relations* 16, no. 2 (2002): 210.

<sup>110</sup> Anthony H. Cordesman, *The Lessons and Non-Lessons of the Air and Missile Campaign in Kosovo* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001), 43.

<sup>111</sup> The point about targeting the electrical infrastructure and quote are taken from Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond* (New York, NY: Henry Holt, 2000), 108.

Instead, normative theory makes the anthropocentric mistake of assuming air power technology is a coherent and non-political medium, thereby locating politics solely within the realm of constructed ideas related to it. There is a kind of “truth” to be found in this narrative that does not, as it will become clear, sit well with reality. The emergence of a disjoint between the “reality” of precision targeting and the social, as well as political, expectations regarding such weapons systems is rooted in the 1991 Gulf war. Carefully curated videos from the perspective of the weapons themselves were circulated during the war to highlight pinpoint attacks, in the process propagating the idea that smart weapons can turn “left at the traffic lights.”<sup>112</sup>

This argument must be taken further. Analysis of the complex politics created by these advanced systems go unnoticed, usually because the scholarly literature accepts as unproblematic the determinist argument that sophisticated weapons are more discerning. What must be foregrounded are the systems themselves and the politics that their use creates.<sup>113</sup> Precision weapons have an inherent margin of error derived from several elements, and “precision” is itself a probabilistic consideration shaped by political assumptions.<sup>114</sup> As both Zehfuss and Wheeler explain, misplaced faith in precision has led to increasing political pressure to use air power in an ever broadening range of roles. As a result, military commanders are pushed to make ever more ambitious targeting

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>113</sup> J. Marshall Beier, "Discriminating Tastes: 'Smart' Bombs, Non-Combatants, and Notions of Legitimacy in Warfare," *Security Dialogue* 34, no. 4 (2003).

<sup>114</sup> For a critical view of guidance system development see: Donald A. Mackenzie, *Inventing Accuracy: An Historical Sociology of Nuclear Missile Guidance* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990). A good summary of the practical issues faced by GPS-based weapons systems, including the limitations of what can be expected of them, can be found in: Michael Russell Rip and James M. Hasik, *The Precision Revolution: Gps and the Future of Aerial Warfare* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute, 2002), 306-333.

plans, like singling out specific buildings in dense urban areas. Further, increasing infatuation with precision obscures the longer run effects of airstrikes, such as the impact on civilians of unexploded ordinance and destroyed infrastructure. In the same way, instances where bystanders die as a direct result of bombing, are conceived of as purely accidental.<sup>115</sup> Chamayou goes further, arguing that concepts of precision are premised on problematic assertions that obfuscate a clear politics of life and death.<sup>116</sup> Foregrounding the technology itself makes it clear that Virtual Commanders like SACUER Wesley Clark, who was in command of Allied operations in Kosovo, are unable to “see” the civilian workers in a factory or perhaps immediately account for the temporal effects of bombing. The civilian deaths that result are therefore political because they are related to operational decisions.<sup>117</sup> The half measures of Kosovo, where this method of war was not only employed but extolled, were identified by Ignatieff as a product of political incoherence relating to precision targeting that was rendered possible by the “virtual” manner in which the West experienced the conflict.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Maja Zehfuss, "Targeting: Precision and the Production of Ethics," *European Journal of International Relations* 17, no. 3 (2011); Wheeler, "Dying."

<sup>116</sup> Chamayou argues that the entire idea of ‘precision’ is built upon a nest of false assumptions about the destruction nature of these advanced weapons: Chamayou, *Theory*, 140-152. Cf. Beier, "Discriminating Tasts: 'Smart' Bombs, Non-Combatants, and Notions of Legitimacy in Warfare."

<sup>117</sup> Zehfuss, "Targeting," 554; Ignatieff, *Virtual*, 91., ff. This argument is not incompatible with the point made by Der Derian that the modern battlespace, from the Western perspective, is largely virtual. In waging war commanders engage with various kinds of data collected and presented visually on screens which are increasingly distant from the battlefield. Viewing warfare in this way develops a rather clean aesthetic that supports contentions that it is “virtuous” or benign at the same time that it obfuscates important issues: James Der Derian, *Virtuous War: Mapping the Military-Industrial-Media-Entertainment Network* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009). A similar argument, made specifically in relation to air power, is made by: Derek Gregory, "From a View to a Kill: Drones and Late Modern War," *Theory, Culture & Society* 28, no. 7-8 (2011).

<sup>118</sup> Ignatieff, *Empire Lite*.

Again, the assumption here is that the technology itself has a static, objective character that socially contrived expectations can, and ought, to be related to. What is fundamentally problematic here is that such an approach is insufficiently attentive to how targeting represents a technical problem shaped by both how the battlespace is understood and “seen” *through* air power technology. Tracing the contours of targeting system development helps outline this point. Technological issues and the influence of weather unravelled international conventions about the use of air power during the Second World War.<sup>119</sup>

Early in 1943 the United States Army Air Force in Europe had enjoyed success with day light pinpoint raids against German infrastructure.<sup>120</sup> However, between October 1944 and January 1945, weather and other considerations meant the US bombing campaign resorted to indiscriminate area bombing.<sup>121</sup> At the time US bombers relied on the Model M or “Norden” bomb sight. A bombardier looking through the telescopic sight in the nose of aircraft acquired the target. Then, manipulating the sight, which had been calibrated using a complex array of calculations, including wind speed, direction, and size of munition, would ensure the proper fall of munitions by altering the path of the aircraft, either by directly controlling the autopilot system or providing visual cues to the pilots.<sup>122</sup> Although very sensitive to the aircraft’s movement, this site proved very accurate in clear skies and at a medium altitude. Being an optical device, however, the

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<sup>119</sup> Thomas, *Ethics*.

<sup>120</sup> Wesley Frank Craven and James Lea Cate, *The Army Air Forces in World War II*, vol. Volume Two: Europe: Torch to Point Blank August 1942 to December 1943 (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1983 [1949]), 227.

<sup>121</sup> James Parton, *Air Force Spoken Here: General Ira Eaker and the Command of the Air* (Bethesda, MD: Adler & Adler, 1986), 324-325; Van Creveld, *The Age of Airpower*, 140-141.

<sup>122</sup> Roger A. Freeman, *Mighty Eighth War Manual* (London, UK: Janes, 1984), 45.

Norden required directly viewing targets, which became impossible given inclement weather or heavy smoke. Bomber Command tried other analogues to visual bombing premised on radar or radio technology, but their limitations meant commanders simply resorted to area bombing.<sup>123</sup> The inability to target more effectively lead to a more general discourse wherein the enemy's will to fight, which resided in its population, was the target.<sup>124</sup>

As a result of this experience targeting technology, though heavily overtaken by the strategy of nuclear war, was geared to finding analogs to direct sight which overcame these limitations. The technology itself is examined in Chapter Four, but here it is important to engage another aspect of air power's emergence as a form of technological problem solving. Specifically, deviating from the direct engagement of attacking enemy forces on the front line requires a more elaborate doctrinal perspective. For a time, concentration on the prospect of nuclear war suspended thinking about the usefulness of air power in any other capacity, but the inability of air power to prove decisive in both Korea and Vietnam forced a doctrinal shift—or to be precise, a reestablishment of air doctrine as a vein of US military thought. Importantly, however, pressure for the more robust use of air power was directly related to an increasingly complex understanding of how infrastructure enabled enemy action, and was therefore the main point of interest. The emergence of a particular rationality for engaging enemy forces should be

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 47-49.

<sup>124</sup> Lindqvist goes as far as to argue that, on the part of the British, decision to bomb civilians was a conscious decision that was kept secret and obscured by the permissiveness of international law. Lindqvist, *A History of Bombing*, 82. Section 177 ff. Lindqvist argues further that US efforts against Germany were vary different from its more bloody methods in the Pacific theatre, arguably because they saw the Japanese as an “inferior” group. See pp. 91-92, Section 198 and pp.105-106, Sections 220-222.

understood as the product of circulating reference between the desire to approach targeting from an infrastructural perspective and the advent of technological analogs to human sight that made precision possible. John Warden III, a Pentagon strategist in the closing days of the Cold War and the early 1990s, endeavoured to fill the void that persisted in US doctrinal thinking with a scientifically driven and theoretically rich approach.<sup>125</sup> The “success” of the 1991 Gulf War stemmed from understanding the enemy as an organisational and technical system to be systematically dismantled rather than a population to be “broken.” With this shift from targeting the “population” to targeting material infrastructure comes a differentiation of the human, corporeal body and the physical background of war. This change is evident in the thought of US strategist John Warden.

Warden first sketched his thoughts on air warfare and strategy in his 1988 work *The Air Campaign*, wherein he argued that concentration on nuclear weapons had unrealistically suspended the difference between strategic and operational thinking about air power. The latter required a fundamental re-imagination if the US was to use force effectively in any circumstances short of nuclear war.<sup>126</sup> However, it was in his later work on “The Enemy as a System” that Warden asserts that the enemy should be understood in terms of a “universal model” of systems he based upon the second law of thermodynamics and which are always naturally moving toward disorder. The universal model is represented as having five concentric rings, each corresponding to a specific sub-system. In the military setting the rings move from leadership in the centre through

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<sup>125</sup> John A. Warden, “The Enemy as a System,” *Airpower Journal* XIV, no. 1 (1995).

<sup>126</sup> John A. Warden, *The Air Campaign: Planning for Combat* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense UP, 1988), 6-9.

organic essentials (food, supplies), infrastructure, population, and fielded military. Concentrating attacks on leadership and communications networks provoke a slide toward disorder, create debilitating confusion, and in so doing alter the political calculus of enemy leadership, perhaps even without protracted conventional land or sea operations. Accordingly:

In the extreme, it may even be war to destroy the state or organization. It is, however, the *whole system* that is our target, not its military forces. If we address the system properly, its military forces will be left as a useless appendage, no longer supported by its leadership, organic essentials, infrastructure, or population.<sup>127</sup>

Air power is defined as a means to interfere with various enemy systems so as to shape the behaviour of relevant subjects, which of course echoes the air power as police power argument. Warden's model, however, exhibits some important characteristics when engaged as a practical logic. Specifically, coercion, rather than deterrence, foregrounded specific material-political configurations through the assumption that a separation of human life from technical systems is possible through appropriate targeting decisions. Warden argued that:

The individual fighter has become a director of large things like tanks, aircraft, artillery pieces, and ships. Fighters are dependent on these things, these physical things, to carry out the mission. Deprived of them, the ability to affect the enemy drops to near zero.... The advent of air power and accurate weapons has made it possible to destroy the physical side of the enemy. This is not to say that morale, friction, and fog [social and organisation challenges facing military groups] have all disappeared. It is to say, however, that we can now put them in a distinct category, separate from the physical.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Warden, "The Enemy as a System."

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

This differentiation of the human body from the technical and material context that renders it possible is what underpins modern warfare for Warden. Though the risk to civilian life remains, it is due in large measure to the fact that the very technological tools that render precision targeting possible involve the creation of surrogates to human vision; targeting systems that overcome boundaries to, or limitations of, human sight. These systems are therefore a mediator that renders technically possible a naturally impossible action. What can be targeted by these systems is what comes to be the focus of the social reasoning about war. Though the overall goal of this approach is to change behavioural patterns, this effect is indirect in that it is produced by altering the physical and technical network that makes enemy action possible.

SACEUR Clark's comments on the use of precision weapons in Kosovo echoed Warden's system model. What is essential here is that this general approach to warfare disaggregates (at least in theory) human bodies from the systems in which they operate; attacking the systems provides a means of shaping behaviour without directly engaging individuals. Once human protection is interpellated into this system, first loosely during Bosnia-Herzegovina and then more robustly during Kosovo, it solidifies an approach to human protection that does not directly address the individual bodies of those whose circumstance the intervention is meant to alter. However, at this point, this still only accounts for the social register of the social-material assemblage of air power as a means of policing humanitarian crisis. What stabilises and shapes the enactment of this logic is the nature of air power technology itself. Specifically, the politics of engaging with the data created by precision targeting systems and other battlefield management technology necessitates an ongoing process of interpretation, which is informed by discourse.

The key takeaway from this history of air power is that its development has been driven by the desire to separate the civilian body, or any body for that matter, from the exercise of military force. The foregrounding of material objects shapes an understanding of spatial management premised on the creation of paralysis, rather than on overwhelming defeat or even killing as such—though killing is a secondary effect. This background and spatial orientation are what allows air power to become tangled with spatial approaches to humanitarianism. However, the use of this technology had a mediating effect and resulted in a new form of conflict management strategy. Importantly, human bodies were not discernable within this operational model, and the result was a depoliticising of civilian life and a simplification of the conflicts that victimised them. The ongoing heterogeneous engineering that followed is the subject of the following Chapters, but before turning to this analysis, a few notes on methodology are in order.

#### **2.4 Notes on a Socio-Material Methodology**

In the post-Cold War period the discourse, strategy, and physical character of humanitarian intervention have crystallised in ways they did not before, including initially around concepts of space.<sup>129</sup> However, the specified, demarcated, and actively protected spaces that hallmarked early post-Cold War operations (specifically Northern Iraq in 1991 and Bosnia-Herzegovina) proved to be only a momentary configuration. Their collapse brought about an extraordinary transformation in that exercises of armed humanitarianism shifted into a new mode, at least when realised through air power by the

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<sup>129</sup> McQueen, *Safety Zones*; Yamashita, *Humanitarian Space*.

United States and NATO. Focusing on this process, and then tracing the process of heterogeneous engineering that followed, requires the use of a tailored form of discourse analysis. Of course, the most efficient way to study militarised humanitarian spaces and intervention strategies would be from within, adopting an ethnographic or participant observation method from one (or, better, more) stations along the chain of reference under investigation. Ethnographic work would provide a perspective on the materialisation process, the resultant political and humanitarian effects, as well as how its operation relates to the broader processes of international politics. The cost and complexity of such an approach, however, are prohibitive and would provide little to no opportunity to study continuity and change over time and across various cases. Further, the materialisation process of intervention is fleeting and dynamic; the end of hostilities either ends international engagement, or it brings about a transition to other forms of management or spatial constructs. In this way, the intervention logic is separate, if not always prior, to the reification of more permanent forms of space with different political and material coordinates. For these reasons a materially minded form of discourse analysis is the best form of study.

The most efficient way to accomplish this is to situate the material objects used to create militarised humanitarian spaces “within the context of a set of political and historically specific relations between technology, security, the governance of insecurity, and broader regimes of governance.”<sup>130</sup> This study foregrounds the technology and uses a form of discourse analysis to unpack how, and on what terms, such artefacts come to be conceived as capable of protecting groups identified as vulnerable. Though primarily

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<sup>130</sup> Anaïs, "Objects," 195.

historical, a focus on discourse informed by both discursive methodology and genealogical method provides an analytical edifice for studying how language ultimately attests to the downward causality of assemblages while contributing to their maintenance by legitimating both their use and effects.

#### **2.4.1 Reading (the) Intervention Assemblage(s)**

Discourse analysis is an integral part of this study, but it is enlisted as a tool in the larger effort to chart the political and material circumstances of the engineering of assemblages. It is this interest in what discourse analysis can tell us about the circumstances and effects of heterogenous engineering which renders it a “materially minded discourse analysis.” Rather than engaging discourse strictly in terms of contingent processes whereby identity or concepts are (re)produced, maintained, or overwritten, this study has far more in common with the kind of work done in governmentality studies. Language is analysed in terms of the different configurations of power which it plays a role in planning, implementing, and legitimating. This means discourse is not only problematised in terms of how it creates and maintains identity constructs (which of course remain important), but in terms of its relationship to the material or technical dispensations through which power is enacted.

This discourse analysis is primarily interested in reconstructing a history of how air power came to be understood as a means of carrying out humanitarian intervention. Such an analysis uses something akin to a genealogical approach which asks what spatial, political, discursive, and material factors worked together to bring the air power

assemblage into existence.<sup>131</sup> A materially minded discourse analysis takes text as a starting point for tracing the associations created between various heterogeneous elements that have been, or are being, engineered to create an assemblage. Doing this requires juxtaposing the play of discourse against the historical reconstruction of chains of reference achieved through ANT. As such, this form of discourse analysis is far closer to governmentality studies than it is conventional discourse analysis. Though both are interested in the constituent, fractured, and power-laden effects of discourse, governmentality studies understand the exercise of power as positional in the sense that it studies how people and things are ordered. Governmentality is specifically interested in the “multifarious practical, technical manifestations” of power, and language is a register through which these practical politics are planned and their effects legitimated.<sup>132</sup>

Under this formulation, discourse is analysed in terms of the constituent role it plays in creating the assemblage, which means putting it in relation to an historical and at times genealogical study of changing patterns of behaviour. This means the focus is not solely on the performativity of language, but also asks what material arrangements must exist to make a given discourse decipherable and operable. What is being foregrounded is not just the identification process, but also how the material aspects of security practices relate to a process of legitimation.<sup>133</sup> To borrow Anaïs’ formulation, the point is to try “to make sense of the spatio-temporal contact zones where objects, devices, ideas, and human beings become entangled...within a web of events, accidents, and

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<sup>131</sup> For an introduction to the concept of genealogy and as a way of studying the microphysics of state power see: Walters, *Governmentality*, 10-21.

<sup>132</sup> Larner and Walters, *Global Governmentality*, 3.

<sup>133</sup> Anaïs, "Objects," 195.

contingencies.”<sup>134</sup> This research draws more heavily on an approach to discursive analysis that operates in a genealogical form while reading for absence as much as enunciation. It is in the silence of discourse that one may find the stabilising influence of material. Following Anaïs, genealogy is “...a methodological process concerned with telling the story of how a set of discursive and non-discursive practices come into being and interact to form a set of political, economic, moral, cultural, and social institutions which define the limits of acceptable speaking, knowing, and acting.”<sup>135</sup>

Operationalising this approach means foregrounding “lines of descent” within a genealogical investigation.<sup>136</sup> In this approach, the historical progression of practice, in this instance humanitarian intervention, is disaggregated and problematised historically. The goal is to chart the multiple emerging, diverging, converging, overlapping, and terminating discursive and material channels through which the process was realised in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and later Libya. There are, however, two important caveats to the approach taken here that prevent it from being called a genealogy rather than a discourse analysis (and thereby require a perhaps unconventional use of the term “discourse analysis”). Genealogical investigation usually takes a far longer view of its subject matter than the one being entertained here (with the slight exception of the treatment of air power above). A shorter time frame is used here to tease out the emergence of the air power policing logic that underpins United States and NATO humanitarian interventions. Of course, even this scope is adopted for pragmatic purposes, and the influence of other periods and forms of warfighting bleed in on occasion. As

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 196.

<sup>136</sup> Walters, *Governmentality*, 117-124.

such, there is not as much “movement” in or between lines of descent as would be found in a more traditional genealogy, hence the reliance on diachronic discourse analysis spanning three humanitarian interventions in the period from 1992 to 2011 as a way of coming to see the assemblage being formed. Also, humanitarian intervention is a far looser assemblage, and its *milieu* far less deterministic, than the broad socio-material configurations genealogy is used to study. For this reason a balance is struck; by evoking the theory of assemblages it is possible to straddle the gap between traditional discourse analysis (focused on language and text alone) and genealogy (focused on the intersection of language and material practice). This makes it possible to study humanitarian intervention as a form of behaviour with certain consistent though mutating aspects that has yet to fully emerge and is therefore still reliant on (re)new(ed) construction in each case.

Regarding the structure of the analysis it is possible to borrow heavily from current work on discourse analysis (as outlined below), but with the caveat that these methods are used as an entry point to the study of assemblages in that they make it possible to identify downward causality. Identifying the creation of specific linkages via an historical reconstruction of engineering efforts allows for the identification of points of mediation, the effect of which can be seen in the play of discourse as ways of thinking about conflict are reformulated to fit the realm of possibility staked out by irreducible material influences. This means taking changes in discourse as important, but in the sense that they provide an opportunity to identify the effects of an assemblage and then unpack how these effects are legitimated. Though specifically interested in the effects of engineering and the identification of how discourse is bounded by the mediating

influences of various material artefacts and spaces, there are some important methodological points that can be borrowed from current discourse analysis practice.

There is a plethora of approaches to discourse analysis found in IR, but several permutations bear note.<sup>137</sup> The first are case specific and temporally bounded forms of analysis which seek to unravel how the use of language produces the identities and practices related to a specific event in a particular way through shifts and experimentations in discourse. In Hansen's model of this approach, the analysis focuses on the explicit statements made by texts that pertain to how the identity of various actors or groups is understood. These explicit statements, of course, are part of a larger discursive network that develops identities through a process of association and differentiation.<sup>138</sup> Malmvig makes the study of discursive practices her goal, namely accounting for how sovereignty and intervention come to be understood in different ways within the discourse(s) of individual cases, rather than a specific approach to the construction of identity.<sup>139</sup> This work uses both approaches tactically. Following Malmvig it is important to problematise how the disruptive nature of conflict and the nature of international response to violent humanitarian crises is to some extent constructed through the unfolding of discourse. Later, specific articulations of identity are unpacked, following Hansen's guidance, in order to show a field of intelligibility is created to both account for and legitimise the effects of the air power assemblage. Paying

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<sup>137</sup> For a review of this literature, which includes treatment of cognitive and symbolic interactionist approaches, see: Jennifer Milliken, "The Study of Discourse in International Relations: A Critique of Research and Methods," *European Journal of International Relations* 5, no. 2 (1999).

<sup>138</sup> Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 41-46.

<sup>139</sup> Malmvig, *State Sovereignty*, 23-29.

more attention to minor variations in the play of discourse in each case brings out the influence of the assemblages that are constructed. The goal, however, is still to provide a history of the present, which is to say problematising current forms of governance to discern how they came to be.<sup>140</sup>

Unlike Hansen and Malmvig, however, discourse is not problematised solely in terms of the chain of signification it (re)creates, but also in relation to the material dispensations that make this play of language decipherable and operable in a practical sense. Language, particularly official discourses surrounding the use of force, is therefore studied for two precise reasons. First, they act as a register within which the downward causality of assemblages becomes visible in the form of (re)configurations of discourse following their creation. Second, they operate as a constituent element of these assemblages. Language helps to maintain assemblages in so far as it legitimates their mobilisation and creates legitimacy for their effects.

It is this implication of language as a facet of an assemblage that lies at the base of what is called here a “materially minded discourse analysis”: a form of study that traces reformulations of discourse as the effect of downward causality and a means of legitimating historically situated and contingent forms of international behaviour. This method requires some additional considerations beyond the investigation of explicit statements made within various texts. Beyond reading for explicit statements, analysis requires sensitivity to what the text specifically *does not* say and as such takes for granted. “This involves creating a conceptual schematic of the terms it uses, the

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 29-30.

assumptions it asks its readers to take for granted, the basic message that it delivers—and to whom.”<sup>141</sup> A critical stance against the text must be taken to look for silences, uncover the assumptions that make it function, implicate the material conditions that account for shifts in the discourse, question its perspective on events, and look for its strategic or rhetorical efforts.<sup>142</sup> Such analysis requires a careful reconstruction of the technical and material history of the contexts in which security practices are carried out. This historical context allows for the identification of changes in discourse in terms of their relationship to a given assemblage. To these ends, a series of analytical questions drive the portions of this study focused on discourse. Specifically:

- How is technology implicated by, and a necessary element to the realisation of, the discourse of interest? What specific operational or organisational purposes does it serve? How does this role relate to the broader discourse(s) of humanitarianism?
- What is the specific practical purpose, and inherent material nature, of the space this technology is enlisted to create? What are its goals and marks of success? What are the social and material aspects of technology which make such reasoning possible?
- How does technology help create subjects of humanitarian governance in specific ways and how is this supported or reflected by discourse? What is the practical effect regarding the experience of groups?
- Building on these questions, how does experience, technological advancement, or the play of discourse surrounding various cases lead to changes in the answers to these questions over time? To what political, normative, and ethical ends?

The insistence that this form of discourse analysis differs from orthodox

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<sup>141</sup> Anaïs, "Objects," 197.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 198.

approaches may strike some as odd, perhaps leading to the argument that what is undertaken here is not discourse analysis properly understood. The “materially minded” moniker may seem strange at first, not least because conventional discourse analysis is *already* avowedly materialist. *Contra* criticisms that a discursive ontology is fundamentally ideational, discourse analysts generally contend that material and ideational factors do not exist in isolation from each other.<sup>143</sup> As Hansen explains, “[t]he point is not to disregard material facts but to study how these are produced and prioritized.”<sup>144</sup> What such analysis stresses is that material things are engaged, used, or responded to as always, having already been identified in discourse. From this perspective, it is only through language that things are identified in the sense that these “‘things’—objects, subjects, states, living being, and material structures—are given meaning”.<sup>145</sup> In this way discourse analysis can be broadly understood as “an examination of why things appear the way they do, and how certain actions become possible.”<sup>146</sup> To do so, discourse focuses on text as the medium through which this process of identification takes place. In foregrounding text, it becomes possible to identify how “specific systems of meaning-production have been generated, circulated, internalized, and/or resisted.”<sup>147</sup>

Regardless of its stated interest in materiality, Poststructural discourse analysis has left itself open to charges that it too narrowly focuses on the practices and politics of

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<sup>143</sup> Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 19-20.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>146</sup> Kevin C. Dunn and Iver B. Neumann, *Undertaking Discourse Analysis for Social Research* (Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan UP, 2016), 4.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

representation.<sup>148</sup> As Aradau and Huysmans illustrate, these approaches, though different to some degree regarding focus, represent an enactment of the international world through connecting and assembling its various discursive facets. They, therefore, include specific assumptions of what texts are, how they produce meaning through intertextuality (which is to say their reference to other texts, old and new), and how this can be effectively studied. These assumptions, regarding critical theory, serve to meld methodological and meta-theoretical considerations.<sup>149</sup> The result is a locating of international politics and the event itself within the context of a specific unfolding but bounded discourse that subsumes material considerations rather than engaging with them. These approaches provide valuable insights regarding the development of case studies and rigorous practices for selecting and reading texts.

Even so, some alterations are needed to study how the practice of intervention represents a socio-material assemblage which can be (re)created, with some level of consistency, in several cases because of the technology used to realise it.<sup>150</sup> As Lundborg and Vaughan-Williams point out, this is not an innate part of the Poststructural theory upon which much of the current orthodoxy of discourse analysis is based, but it has become a hallmark of its practice.<sup>151</sup> A particularly powerful way of escaping this trap is to think of discourse as a window into the analysis of assemblages, and to problematise the relationship between dispensations of power and the play of discourse. In this way,

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<sup>148</sup> Tom Lundborg and Nick Vaughan-Williams, "New Materialisms, Discourse Analysis, and International Relations: A Radical Intertextual Approach," *Review of International Studies* 41, no. 01 (2015): 7.

<sup>149</sup> Aradau and Huysmans, "Critical Methods," 10-11.

<sup>150</sup> Latour, "Society Made Durable."

<sup>151</sup> Lundborg and Vaughan-Williams, "New Materialisms," 6-7.

we come to see something Bennett calls “thing-power.” Her contention is that “*objects* appear more vividly as *things*, that is, as entities not entirely reducible to the contexts in which (human) subjects set them, never entirely exhausted by their semiotics.”<sup>152</sup>

Thinking in terms of assemblages makes it possible to more adequately discuss the role of things because it replaces the focus on identification with the downward causality of the assemblage, thereby bringing to light how both concept and material are shaped but not determined.

#### **2.4.2 Organisation and the Selection of Texts**

Each of the following case studies is loosely organised around an archetype: an engagement with the physical, political, and practical context that establishes the socio-material relationships at play in the intervention set against a discourse analysis attuned to how its operation is rationalised. Along the way important secondary points are made: Chapter Three takes the opportunity to discuss how the more general context of a conflict helped shape intervention logics; Chapter Four interrogates how targeting technology helped virtualise and thereby render mobile the emerging logic of air power policing; Chapter Five engages more fully with how R2P has come to resonate with this assemblage, both legitimating its use and being shaped by the resultant politics. All of these are set against the discourse(s) of each case in order to tease out the resulting downward causality and the means by which this specific assemblage was legitimated.

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<sup>152</sup> Jane Bennett, "The Force of Things: Steps toward an Ecology of Matter," *Political Theory* 32, no. 3 (2004): 351.

The selection of texts for this kind of analysis is always controversial, and to some extent, is a forever-unfinished process. Scholarly rigour and constructive, elaborate collection techniques are, however, possible. In order to balance rigour with openness, the project adopted a progressive approach to the collection of texts building on the work of Hansen, Malmvig, and Anaïs. Texts were collected in several phases, starting with a highly-regimented typology of textual categories and growing out to incorporate other available and relevant documentation. Initially, official documents that sought to explain and rationalise the interventions were collected. Specifically, US Department of Defence and NATO press briefings provide the foundation for this stage of the collection process. These categories of texts were selected because they were widely available, were authoritative on the function of the intervention in question, and were a source of information and conceptual clarification for the larger discourse surrounding each case.

The first case, however, was approached differently given the kind of documentation that is now available. Here the discourse analysis engages the several hundred internal documents recently declassified by the CIA and Clinton Presidential Library. The 337 documents contained in this declassification were created or collected by the Inter-Agency Balkan Task Force (BTF).<sup>153</sup> The BTF was created: “To centralize and coordinate development and implementation of a collection strategy [...]; to centralize and coordinate the [intelligence] Community’s sanctions monitoring effort in support of UN Security Council Resolution 757; [and] to coordinate general military

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<sup>153</sup> Every attempt has been made to cite the documents associated with this effort with accuracy and clarity. However, it may be helpful to refer to the complete list of declassified sources on the CIA’s website: <http://www.foia.cia.gov/collection/bosnia-intelligence-and-clinton-presidency>

intelligence support to US policy and contingency planning and tactical intelligence support.”<sup>154</sup> The BTF collected, collated, and helped interpret information and reporting from the various United States and international agencies in order provide a collection of coherent, all-encompassing, and policy-relevant reports which functioned as a foundation for meetings of the Clinton Administration’s foreign policy “Principals”.

Though discourse of the broader public and Congressional discourse should not be ignored, it is not foregrounded here for two reasons. First, Hansen’s study of the discourse surrounding the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina has already accomplished much of this work.<sup>155</sup> Second, the BTF documentation provides a window into how the Clinton Administration understood the conflict and how strategies for intervention emerged in relation to this understanding. These insights actually provide an opportunity to reengage Hansen on a few points.

Case	Number of Documents
Bosnia-Herzegovina	337
Kosovo	269
Libya	105

**Table 1: Data Sets by Case Study**

The result of this textual collection strategy was a large dataset (see Table 1) which was then reflexively coded. In each case, the documents were coded using a set of general conditions relevant to a series of considerations relevant to the particular case. Then, data points were reorganised into a set of sub-categories defined after patterns were identified within the first level of coding. This second coding level varied depending on patterns that became clear in the first level. The text selection and coding processes were

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<sup>154</sup> W.O. Studeman, "Establishment of Interagency Task Force," ed. Deputy Director of Central Intelligence (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1992), 2.

<sup>155</sup> Hansen, *Security as Practice*.

undertaken in keeping with the methodologies of Hansen and Malmvig. With this granular organisation (see Figure 1) it was then possible to begin reading for the assumptions made by the discourse that is evidence of underlying assumptions relevant to technology and/or material. It is here that the more critical, materially sensitive engagement seen in each Chapter added to complete the analysis.

In all three of the case studies the discourse analysis plays a foundational role, but its outcome leads to the study of another set of texts and processes that are brought to light in the process. Regarding Bosnia-Herzegovina, engagement with the history of the intervention and the political-material nature of the conflict is used to situate the discourse analysis and further elaborate on the transformations in the use of air power. In the Kosovo Chapter, first hand accounts of the conflict are used in order to draw out the effects of thinking about humanitarian intervention from the air. Finally, the Chapter on Libya is specifically designed to engage with R2P, and as such the ICISS document plays an important role.

### 3 Competing Rationalities of Conflict Management in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995)

*The conduct of war is the art and science of using military force with other instruments of national power to achieve victory. Military victory is normally the decisive defeat of an enemy which breaks his will to wage war and forces him to sue for peace.<sup>1</sup>*

*We are not dealing with an orthodox war, a single enemy, a front line, or clearly identifiable targets.<sup>2</sup>*

Between 11 and 13 July 1995 Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) forces overran Dutch UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) Peacekeepers and Muslim forces in Srebrenica, a mountain town close to the border of Serbia and what would become Bosnia-Herzegovina following the Dayton Accords in 1995. Srebrenica was located in one of several Muslim-controlled enclaves that had emerged following the outbreak of hostilities in 1992. As a “safe area” it was created on 19 March 1993 when UNPROFOR Commander, French General Phillipe Morillon—himself cornered by inhabitants of Srebrenica who feared the ethnic cleansing sure to follow an imminent BSA attack—unilaterally declared that his force would ensure the enclave’s integrity. The UNSC was left with little choice, and on 16 April passed resolution 819 formalising the General’s declaration and straining UNPROFOR’s mandate to include administering the safe area of Srebrenica. On 6 May, resolution 824 expanded this new role to include Sarajevo, Žepa, Goražde, Tuzla, and Bihać. It was in 1995, with the fall and ethnic cleansing of

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<sup>1</sup> "Afm 1-1: Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force," ed. United States of America Department of the Airforce (1984), 1-1.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from UK Prime Minister John Major to Lord David Owen. Quoted in David Owen, *Balkan Odyssey* (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace, 1995), 19.

Srebrenica and Žepa, that the safe areas would become a haunting reminder of international failure in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Whereas the academic literature largely takes the collapse of the safe areas as a singular failure of international resolve, this Chapter offers a different reading that foregrounds how the need to reconcile the political goal of human protection with the management of specific spaces set off a process of heterogeneous engineering. The humanitarian intervention literature largely asserts that the international community's failure to prevent the violence of 1995 reveals an underlying social, political, or discursive morass. In this formulation, military force is understood in purely instrumental terms, and the ineffectiveness of international efforts are reduced back to factors that obstructed or obscured the otherwise clear practical context of the conflict. What is lost in this reading is the fact that international engagement with this conflict required engineering new assemblages of both concepts and tools in order to make action possible. Though policy makers were guided by the experience of efforts in Northern Iraq (circa 1991), in the Former Yugoslavia belligerents had ready access to military resources, the conflict itself was more diffuse, and all sides were willing to interfere international forces.<sup>3</sup>

This Chapter tells the story of international engagement with Bosnia-Herzegovina from a different perspective, one that foregrounds the conflict space and how it was engaged through specific mediating objects. A mediator, following Latour, is an object enlisted to realise a particular behaviour, and in so doing forces a "detour" in practice that in turn recasts the task to which the tool as been put, as well as the problem itself. A

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<sup>3</sup> Yamashita, *Humanitarian Space*, 85.

mediator is a specific node within a larger chain of reference, and following the discussion of technology in Chapter Two, should be understood as having both a logical and phenomenological effect on practice. Rather than a passive surface on which politics played out, Bosnia-Herzegovina is engaged as a site of heterogeneous engineering whereby the principles of global humanitarianism were linked to specific physical spaces by way of technical intermediaries, namely air power. The result was not a coherent but a nascent assemblage, but the engineering process itself yielded an important form of downward causality. The nature of the conflict space and the politics of the Clinton Administration made it possible to create a relationship between air power, a technical means of intervention, and Serb heavy weapons, a class of physical objects whose management came to be seen as a means of controlling the conflict space. The resulting downward causality was a reformulation of both US purpose and the nature of the conflict itself in terms of circulation. Evidence of this downward causality is provided via an analysis of the discourse of the Clinton Administration, specifically how the conflict was identified and understood, and shifted between 1992 and 1995.

This is not, however, a deterministic analysis. It is the interaction between conflict space, technology, and politics that gives the intervention its ultimate form and a historical perspective is required to trace how these factors interrelate. The engineering of the air power assemblage was contentious, both within the Clinton Administration (as the reconstruction of discourse bears out) and at the level of international action. The historical and discursive analysis show that while bombing was originally designed to buttress the efforts of UNPROFOR, over time it became clear that these approaches materialised in different and incompatible ways. Though they would not be completely

disentangled until UN efforts were robbed of all credibility by the collapse of Srebrenica and Žepa in 1995, addressing these two approaches as attempts to engineer an assemblage disrupts the notion that intervention can be thought of in broad, totalising terms. The materialisation of UNPROFOR, specifically as a peacekeeping force mediated by the construction of observation posts, created its own set of affordances and these effects are noted below. However, these differences are only noted to the point that their difference from the air power assemblage becomes clear; a more detailed unpacking must wait for later work.

While not “better” than the UN’s attempt to expand the role of UN peacekeepers, this engineering process related to air power more directly addressed the physical context of the conflict and was, therefore, able to persist. The importance of heavy weapons to dictating the balance of forces that brought about the enclaves proved to be a ready surface on which to deploy air power. In addressing the conflict in this way, the United States and later NATO approach to the conflict was mediated by air power. Though the use of air power in Bosnia-Herzegovina was provisional and never entirely extricated from its initial entanglement as a means of supporting UNPROFOR, the former model was not discredited by the collapse of the safe areas. In fact, this model was legitimated by the failure of UNPROFOR and would become the foundation for later United States and NATO humanitarian interventions.

With this reading intact, not only is the prevailing academic literature unsettled, but the ethical and political effects intervention are uncovered as having a socio-material foundation. In both cases, the materialisation of protection brought with it the physical and political isolation of those whose plight legitimated international efforts. However,

the reformulation of the conflict as a problem of circulation rendered human protection a derivative outcome, and in so doing created a specific spatial politics whereby vulnerable groups were sequestered to maintain the socio-material typography of the conflict. Those thought to require protection are not visible or referenced directly in either the air power or peacekeeping model, but they nonetheless are acted upon by these efforts in specific ways. Beyond being problematic in terms of long-term political stability, this perspective also allowed for the (re)creation of a physical environment incompatible with the humanitarian moniker of international efforts, in some ways proving directly harmful and even deadly.<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, the outcome of the intervention inflected future uses of force under the humanitarian banner, eventually leading to the explicit differentiation of military efforts and the stated goals of global humanitarianism in both Kosovo (Chapter Four) and Libya (Chapter Five).

### **3.1 From Muddle to Mediators**

Within the academic literature, international efforts to manage the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina were tragically muddled; confused, tepid, and only decisive after the BSA's ethnic cleansing of the Eastern Enclaves. Many agreed with Lord Owen, Co-Chairman of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, that using military force decisively sooner would have "...moderated the worst excesses of the war."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The far more institutionalised and deliberate organization of space in order to depoliticize the Palestinian population has already been the focus of extensive study. See: Adi Ophir, Michal Givoni, and Sari Hanafi, *The Power of Inclusive Exclusion: Anatomy of Israeli Rule in the Occupied Palestinian Territories* (New York, NY: Zone Books, 2009).

<sup>5</sup> Owen, *Balkan Odyssey*, 12.

Constructivists argued that the humanitarian intervention norm had not become strong enough to shape state interest, overcome pre-existing legal considerations, or alter how human protection was weighed against sovereignty amidst the tenuous geopolitics of the post-Cold War period.<sup>6</sup> A more Liberal argument, which foregrounds issues regarding institutional politics, contends that UNPROFOR was never adequately equipped to meet its political mandate while the US and NATO relied solely on air power.<sup>7</sup> Though the UNSC had authorised force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, this was a show of resolve never meant to push UNPROFOR beyond peacekeeping; there was never a clear a strategic direction for the Blue Helmets and as such they struggled to navigate the changing context of the conflict.<sup>8</sup> For Poststructuralism, this lack of political efficacy was rooted in how responsibility for the violence was construed via discourse. Ethnic “leaders” (construed from the perspective of pre-existing discourse(s) of Balkan identity rife with references to hatred and irrationality) were blamed for civilian deaths, while the international community retained responsibility for civilian wellbeing. Inaction reigned because fault for continued violence was attributed to the belligerents themselves.<sup>9</sup>

Bosnian national identity was overly simplified to coincide with the territorial borders of

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<sup>6</sup> Walling, *All Necessary Measures*, 89-91.

<sup>7</sup> McQueen, *Safety Zones*, 67-94. Wheeler goes as far as stating the UN should have set up fully-fledged UN protectorates, rather than adopt the half-hearted safe-area policy, in 1992. See: Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 250. For a summary of the confusion of the UNSC debate see: Walling, *All Necessary Measures*, 97-110. For a neat discussion of geopolitical considerations see: Thomas G. Weiss, *Military-Civilian Interactions: Intervening in Humanitarian Crises* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), 107, 118-130.

<sup>8</sup> Mats Berdal, "Bosnia," in *The Un Security Council: From the Cold War to the 21st Century*, ed. David M. Malone (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2004), 460-463. Boulder points out that, at the institutional level, UNPROFOR was instructed by the UN bureaucracy only to help the UNHCR if asked; the force was not told it had any military responsibility for the protection of the population of the enclaves.

<sup>9</sup> Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 111-128. Cf. Susan L. Woodward "The Long Intervention: Continuity in the Balkan Theatre," *Review of International Studies* 39, no. 05 (2013): 1170-1171.

the Republics, in the process undermining any attempt to engage usefully with the conflict on political terms and instead authorising forms of international engagement that propagated violence.<sup>10</sup>

The ultimate effect of this morass is clear: the UN's credibility was ravaged as it proved incapable of pragmatically engaging with the unique circumstances of the safe areas.<sup>11</sup> UNPROFOR had been designed to enforce ceasefire zones in the Krajina region between Bosnia and Croatia, and the force was not redesigned, augmented, or provided with a revised operational logic when given a mandate to protect the safe areas. As a policy, the safe areas were never meant to be more than temporary solutions, but the expansion of UNPROFOR's mandate made them permanent without providing for their long-term stability.<sup>12</sup> As a classic peacekeeping force, UNPROFOR lacked aggressive rules of engagement, sufficient material resources, or proper institutional support for their new mission. The force quickly became an embarrassingly powerless pawn and political hostage of Bosnia's various armed factions.<sup>13</sup> In all, the political goals of the UNSC and NATO were incompatible with the material resources devoted to the operation, especially

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<sup>10</sup> David Campbell, *National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity, and Justice in Bosnia* (Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota UP, 1998), 12.

<sup>11</sup> Tuathail, "Cleansing of a 'Safe Area'," 120-121.

<sup>12</sup> Berdal, "Bosnia," 452-454.

<sup>13</sup> On the conflict between mandate and practical matters see: Weiss, *Military-Civil*, 97; Karin Von Hippel, *Democracy by Force: U.S. Military Intervention in the Post-Cold War World* (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2000), 136-138.; Jane Boulder, *Peace Enforcement: The United Nations Experience in Congo, Somalia, and Bosnia* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2001), 90-93. On the matter of UNPROFOR's frequently being taken hostage this was most notably done by the BSA: Weiss, *Military-Civil*, 123-124. However, the detention and use of UN troops as human shields, which lead to the deaths of four individuals, was also done by Croat forces during Operation Storm. See: UN Secretary General, "Report of the Secretary General Submitted Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1009," (New York, NY: United Nations, 1995), 23.

given that limited airstrikes did little to dissuade violence between factions who were unhappy with the status quo.<sup>14</sup>

The overarching theme of this literature is that the conflict itself presented a set of circumstances that could have been more adequately engaged had normative pressure, institutional politics, or discourse allowed for it. Absent from this analysis is an engagement with how materialising the intervention was itself an example of an ongoing engineering effort that led to a reformulation of how international engagement functioned in practice. Foregrounding how and on what socio-material conditions a relationship between air power and the conflict space itself was created provides a means of bringing the downward causality of the resulting assemblage into view. The socio-material context of the conflict itself was not a passive surface on which international efforts played out, but was a complex, dynamic, and most importantly irreducible factor in the politics of the intervention; it emerged, shifted, and functioned in ways independent of international efforts, and as such created specific affordances for a relationship between air power and humanitarianism. Further, the orthodox reading of the intervention fails to unpack how relying on different material and technical infrastructures—observation posts for UNPROFOR, air power for NATO—not only influenced how these institutional actors came to understand the conflict, but would eventually bring these efforts into competition as distinct modes of conflict management. In both cases, material actants mediate the realisation of humanitarian intervention, meaning they play a constituent role in its engineering.

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<sup>14</sup> Elinor C. Sloan, *Bosnia and the New Collective Security* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998), 29-39.

The reformulation of the conflict as a problem of circulation was a function of the mediation of international efforts through air power and the terms on which it engaged the conflict space. Following Latour, a mediator is some “thing”, of any ontological quality, which interferes in what would otherwise be thought of as a linear process.<sup>15</sup> What results is a “translation”: a “...displacement, drift, invention, mediation, the creation of a link that did not exist before and that to some degree modifies [the relationship between agent and goal].”<sup>16</sup> For Latour, the enactment of any social desire, such as protecting vulnerable civilians in conflict zones, requires the enlistment of various mediating technical tools in the process. The effect, he makes clear, is “wholly symmetrical” in that both the nature of the mediators and the actors who enlist them are altered by this process.<sup>17</sup> This leads to a second quality of mediation, specifically a “detour” through technical means to make a goal achievable, but this process changes the coordinates of the activity in the process.<sup>18</sup> The remainder of this Chapter unpacks how the relationship between air power and the conflict space was created, in so doing making it possible to see the detour that was taken and situate it as a form of downward casualty.

### **3.2 Heavy Weapons: Wars of Independence and the Emergence of Contested Spaces**

Coming to see the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina as a problem of circulation was not only a product of institutional politics or discourse. The specific materialisation of the

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<sup>15</sup> Latour, *Pandora's Hope*, 178-180.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 179.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 179-180.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 180-181.

conflict—how ethnic imaginaries came to be reflected in the spatial context of the conflict and enacted through the organised use of military force—created practical affordances that shaped the use of air power. In the same way that international engagement cannot be adequately explained or critiqued without attention to how it materialised, ethno-political readings of the conflict in the Former Yugoslavia are deficient because they do not consider the material terms on which these politics emerged and functioned. This deficiency is relevant to a discussion of military intervention because without foregrounding the conflict space the effects it has on the ultimate form of international action go unnoticed. By addressing the socio-material context of the conflict it becomes clear that international efforts were not only marked by a power-laden play for competence (as practice theory would suggest), but instead a mediated process whereby *the specific practical form of the action itself* emerges in ways that are not overdetermined by any one factor. To say that intervention is a practice that reifies knowledge is to miss the productive effects of bringing political imperatives into what Barad calls intra-action with matter: “the nonhuman things that make up our everyday existence as well as the corporeality of our embodiments.”<sup>19</sup>

The entangled but ultimately separate processes of heterogeneous engineering undertaken by the international community in Bosnia-Herzegovina were carried out in relation to, and where ultimately mediated by, the conflict space. The conflict space encompasses the topography of the former Yugoslavia, its associated political demarcations, the material distribution of military technology, and the potential for

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<sup>19</sup> Aradau et al., "Discourse/Materiality," 58. Cf. Karen Barad, "Getting Real: Technoscientific Practices and the Materialization of Reality," *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 10, no. 2 (1998): 101.

mobilisation along ethnic lines left latent by past Yugoslav defence policies. These factors brought into being a socio-material conflict space wherein the materialisation of ethnic imaginaries was conducted through siege and territorial contestation. This socio-material character made the use of air power conceivable, thereby contributing to the reformulation of the intervention from an exercise in protection to one of policing. The enclaves emerged in this socio-material context; by leveraging the enclaves as safe areas, this socio-material context mediated international engagement, rendering it an attempt to manage the circulation of specific things that contributed to and simultaneously endangered the existence of the enclaves. This not to say that the physical or technological facets of the conflict determined international response, but a close look at the conflict shows that international engagement with the conflict followed a process, like the one outlined by Squire, of materialisation enacted through material things and in specific spaces.<sup>20</sup>

Conflict in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina was motivated by complex ethnic politics, but these politics materialised in a specific way that brought the emergence of a series of contested spaces. Following the independence of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina ethnic statelets formed in both the Krajina region (which would become the foundation for UNPROFOR's initial deployment), Sarajevo, and around several towns in Eastern Bosnia (the Eastern Enclaves). These spaces formed because of the diffused demographics of the Former Yugoslavia, but also because each group could effectively mobilise militarily in a coherent and ethnically focused manner. This latter point is

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<sup>20</sup> Vicki Squire, "Reshaping Critical Geopolitics? The Materialist Challenge," *Review of International Studies* 41, no. 01 (2015): 151.

precisely why the conflict could materialise in the way it did and come to create a specific context for international intervention.

The emergence of effective government forces in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and of ethnic militias that contested their territorial claims in favour of materialising divergent nationalist imaginaries, were not spontaneous. Militias and government forces emerged from the remnants of Yugoslavia's partisan-inspired national defence organisations, as well as standing reserve forces. Yugoslavia's policy of "Total National Defence" (TND), which it followed from 1969 until the 1980s, prefigured this mobilisation. Yugoslavia's defensive posture during the Cold War as a small, Non-Aligned state in a strategic location relied on two equal military bodies: the JNA and Territorial Defence (TO) forces.<sup>21</sup> The latter were designed to deter foreign occupation by institutionalising Yugoslav society's ability to conduct a long, organised, and well-equipped partisan resistance.<sup>22</sup> However, TND was as much social engineering as strategic calculus, and as a result created a foundation for conflict in the 1990s.<sup>23</sup> TO fell outside JNA control and were directly managed by the civilian authorities in each republic. This separation was designed to create a military balance conducive to inter-

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<sup>21</sup> Adam Roberts, *Nations in Arms: The Theory and Practice of Territorial Defence*, 2nd ed. (Houndmills, UK: Macmillan/IISS, 1986), 172-173.

<sup>22</sup> James Horncastle, "Reaping the Whirlwind: Total National Defense's Role in Slovenia's Bid for Secession," *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 26, no. 3 (2013): 530; Roberts, *Nations*, 187-188.

<sup>23</sup> Horncastle, "Reaping the Whirlwind: Total National Defense's Role in Slovenia's Bid for Secession." Roberts, *Nations*, 142-145. The need for such an unconventional defensive plan was put in stark relief by the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and invasion of Hungary in 1956. These crises illustrated the Soviet willingness to directly intervene in other states, how states with a similar military capacity to Yugoslavia were easily overwhelmed by Soviet forces, and that the US was unlikely to become directly involved: Badredine Arfi, *International Change and the Stability of Multiethnic States: Yugoslavia, Lebanon, and Crises of Governance* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 2005), 119-120; Roberts, *Nations*, 161-171.

ethnic stability by making it possible for the republics to resist federal pressure, but stopped short of providing the means to coerce each other or Belgrade. It then became politically tenable for the JNA's conscripted, inter-ethnic force to be deployed across the country, showing the authority of the federal government while promoting ethnic heterogeneity.<sup>24</sup>

TND was scrapped in the 1980s in favour of a centralised JNA, an organisation that had become dominantly Serbo-Montenegrin by 1991; TO units were officially disbanded and their arms transferred to the military.<sup>25</sup> Even so, the institutional remnants of TND provided the foundation for organising armed groups in the 1990s.<sup>26</sup> As Yugoslavia frayed, militarised factions organised along the lines of former TO units. The complex social and military purpose of TND, specifically the proliferation of localised units, meant the ideological position of the republics themselves was dominant.<sup>27</sup> Member loyalty was most immediately to municipal authorities, creating ethnic homogeneity within individual units despite the official, national policy of inter-ethnic harmony.<sup>28</sup> The contested spaces emerged specifically because, in 1991-1992, local-level groups and government forces radicalised quickly along the lines of past TO formations, were militarily effective in short order, and made claims to local territory. Overall, the goal was to cement local control, materialising the diffuse demographics of the country,

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<sup>24</sup> Marko Attila Hoare, *How Bosnia Armed* (London: Saqi Books in association with the Bosnian Institute, 2004), 18-20.

<sup>25</sup> Horncastle, "Reaping the Whirlwind: Total National Defense's Role in Slovenia's Bid for Secession," 534-538.

<sup>26</sup> Hoare, *How Bosnia Armed*, 20-24.

<sup>27</sup> Horncastle, "Reaping the Whirlwind: Total National Defense's Role in Slovenia's Bid for Secession," 530-531.

<sup>28</sup> Hoare, *How Bosnia Armed*.

and then make gains through force to create effective governing units. Because of the shared history of TND, however, the result was a strategic stalemate which no group took to be satisfactory, rendering international arbitration impossible until the signing of the Dayton Accords in 1995.<sup>29</sup>

The legacy of TND created a means of organising coherent military units around ethnic and/or nationalist imaginaries. The physical and political geography of the Former Yugoslavia, as well as the prominent role of heavy weapons, materialised the conflict space in a specific manner. Slovenia's successful defeat of the JNA following its declaration of independence on 25 June 1991 illustrated the complex socio-material politics of the conflict. Careful military preparation anchored Slovenia's resistance while posturing by Serb President Slobodan Milošević in Belgrade quickly solidified their independence.<sup>30</sup> However, Slovenia's ethnic homogeneity, liberal economic outlook, and sense of uniqueness within Yugoslavia made succession relatively easy. In Croatia (which declared independence on 29 May 1991) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (29 February 1992), the balance of military force and ethnically-minded politics was fractured, meaning that TND's legacy was not to create a coherent new state but to help cement a series of discontinuous and contested spaces brought into being at the nexus of ethnic politics, institutional organisation, and relative access to heavy weapons.

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<sup>29</sup> On the inter-relationship between TND, the economic geography of Yugoslavia, and the changing international community see: Arfi, *International Change*, 113-121. On the stalemate between armed groups see: Weiss, *Military-Civil*, 102.

<sup>30</sup> Milošević worked to hasten Slovenia's departure in order to re-structure the Yugoslav Presidium to better suit Serbian. See: Laura Silber and Allan Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation* (London, UK: Penguin, 1997), 162-163.

Conflict functioned similarly in Bosnia-Herzegovina following its declaration of independence. Though they shared a common civic identity, Bosnia's Serb, Croat, and Muslim groups each used history to support their conflicting territorial claims over the new state. For a number of reasons, no group could cement complete control over land they saw as rightfully theirs and so sought gains through force with the backing of separate self-declared governments.<sup>31</sup> Though the internationally recognised pluralist Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina convened in Sarajevo under President Alija Izetbegović, this government was contested by the Republika Srpska, convened in Pale under Radovan Karadžić, and the Croatian statelet of Herzeg-Bosnia, with its own armed elements and capital in Mostar.<sup>32</sup> Pale was able to mobilise a military force even more powerful than the government in Sarajevo, specifically because it was equipped by the retreating JNA with tanks, artillery, and other advanced weapons and came under the control of Mladić. It was this socio-material context, the legacy of TND, the materialisation of contested ethnic imaginaries, and the availability of heavy weapons, that gave rise to the brutal biopolitical security logics enacted through specific tactics in discrete places; the format by which ethnic cleansing was carried out.

Foregrounding how the ethnic politics of Yugoslavia materialised illustrates how it operated as a biopolitical security logic, albeit of a particularly brutal character, mediated by the powerful heavy weapons of the JNA and later BSA. Within Croatia, in 1991, this meant tasking the JNA, which had become a tool for expanding Serb territory

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<sup>31</sup> Robin Okey, "Overlapping National Historiographies in Bosnia-Herzegovina," in *Disputed Territories and Shared Pasts: Overlapping Histories in Modern Europe*, ed. Tibor Frank and Frank Hadler (Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 349-353.

<sup>32</sup> The Herzeg-Bosnia remained independent until the signing of the Croat-Muslim agreement in 1994.

outside of Serbia, into a support network for the operations of Croat Serbs.<sup>33</sup> JNA forces under Colonel Ratko Mladić supported the efforts of the Knin-centred Republic of Serb Krajina (RSK), a discontinuous territorial claim made by local Serbs within the Krajina region on the border with what would become Bosnia-Herzegovina. RSK and JNA forces worked together to link discontinuous pockets of territory they controlled with the goal of joining the nascent statelet with the Serbian Republic. Violence in Kijevo, which was besieged in August, provides a telling example of how this ethno-nationalist imaginary materialised as a form of siege warfare having been mediated by heavy weapons. After Mladić's artillery encircled and bombarded Croat-controlled segments of territory between or within Serb-held areas, RSK paramilitaries would move in to "cleanse" the areas of Croat civilians with the expressed purpose of making an ethnically viable addition to the future Serb state.<sup>34</sup>

It was in Vukovar that international humanitarian efforts began to be focused by the affordances created by this context. It was also in Vukovar that the weakness of these engineering efforts was brutally uncovered. The city was besieged from September until November 1991, and the International Commission of the Red Cross (ICRC) attempted to create neutral spaces of the kind outlined in the Geneva Conventions. In the last days of the siege, high-level negotiations in Zagreb between Croat, Serb, and ICRC officials yielded agreement on Vukovar's hospital becoming a neutral space. Regardless, when the city fell on 20 November local Serb troops entered the hospital claiming its inhabitants had to be removed for their own safety; in actuality, they were killed and buried in a mass

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<sup>33</sup> Silber and Little, Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 169.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 169-174.

grave near Ovčara.<sup>35</sup> Encirclement, besiegement, and bombardment until collapse followed by the “cleansing” of contested spaces, from buildings to enclaves, through deportation and murder became a repeated strategy both in the Krajina and in Bosnia-Herzegovina.<sup>36</sup> These tactics would not yield a set of ethnically “pure” and territorially integrated states but end in a stalemate. In February 1992, all sides in the Krajina conflict agreed to a ceasefire and the deployment UNPROFOR, but this agreement would only last until Croatia became strong enough to push its advantage with Operation Storm in 1995.

Foregrounding the socio-material terms on which contested spaces emerged illustrates that they were a dynamic part of the intervention’s politics, rather than a passive surface upon which international edict was carried out. The process by which these enclaves emerged, including the important role of Serb heavy weapons, created affordances for international humanitarian. Serb heavy weapons helped to create the physical context of the war, in the process making it possible to conceive of US involvement through air power. The use of air power, however, marked an intra-action between material context, technical tools, and politics, not simply an enactment of international political will. The role of heavy weapons, and the resulting siege-like movement of the conflict, provided a coordinate for the use of US air power. Though the UNSC’s announcement that some of the contested spaces would function as safe areas added a political element, the relationship between the stability of the enclaves and the

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<sup>35</sup> Michele Mercier, *Crimes without Punishment: Humanitarian Action in Former Yugoslavia* (East Haven, CT: Pluto Press, 1995), 96-97.

<sup>36</sup> Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 177-183.

general balance of the conflict preceded this declaration, in some sense setting the terms of the latter's (in)effectiveness.

### **3.3 Air Power: Mediators and Divergent Engineering Practices (1991-1993)**

Establishing how the enclaves emerged from a complex socio-material context makes it clear that the conflict space was not a passive surface on which international efforts were enacted. Engaging the conflict space in socio-material terms makes it possible to identify the affordances that would make it possible to conceive of how air power could be used to manage the conflict, in the process providing a partial account of why international efforts took the form they did. When air power was juxtaposed against the conflict space, the result was a nascent assemblage resulting in a telltale signature of downward causality. As this relationship formed, it became possible for the Clinton Administration to overcome its initial confusion regarding how to effectively leverage air power as a means of dealing with the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The result was not a conceptual working through, but instead a steady reformulation of how the Administration understood both the conflict and its role in managing it. Instead, what occurs is a symmetrical shift; a reformulation of how US policy makers understood the conflict which reveals the downward causality of the resultant assemblage. Eventually, this reformulation recast the conflict as a problem of circulation, and US (and later NATO) efforts would come to see human protection as a derivative of addressing this problem.

What follows is a discourse analysis of recently declassified Clinton Administration intelligence materials relating to conflict in the Former Yugoslavia. This analysis asks a series of negative questions of the texts in the sense that unpacks the

implicit judgements being made about the conflict and the US role in relation to it. How is the conflict itself understood to be operating? How has the relationship between air power and technology come to be recognised? How has the understanding of US efforts changed? Such an analysis also illustrates that assemblages shape rather than determine the behaviour of its constituent parts. The assemblage proves to be both politically and practically contingent. Internal debate never was marked by contending conceptualisations of the relationship between air power and the conflict, and as a result the practice is fraught with internal tensions. Bringing attention to this undermines the contention that technology or material factors are determinate, and illustrates that assemblages must always be supported and re-legitimated in the face of competing formulations. This discourse analysis not only illustrates downward causality, but also how foreign policy discourse is itself a kind of maintenance programme for assemblages that are not welded into a coherent whole. Similarly, claims that discourse itself overdetermines the physical world to the point of indiscernibility are unsettled because of the clear intra-action between material and discursive patterns. Once established, the affordances of the air power-heavy weapons relationship set the terms of debate, and as this relationship changed along with the shifting conflict space, discourse was forced to keep pace.

### **3.3.1 Air Power: Competing Formulations of US Engagement**

During the 1992 Presidential Campaign, future President Clinton seized upon the increasing unpopularity of the George H.W. Bush Administrations approach to the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. His proposal was labelled “Lift and Strike”: lift the UN arms

embargo so that Bosnian Government forces could arm, and then use NATO air power to strike the BSA positions that had encircled and were now pressuring Muslim enclaves.

The Former Yugoslavia had not been a priority for the Bush Administration, and the US had sought containment and deterrence through “diplomatic, economic, and military sanctions, binding arbitration, and stronger and expanded peacekeeping forces.”<sup>37</sup> A 1991 CIA report, written before the conflict broke out, conceived of the conflict space as a rather lifeless; manageable through peacekeeping and diplomacy. It argued that:

Full-scale civil war, if it comes, will probably be disorganised and protracted, with a stalemate the most likely outcome. With neither side able to impose its will by force of arms, a political solution—perhaps brokered internationally—would be required.<sup>38</sup>

The conventional narrative holds that this approach became untenable, not because of shifts in the conflict space itself, but because public revelations of ethnic cleansing and Serb siege tactics during the 1992 US Presidential election reformulated the conflict into a humanitarian emergency.<sup>39</sup> In response, Candidate Clinton echoed Congress in pushing for lift and strike, thus cementing a discursive shift that brought pressure to action and associated US efforts with air power.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Robert Gates, "A Broadening Balkan Crisis: Can It Be Managed?," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1992), 5. At this point US policy was consistent with what McQueen defines as the status of international response, namely of careful support of peace negotiations along with containment of the violence to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia: McQueen, *Safety Zones*, 56-57.

<sup>38</sup> Redacted, "Yugoslavia: Military Dynamics of a Potential Civil War," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, Directorate of Intelligence, 1991), iii.; For more detail on the emergence of stalemate see p.6.

<sup>39</sup> Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 117. *ibid.*, 105. As McQueen explains, the Bush Administration did not expect the American public to react strongly to the war, meaning they were more than happy to allow the Europeans to take the lead on Yugoslavia in order to strengthen arguments about a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) following the Maastricht treaty: McQueen, *Safety Zones*, 56.

<sup>40</sup> Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 104-105; Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 252. It also bears noting that Clinton couched this criticism in a more general attack on Bush's foreign policy which included his handling of the Somalia crisis: Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 179.

The problem is that this provides only a partial, and heavily anthropocentric, reading of how and why US policy shifted. Though lift and strike was a tantalising rhetorical device, what it meant in practice was far from clear. The question of what it would mean, in practice, to actually materialise lift and strike initially stymied the new Administration. A White House memorandum noted, “during the campaign, President Clinton called for stronger action on Yugoslavia but without specifying particular steps beyond enforcing the no-fly zone.”<sup>41</sup> Clinton’s first Presidential Review Directive listed no less than six possible options for the use of air power (among other approaches) including ensuring aid delivery, punishing Serb efforts, or making good on Bush’s private threat to Milošević to deter further violence.<sup>42</sup> At the first meeting of Clinton’s foreign policy Principals on 29 January, National Security Advisor Anthony Lake outlined a complex rubric of possible actions across three phases of escalating pressure:

1. Actions which would not undermine international consensus: increasing aid, perhaps including airdrops, and demanding access to the detention centres in Western Bosnia.
2. Options which would be possible with Allied support, but would be expensive and difficult: opening up the flow of goods into and throughout Bosnia, especially to Sarajevo; tightening sanctions and taking other measures to isolate Serbia; and raising the public profile of war crimes.
3. Utilizing or threatening to use military force: enforcing the no-fly zone through attacking relevant ground targets, lifting the Bosnian arms embargo, “unleashing” UNPROFOR, using air power to protect aid convoys, and “sequestering all heavy weapons.”<sup>43</sup>

Grappling with this complexity represented a site of engineering related to a

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<sup>41</sup> Anthony Lake, "Presidential Review Directive/Nsc-1: Us Policy Regarding the Situation in the Former Yugoslavia," (Washington, DC: The White House, 1993), 2.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>43</sup> Daniel W. Wagner, "Memorandum for the Record: Principals Committee Meeting on the Former Yugoslavia, 28 January 1993," (Washington: Central Intelligence Agency, 1993), 2.

specific technical and material problem in that ensuring a foundation for negotiations and preventing ethnic cleansing appeared to be mutually exclusive goals.

It was in this context that the role of the conflict space became important. Rather than a lifeless surface amenable to diplomacy, the affordances of the conflict space quickly set the terms of debate. The result was a reformulation of how the conflict was understood, and the importance of US engagement. Ratko Mladić had become Commander of the BSA and had at his disposal an inventory of heavy weapons bequeathed to him by the retreating JNA. As a result, the BSA was making quick territorial gains and systematically uprooting Muslim opposition to Serb territorial ambitions. By late 1991, CIA Director Robert Gates argued in an internal memo that “there [was] virtually no chance of real negotiated settlement” and that the “failure to act or to achieve a positive outcome would have a negative impact on the US security role in Europe.”<sup>44</sup> An NIC brief for the Clinton transition team attests to how discourse was being forced to grapple directly with the conflict space. It pointed out that:

The Bosnian Serbs probably have taken all the territory they are able to control and possibly all they want.... While they are capable of bringing sufficient force to bear to defeat the Muslims in any given battle, the Bosnian Serbs are overextended in the large territories they have overrun. Their unwillingness to date [December 1992] to take heavy casualties in infantry engagements makes a comprehensive and decisive military campaign against Muslim forces or remaining Muslim enclaves unlikely. But they will continue to apply force selectively to eliminate some pockets of resistance and to continue ethnic cleansing.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Gates, "A Broadening Balkan Crisis: Can It Be Managed?," V.

<sup>45</sup> David Cohen and Fritz W. Ermarth, "Responses to Transition Team Questions on the Balkans," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1992), 12. It is also interesting to note that this idea of drawing the enemy into taking large pieces of territory and become over-extended was a principle of TND. See: Roberts, *Nations*, 176-177.

Over the next two years the Clinton administration would slowly move toward an understanding of the conflict space as something to be managed, via air power, to offset these two seemingly contradictory imperatives; ensure a continued territorial stalemate as a starting point for negotiations, but also manage this stalemate directly to ensure ethnic cleansing was prevented.

Operating within the realm of possibility staked out by the conflict space itself, and the decision to rely solely on air power, touched off an process of heterogeneous engineering through which competing rationalities of conflict management emerged within discourse. In one formulation, the conflict space itself was conceived as the manifestation of a delicate balance of factors that air strikes would disrupt rather than support. In this formulation, the role of air strikes was strictly punitive; strikes punished various actors for flouting political agreements, breaking cease-fires, or harassing UNPROFOR. The other formulation took the conflict as something that had to be managed and thus saw air power as a productive tool for creating and maintaining order. Both of these logics operate within the affordances created by the air power-heavy weapons relationship. Likewise, both strategies were not meant to destroy an enemy or directly protect civilians.<sup>46</sup> Instead, US efforts came to see the conflict space in its entirety as something to be directly managed in the interests of preventing or confronting disorder via something by something akin to creative destruction.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Walter J. Boyne, *The Influence of Air Power Upon History* (Gretna, LA: Pelican, 2003), 362; Walter J. Boyne, *Beyond the Wild Blue: A History of the United States Air Force, 1947-2007*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Thomas Dunne, 2007), 340-341; Ivo H. Daalder, "Decision to Intervene: How the War in Bosnia Ended," (1998), <http://www.brookings.edu/research/articles/1998/12/balkans-daalder>.

<sup>47</sup> Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils*.

The US intelligence and defense communities were the staunchest advocates for seeing the conflict space as a delicate balance, and this approach is mirrored in how they describe the actors' behaviour and the policies they promoted. For example, air strikes could have eased pressure on Muslim forces following BSA offensives in 1993, but Government forces could not be expected to retake territory or solidify their strategic position while the international community would appear to be abandoning neutrality.<sup>48</sup> Even completely lifting the arms embargo would not have a decisive effect because "Bosnian forces have fundamental weaknesses in training, organisation, and discipline which prevent them from functioning as an effective fighting body."<sup>49</sup> However, the NIC argued against strengthening Bosnian military capacity for fear of inviting Serb aggression, provoking Yugoslavia's direct involvement, and up-ending negotiations.<sup>50</sup>

Instead, the conflict was taken as a delicate balance that the overzealous use of force would shatter. To this end, air power was defined as useful only in so far as the international community could justifiably punish transgressions of agreements or the harassment of UNPROFOR.

The central Serb goals in Bosnia have been and remain the destruction of Bosnia as a viable independent state and the incorporation of Serb-claimed regions into a greater Serbia. The current Bosnian Serb offensive in eastern Bosnia should be seen in this context; it appears aimed at eliminating the few remaining Muslim enclaves in the region. Barring the introduction of an external force strong enough to compel them to desist, the Serbs are unlikely to stop until they have reached their goal.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> "Likely Consequences of Partially Lifting the Arms Embargo in Conjunction with Air Strikes," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1993), 1.

<sup>49</sup> "Likely Consequences of Fully Lifting the Arms Embargo on Bosnia," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1993), 1.

<sup>50</sup> Cohen and Ermarth, "Responses to Transition Team Questions on the Balkans," 12.

<sup>51</sup> "Serb War Aims," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1993), 1.

Given that airstrikes had to be backed by a clear willingness to follow through, any effective bombing would “expand the violence, and probably wreck the Vance-Owen process,” an initiative that fell apart on its own in early 1993.<sup>52</sup>

Chairman Powell argued that political will existed for a range of small scale military options but argued that these methods were unlikely to serve the Administration’s political goals. Following the first Gulf War, the US military doctrine was predicated on operations that sapped the enemies’ will to fight by establishing air superiority, ensuring operational flexibility, and cutting off supply routes from the air.<sup>53</sup> The result was a predisposition to out sized operations that would not only undermine stability in Bosnia but compromise aid delivery.<sup>54</sup> At the 29 January Principals meeting, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Colin Powell outlined a plan for airstrikes against “counter-military, -industrial, and –regime targets in Bosnia and Serbia-Montenegro.” Though the operation would be low risk for the US and/or Allied military personnel, high civilian casualties and “large” flows of refugees would result.<sup>55</sup> Using air power to protect aid convoys and safe areas risked provoking BSA attacks on aircraft and UNPROFOR, in

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<sup>52</sup> "Likely Consequences of Warnings of Air Strikes against Bosnian Serbs and Serbia," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1993), 1.

<sup>53</sup> Gary Gault, "60th Anniversary of the Us Air Force: Lessons Learned in Airpower Throughout the Ages," ed. Studies & Analysis HQ USAF/A9, Assesemnt and Lessons Learned, United States Air Force (Rosslyn, VA2007), 46.

<sup>54</sup> Madeleine K. Albright and William Woodward, *Madam Secretary* (New York, NY: Miramax, 2003), 181-182. This is linked to the so-called Powell-Weinberg Doctrine that asserted several criteria had to be met before the US Defence establishment would support the use of military force. See: Kenneth J. Campbell, "Once Burned, Twice Cautious: Explaining the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine," *Armed Forces & Society* 24, no. 3 (1998).

<sup>55</sup> Wagner, "Memorandum for the Record: Principals Committee Meeting on the Former Yugoslavia, 28 January 1993," 4.

turn undermining international support because the Allies took air power alone to be insufficient.<sup>56</sup>

Operational plans, therefore, focused on the neutralisation and monitoring of key transportation routes to ensure aid flows and the movement of important actors in order to punish transgressions during the Vance-Owen negotiations. This selectivity was not purely political but also had a material factor. The BSA was able to hide its resources in the heavy forests and mountainous terrain of interior Bosnia.<sup>57</sup> There was also no assumption that the use of force could alter Serb behaviour overall. Referring to Sarajevo, Powell said, “when the F-16s go home at night the shelling can begin again. Maybe we would luck out and get the same reaction we did by declaring the no fly zone [sic] and getting pretty good compliance without enforcement. But to really end the siege [of Sarajevo] would take a full infantry division with air support.”<sup>58</sup> As for the forceful delivery of aid, the BTF noted that UNPROFOR lacked the resources to realise this policy, which would likely lead to UN casualties and undermine relief efforts in the region.<sup>59</sup> Using air power to help aid convoys “blast through” to Sarajevo and the eastern enclaves would create more violence and invite retributions against UN peacekeepers, in turn threatening the delicate international consensus supporting UNPROFOR—the force, after all, was not equipped for combat and required both the acquiescence of the various

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<sup>56</sup> "'Yugoslav' Policy Options: Likely Responses," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1993), 13-14.

<sup>57</sup> Colin L. Powell and Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey*, Large Print Edition ed. (New York: Random House, 1995), 876-877.

<sup>58</sup> "Minutes of the Principals Committee Meeting on Bosnia, February 5 1993," (Washington DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1993), 4.

<sup>59</sup> "Likely Consequences of Aggressive Delivery of Relief Supplies," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1993), 1.

factions and the appearance of neutrality.<sup>60</sup> In one instance, Powell argued clearly that the humanitarian goals of the Administration and the use of military force was incompatible because “the relief effort would stop if we used force before a settlement.”<sup>61</sup>

What becomes clear here is that the conflict is increasingly understood through the movement of things and the limits and possibilities in managing this movement. Though the goal was punitive, the discourse attests to the downward causality of the air power assemblage in that once a relationship between bombing and heavy weapons was created the way in which the conflict is identified and actions legitimated changes. Importantly, this formulation stops short of seeing air power as itself a model of conflict management, instead relegating its importance to the support of UNPROFOR and political efforts. Yet, though this clearly illustrates the downward causality of the assemblage, this is a political and contentious formulation rather than a determined one. Over the same period, a competing discursive formulation identified the conflict along different lines.

Proposed by and most famously associated with then-UN Ambassador Madeline Albright, a second logic came to a different conclusion on the conflict even though it also operated within the affordances of the air power-heavy weapons relationship. This perspective, which is enunciated in the register of liberal interventionism, saw the conflict itself as a mark of disorder and thereby took air power as a tool for policing into existence an appropriate political context. Events on the ground, including the continued bombardment of Sarajevo, forced heavy weapons to the fore of US discussion, in the

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<sup>60</sup> "Minutes of the Principals Committee Meeting on Bosnia, February 5 1993," 3; Powell and Persico, *My American Journey*, 877.

<sup>61</sup> "Minutes of the Principals Committee Meeting on Bosnia, February 5 1993," 4.

process providing a coordinate for the use of air power and the formation of a conflict management strategy that dissolved rather than balanced the difference between diplomatic and humanitarian goals. At their 5 February meeting, the Principals roundly denounced a Presidential Decision Directive on the use of force for being “pallid”. At this point, UNPROFOR was still argued to be an important tool for managing the conflict, but UN Ambassador Albright pushed in a different direction; her remarks gestured toward, but did not clearly elaborate, an approach that would use air power to (re)create balance and maintain the safe areas. She argued that a negotiated peace based on the current distribution of territory amounted to “...sweeping the problem [of ethnic cleansing] under the rug.”<sup>62</sup> She then elaborated, “If we say we would never impose a settlement we are blessing ethnic cleansing.”<sup>63</sup> This position foreshadowed an approach that saw the use of force not as disruptive to order and punitive in nature, but constructive and managerial; it prefigured a policing logic.

Rather than disrupt to the political process, these airstrikes were conceived as necessary for ordering the conflict space in way that ensured a “proper” settlement and ensured the protection of civilians. Targeting Serb heavy weapons was one way of accomplishing these goals without having to adopt a more direct role in the conflict, but it nonetheless sought to manage, from a distance, the physical context of the conflict itself rather than only protect individuals or punish Serb transgressions. The desire to create a self-regulating political context is clear in the comments of Secretary of Defence Les Aspin. During the same meeting, he reiterated the need to “try, under Vance/Owen, to

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

come up with a settlement that does not require massive force to enforce” future stability.<sup>64</sup> Albright, in response, insisted more direct “NATO action” be taken to set the stage for such a negotiated settlement.<sup>65</sup> At this point, the dissolution between negotiated settlement and the curtailment of violence was almost completely dissolved. CIA

Director R. James Woolsey noted:

We keep talking about enforcing the whole agreement, fixing the whole situation. But we also talk about using only air power...It would be something useful if we could stop people from killing each other with heavy weapons. Even if small arms continued to be used, that is a game the Bosnians can play. We can take away from the Serbs the heavy stuff and frighten with some of the other.<sup>66</sup>

Woolsey’s comments also illustrate clearly the downward causality of the nascent assemblage in their interest in managing the movements of various objects as a means of creating such a balance. According to Woolsey:

If we at least used air power to lift the siege of Sarajevo, maybe in time doing more, we could have not only a “no fly zone” but also a “no drive zone”. [Section redacted] So we could tell the UN that part of the package is that Bosnia can go along with something close to Vance/Owen but we potentially could bring to the party of NATO enforcement a ban on tanks, artillery, and APCs about 20-20 [sic; unclear] kilometers around Sarajevo.<sup>67</sup>

Woolsey’s comments are an important window that renders visible the assemblage of physical objects and locations that began to collect around and in turn shape US policy. In spatial terms this meant opening of certain kinds of movement while curtailing others; namely “lifting the siege” by ensuring aid flows while preventing the movement of armed

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 2.

forces.<sup>68</sup> The overall point, however, was to police into existence an ordered space whereby an appropriate level of political activity could occur.

It was under these discursive-material conditions that, as the VOPP disintegrated following a series of BSA offensives in 1993, the conflict space was increasingly identified as a space wherein order would have to be contrived. It was also here that the order being created was directly related to the enclaves. Further, under these conditions US policy increasingly became synonymous with NATO policy. Albright and the US State Department Staff in country endorsed the creation of “safe enclaves,” arguing in a 14 April 1993 Memo that creating enclaves, coupled with airstrikes, was the best way to avoid further ethnic cleansing. In coming to see the safe areas as a function of the order to be contrived solidified, the debate within both the Clinton Administration and internationally became focused on airstrikes. Key Principals such as Chairman Powell began supporting the “lift and strike” policy.<sup>69</sup> The US, Russia, Spain, Britain, and France signed a “Joint Action Plan” indicating their intention to defend the safe areas by force, establish a war crimes tribunal, and tighten surveillance of the border between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia (which was largely in BSA hands) on 22 May.<sup>70</sup> On 29 June 1993 the Non-Aligned Movement and the US advanced a UN draft resolution stating that, absent direct international intervention, Bosnia-Herzegovina should be allowed the means to defend itself by lifting the arms embargo.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> The Director’s comments also prefigure the logic Hansen identifies as underlying Congressional debate in 1994, specifically that the conflict should be made ‘fair’ in some way, though this was thought of in terms of lifting the arms embargo: Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 124-125.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> Walling, *All Necessary Measures*, 101.

Helping to propel this transition was an increasing popular awareness of the conditions facing civilians. Ongoing violence and the deplorable living conditions in the enclaves made it increasingly untenable to argue that there was any order worth preserving in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The BSA's regular shelling of Sarajevo, which would continue until the war's end, was witnessed by the growing corps of foreign journalists stationed in the city. Reports on the squalid and dangerous conditions within Sarajevo and the enclaves, though the latter were not always accessible, also became common.<sup>72</sup> These conditions were juxtaposed against the fact that the BSA proved both capable and willing to flout UNPROFOR, leading the NIC to note wryly in July that the Serbs could simply "starve both residents and defenders" of the enclaves and Sarajevo.<sup>73</sup> Having established the need for strategic balance, linking human protection with buttressing contested spaces, and implicating the need to curtail the BSA's use of heavy weapons, a consensus formed around the use of air strikes with full acknowledgement of what this meant for stability required for UNPROFOR and the delivery of aid.

This instability had the effect of dissolving some of the difference between maintaining contested spaces and finding a peace agreement while making it appear that destroying Serb heavy weapons would have the desirable political effect. This was clearly an order creating rather than order maintaining move given that Albright conceded that humanitarian operations on the ground would end, but insisted that the

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<sup>72</sup> Joe Sacco's graphic novel *Safe Area Gorazde* recounts how reporters slowly discovered how life inside the 'safe'-areas was beset by sickening violence, replete with sniper fire, shelling, hunger, disease, and sexual violence committed *en masse* against Muslim women who crossed paths with or were hunted down by BSA and Serb paramilitary forces: Joe Sacco, *Safe Area Gorazde*, Special ed. (Seattle, WA: Fantagraphics Books, 2011).

<sup>73</sup> Robert Gates, "Combatant Forces in the Former Yugoslavia: Volume Ii--Supporting Analysis," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1993), 24.

BSA had already obstructed these efforts and would likely undermine them in the future.<sup>74</sup> Now a nascent policing strategy was taking form that would create paralysis on the ground, as per the use of air power, to manage the conflict in its entirety. Though shifts in the physical context of the conflict and the emerging desire to actively manage the war were taking form, the stiff resistance by the DOD or the complete differentiation of the air power operations from ground efforts had not occurred. That said, the focus on heavy weapons as a means of policing the conflict, which springs from both the influence of air power technology and the physical context of the enclaves, is clearly visible.

### **3.3.2 Observation Posts: Materialising UNPROFOR in the Safe Areas**

Identifying the socio-material conditions created by the nascent air power assemblage also brings to light the fact that there is little merit in discussing international intervention or engagement *as such*. The downward causality of the air power model is not only clear in the sense that the discourse of the Clinton Administration was increasingly circumscribed by the affordances created by it, but also by the increasing differentiation of air strikes from UNPROFOR. UN efforts were a separate engineering attempt that materialised along very different lines and thus was circumscribed by slightly different affordances. After the VOPP collapsed in early 1993, UN efforts to manage the conflict were forcibly materialised around the safe areas, which meant an attempt to expand the peacekeeping model to include human protection. Having the policy forced into existence, on unclear terms, by General Morillon's unilateral declaration that Srebrenica

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<sup>74</sup> Madeleine K. Albright, "Memorandum for the National Security Advisor Re: Options for Bosnia," (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 1993), 3-4.

fell under UN protection, UNPROFOR established their presence through a specific set of material mediators; observation posts constructed in keeping with standard peacekeeping practice. Resolution 819 formally established this mission for UNPROFOR, but the Department of Peacekeeping affairs made it clear that this entailed “no military obligations for UNPROFOR.”<sup>75</sup>

In this way, UN efforts were reliant on the organic organisation of the conflict rather than attempt to directly manage it, leaving it unable to adapt when the conflict space shifted and the affordances that had made their operations possible no longer existed. The UNSC, Owen points out, passed resolutions demanding that the Eastern enclaves remain free of violence without physically demarcating them or ensuring their full demilitarisation.<sup>76</sup> Though this has been diagnosed as a disconnect between the institutionalised knowledge of the UN and the specifics of the conflict, the material infrastructure of UNPROFOR mediated the ongoing debate, in the process cementing this disjoint.<sup>77</sup> Observations posts are technology of surveillance, and relying upon them materialised UNPROFOR efforts in a particular way, in the process creating a specific kind of humanitarian politics. A full elaboration of this point will have to await further research, but it is possible to make some provisional statements about UNPROFOR in order to bring to light the increasing difference between NATO and UN efforts.

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<sup>75</sup> Communication from Kofi Annan to Generals Wahlgren and Morillon. Cited in: JCH; Romijn Blom, P; Bajalica, N; Duijzings, G; Frankfort, T; de Graaff, BGJ; Kersten, AE; Koedijk, PCM; Schoonoord, DCL; van Uye, R; Wiebes, C, "Srebrenica - a 'Safe' Area: Reconstruction, Background, Consequences and Analyses of the Fall of a 'Safe' Area," (Amsterdam, NL: Netherlands Institute for War Documentation, 2002), 959-960.

<sup>76</sup> Owen, *Balkan Odyssey*, 114.

<sup>77</sup> Tuathail, "Cleansing of a 'Safe Area'."

Like the emerging air power-centred approach to conflict management found within the discourse of US policy, the safe area policy was the product of a process of heterogeneous engineering where several different configurations vied for influence. Neither the UNHCR or the ICFY supported the safe area policy. On 29 and 30 July 1992, seventy countries attended the International Meeting on Humanitarian Aid for Victims of the Conflict in the Former Yugoslavia. During the keynote, UN High Commissioner Sadako Ogata referenced a “new – horrifying – twist. Displacement seems to be the goal, not just the result of the war” in the former Yugoslavia.<sup>78</sup> Ogata maintained that protecting the human rights of refugees in Bosnia meant preventing their forced movement or relocation. UNHCR operated under the pretence that “securing respect for the rights of refugees is of the essence of protection,” meaning the organisation’s goal would be the prevention of “circumstances which cause refugees to flee and...facilitating the conditions which will allow them to return.”<sup>79</sup> Doing so should not have, according to Ogata and many others, included the creation of specific spaces to shelter displaced individuals.

This meeting also marked the beginning of discussions of a safe area policy, but attending closely to these discussions illustrates that it is impossible to say that these spaces were enacted by the international community in the truest sense. They cannot be understood, as socio-material contexts, without reference to the forced relationship

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<sup>78</sup> "Statement of Mrs. Sadako Ogata, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to the International Meeting on Humanitarian Aid for Victims of the Conflict in the Former Yugoslavia. Geneva, 29 July 1992," United Nations High Commission for Refugees, <http://www.unhcr.org/3ae68fac1a.html>.

<sup>79</sup> "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1992," (New York, NY: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1992).

between UNPROFOR and the conflict space because there was no clear consensus on what a “safe area” meant in practice before Morillon’s statements.

At the 1992 Summit, states were clearly worried about an influx of refugees into southern Europe, but no consensus existed as to what measures should be taken.<sup>80</sup> Safe spaces were a popular idea, but there was no agreement on where these should be or how they should be rendered safe. Following the Geneva Conventions, states offered policies informed by pre-existing concepts of neutral space in times of conflict that looked similar to the approach of Operation Provide Comfort in Northern Iraq (circa 1991).<sup>81</sup> The French supported “security zones,” while many others voiced support for some sort of ground force to be deployed to secure areas inhabited by refugees.<sup>82</sup> Rather than the safe havens created in Iraq, however, these spaces would be protected by an armed force.<sup>83</sup> British plans for safe areas, on the contrary, involved areas that were not enclaves, and their means of “security” were to be armed patrols carried out by UNPROFOR from Sarajevo.<sup>84</sup> This difference in approach also meant the location of these proposed safe spaces varied, or in the case of Britain did not seem to have a defined physical location at all. France and Germany discussed creating a space in the enclave around Bihać while the British, and later Dutch, were developing plans for less robust spaces to be constructed in Travnik, Vitez, and Zenica.

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<sup>80</sup> Blom, "Srebrenica - a 'Safe' Area: Reconstruction, Background, Consequences and Analyses of the Fall of a 'Safe' Area," 466.

<sup>81</sup> McQueen, *Safety Zones*.

<sup>82</sup> Blom, "Srebrenica - a 'Safe' Area: Reconstruction, Background, Consequences and Analyses of the Fall of a 'Safe' Area," 467.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 598.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 599.

The problem, as seen in Croatia, was that the belligerents either opposed such areas or wanted to realise them for their own purposes, all while their demarcation would focus the violence in the country along consolidated confrontation lines.<sup>85</sup> To this end, the ICFY Co-Chairs argued that safe areas would undermine the various belligerent groups' willingness to negotiate.<sup>86</sup> Even so, public pressure to find a strategy to mitigate the violence grew in the spring of 1993. At NATO, Secretary General Wörner began supporting lift and strike; the safe area policy as it stood at that time far from a coherent alternative.<sup>87</sup> By December 1992, the International Red Cross had begun pleading for the creation of "safe havens" while the UNHCR remained convinced that such areas abetted and consolidated ethnic cleansing.<sup>88</sup> The ICRC, likely informed by its experiences in Croatia earlier in the conflict, rejected the idea that safe areas could be set up in besieged cities, meaning they would not be set up in the enclaves.<sup>89</sup> Similar considerations of safe areas circulated within the international community, but these varied widely in form, function, and location.

Morillon's actions were themselves political, but in the end his efforts brought the safe areas into existence through the conflict space rather than forge them on his own. The enunciation of their existence was political rather than practical: Morillon's actions were most likely a brazen reaction to Commissioner Ogata's cancelling of aid operations

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 604.

<sup>86</sup> B. G. Ramcharan, *The International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia: Official Papers*, 2 vols. (Boston, MA: Kluwer Law International, 1997), 1403-1404.

<sup>87</sup> On the changing perspective of NATO see: Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 106.

<sup>88</sup> Blom, "Srebrenica - a 'Safe' Area: Reconstruction, Background, Consequences and Analyses of the Fall of a 'Safe' Area," 595.

<sup>89</sup> Mercier, *Crimes without Punishment: Humanitarian Action in Former Yugoslavia*, 125-126.

in Eastern and Central Bosnia than a planned tactical manoeuvre.<sup>90</sup> The political firestorm between the UN peacekeeping office and UNHCR that followed surely undermined any attempt at refining the policy, meaning the location, shape, size, and stability of the enclaves was a function of the conflict space rather than international politics. Regardless, the General's actions and the more general response left little room for change. The media looked upon the incident favourably, and UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was supportive. It also meant that the UN was forced to act through the affordances created by the relationship between the conflict space and peacekeeping praxis, which would become increasingly differentiated from US efforts as the conflict space shifted.

### **3.4 Engineering Tension: Violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1993-1995)**

Though US and UN efforts in Bosnia-Herzegovina were meant to be complimentary, the experience of the "dual-key" and the crises of summer 1995 brought to light how the different ways in which they were materialised made them incompatible. This incompatibility shows up in, and again works to cement the reconfiguration of, the discourse of US policy makers. Eventually the US abandoned its support for UNPROFOR altogether as it came to see air power as a coherent policing model which was disrupted by the UN presence. In 1994, the Administration increasingly saw UNPROFOR's static deployment as inadvertently becoming a tool to evade or complicate US efforts, rather than a means of separating the warring parties.<sup>91</sup> As the US

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<sup>90</sup> Blom, "Srebrenica - a 'Safe' Area: Reconstruction, Background, Consequences and Analyses of the Fall of a 'Safe' Area," 722.

<sup>91</sup> "The Bosnian Serbs: Likely Next Steps," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 1.

increasingly took the conflict space as requiring direct management, UNPROFOR insisted on seeing the use of air power only in terms of punishing Serb transgressions.

The US approach was not “better” than the UN approach. As will be illustrated below, both assemblages are shown to have forced the enactment of particular kinds of violent humanitarian politics. What the air power assemblage did do is afford US officials a kind of flexibility, specifically because it foregrounded Serb heavy weapons. Again, the complete disentanglement of the air power model from UN efforts did not occur until the fall of Srebrenica and Žepa over the summer of 1995. But, tracing the politics of the preceding period illustrates that international engagement was itself a site of competition between different processes of heterogeneous engineering. Nowhere is the tension created by these divergent socio-technical approaches more evident than in the controversy that surrounded the the “UN-NATO” or “dual key” agreement regarding airstrikes. Under this agreement, strikes would only occur when the UN Secretary General, UNPROFOR Force Commander, and the NATO Commander-in-Chief of Allied Forces South all agreed.<sup>92</sup> Within the Clinton Administration, the dual key was argued to be cumbersome, but the Allies, especially Britain, insisted it be respected.<sup>93</sup>

Relying on different mediators created increasingly incompatible materialisations of US and UN policy. By 1994, all sides manipulated UNPROFOR to its own ends: BSA forces encircled UN collection points outside Sarajevo and demanded the return of their weapons while government forces mounted offensives in Olovo in an attempt to link

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<sup>92</sup> Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 106.

<sup>93</sup> Ivo H. Daalder, *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America's Bosnia Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 2000), 22-23.

Sarajevo with the enclaves.<sup>94</sup> Further, all the belligerent groups were now openly flouting, and in some cases attacking, UN troops.<sup>95</sup> The increasing instability of UNPROFOR was itself a function of the changing conflict environment. By the time Srebrenica and Žepa collapsed in 1995, the space was being actively shaped by an increasingly effective Bosnian Government and Croatian forces. As Muslim forces pushed out from their besieged positions in Central Bosnia toward the Eastern Enclaves, the BSA worked to cement its claims before its forces were spread too thin. This meant a turn toward the safe areas, but having organised itself through a network of observation posts that materialised orthodox peacekeeping practice, UNPROFOR proved unable to pragmatically engage with this change of environment.<sup>96</sup> As this became apparent, US decision makers increasingly turned to air power as a mechanism for policing the conflict.

Early after the collapse of the VOPP in 1993 the threat of airstrikes proved enough to force Serb abandonment of key positions overlooking Sarajevo and the return of the Izetbegovic government to peace negotiations, but this would not last.<sup>97</sup> As Serb pressure mounted, US reports rearticulated the idea that the conflict space needed to be directly managed, and highlighted the role of BSA heavy weapons in allowing the conflict to grind on in a slower, localised, siege-like manner.<sup>98</sup> Importantly, the declassification of BTF documents from this period includes few sources, apparently

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<sup>94</sup> "Situation in Sarajevo Deteriorates," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 1. 3

<sup>95</sup> "Military Status Report for Sarajevo, Gorzde, and Tuzla," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 1.,2 Even the Government forces were reported to have attacked UN troops, namely a group of Swedish Blue Helmets on 15 May

<sup>96</sup> Tuathail, "Cleansing of a 'Safe Area'."

<sup>97</sup> Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 106.

<sup>98</sup> Gates, "Combatant Forces in the Former Yugoslavia: Volume Ii--Supporting Analysis," iii. *ibid.*, 23.

because the Administration was considering unilateral airstrikes.<sup>99</sup> In late 1993, however, the Principals were keen to downplay the use of force, and perhaps disabuse the UNSC of support for UNPROFOR, in order to ensure Sarajevo's continued willingness to negotiate, but the BTF was clear that UNPROFOR remained important for the wellbeing of those within Muslim held areas.<sup>100</sup> Even so, prospects of a multiethnic peace were said to have dwindled in the fall of 1993; Croatia wrested control of contested areas in Western Bosnia-Herzegovina while the Serbs solidified their control over the eastern portion of the country.<sup>101</sup>

What would become clear is that UNPROFOR's new safe area mandate was becoming both increasingly unstable and a detriment to the maturing policing strategy of the Clinton Administration. Public pressure also began to play a role in forcing this maturation. The Markale bombing and assault on Bihać brought renewed engineering efforts and increasing differentiation of the US and UN approaches. Public opinion was roiled by 5 February 1994 shelling of the Sarajevo Markale (marketplace). A single mortar shell fell in the middle of the market, killing 68 civilians. Even though Sarajevo had been besieged for two years, the Markale bombing was heavily reported in the global media and elicited powerful public and political condemnation. At this point the UNSC did not agree on a causal narrative to explain why violence persisted in Bosnia-

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<sup>99</sup> This source does not directly state the US was contemplating this, only that "rumours" had been circulating and the two signatories felt obliged to speak out against any unilateral action. Roger Z. George and George Kolt, "Memorandum for Director of Central Intelligence Re: Likely Allied Reactions to Unilateral Us Actions in Bosnia," (Washington, DC: National Intelligence Council, 1993).

<sup>100</sup> Anthony Lake, "Memorandum for the President Re: Bosnian End-Game Strategy," (Washington, DC: The White House, 1993), 1. "Some Implications of an Unprorfor Withdrawal from Bosnia," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 1. *ibid.*, 2.

<sup>101</sup> Joseph S. Nye, "Update Memorandum Nie 93-22: Prospects for Bosnia," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1993), 1.

Herzegovina, but they nonetheless came under pressure to respond.<sup>102</sup> The result was a relapse to older ways of thinking about peacekeeping that were consistent with UNPROFORs position: negotiate a ceasefire, which included agreements on weapons, and place international forces on ceasefire lines to deter aggression.

In response to the Markale bombing a fault appeared between US/NATO and UN approaches that would be driven wider by the assault on Bihać in March. McQueen explains that the Markale bombing brought about two, eventually coordinated, responses. UNPROFOR commander in Bosnia Michael Rose pushed both sides to accept a ceasefire (signed on 9 February) which included the withdrawal of BSA heavy weapons to positions more than twenty kilometres from Sarajevo and the deployment of UNPROFOR troops along the confrontation line within the city. NATO air strikes were planned to punish transgressions, but the NAC's ultimatum that the BSA remove its heavy weapons within ten days or face airstrikes was a stepping stone in the development of the air power model.<sup>103</sup> The Clinton Administration began seeing UNPROFOR as a hindrance, given that they were put at risk by any attack against the Serbs that may become necessary.

The assault on Bihać stabilised this position while illustrating the need to think more deliberately about how air power would be used rather than relying on UNPROFOR. Focusing on BSA heavy weapons presented a practical problem in that identifying, monitoring, and targeting such weapons was difficult given Bosnia's topography and weather. Serb tanks began bombarding the town of Bihać on 12 March and began a full

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<sup>102</sup> Walling, *All Necessary Measures*, 102.

<sup>103</sup> McQueen, *Safety Zones*, 77; Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 107.

offensive on the 31<sup>st</sup>.<sup>104</sup> UNPROFOR Commander Rose requested air support on 10 April and US air strikes followed later that day and into the 11<sup>th</sup>.<sup>105</sup> Though the 8 April report alludes to a “UAV” sortie on 11 April, it nonetheless reminds that “[e]ven in Sarajevo [redacted] we never detected [redacted] more than about 100 of the estimated 700 weapons the Serbs had in the 20 km exclusion zone at any one time.”<sup>106</sup> Though satisfied with Rose’s willingness to turn his key, it was clear that UNPROFOR was not enough to secure the enclaves and that no coherent strategy existed for what NATO would have done had the BSA kept up its assault.<sup>107</sup>

Though the BSA retained an advantage in heavy weapons that allowed them to dictate the tempo of conflict, the signing of a Croat-Muslim pact in January 1994 meant arms could now flow into Government hands via Croatia.<sup>108</sup> BTF documentation insisted that the balance between these forces had to be contrived because it seemed Government forces were unlikely to “substantially roll back Serb gains,” leaving the enclaves vulnerable to BSA retribution.<sup>109</sup> These reports were proven prescient with the fall of Gorazde in April 1994. The BTF called this turn of events a “tactical defeat for the US/NATO; the wrong reaction could turn it into a strategic defeat.”<sup>110</sup> Any claim that the conflict could be understood as stable were discredited and a more articulate version of

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<sup>104</sup> General, "Report of the Secretary General Submitted Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1009," 34.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>106</sup> "Bosnian Serb Heavy Weapons around Gorazde," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 2.

<sup>107</sup> A. Norman Schindler, "Memorandum for the Record: Principals Committee Meeting on Bosnia, 10 April 1994," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 1.

<sup>108</sup> "Government Forces Seizing Initiative," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 1.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

<sup>110</sup> "Memorandum for the Record: Principals Committee Meeting on Bosnia, 18 April 1994," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994).

the policing logic became a major goal. Advisor Lake tasked the National Security Council to draw up plans for the creation of exclusion zones around the safe areas; wherein heavy weapons would be subject to airstrikes, as well as providing for the possibility of responding to attacks directly using airstrikes if need be.<sup>111</sup> Such a use of force was clearly designed to freeze the balance of forces in keeping with a policing logic understood through the lens of air power.

In this context, the affordances of the air power-heavy weapons relationship dissolved the difference between diplomatic and humanitarian goals because of the need to think about the conflict in terms of physical objects moving about the conflict space. Though the current 51/49 split of territorial control (favouring the Muslims) may have been a foundation for peace, the Muslims would only accept such an agreement if some form of enforcement existed in the case of Serb disobedience.<sup>112</sup> Complicating any attempt to ensure Serb acquiescence was a specific material factor—the topography of Bosnia. A May 1994 NIC Memorandum argued the mountainous terrain of interior Bosnia funnelled both aid convoys and illicit arms onto a few key routes, simplifying Serb interdiction efforts and undermining pleas that the routes be open to the unfettered movement of aid convoys. Serb intransigence was also fed by the smuggling of arms and food to the safe areas through numerous smaller trails that crisscross Bosnia's heavily forested interior.<sup>113</sup> The deployment of UNPROFOR to the enclaves to observe the

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> A. Norman Schindler, "Memorandum for the Recrod: Principals' Committee Meeting on Bosnia, 31 May 1994," (Washington, DC1994), 1-2.

<sup>113</sup> "Lifting the Arms Embargo: Impact on the War in Bosnia," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 5.

separation of forces changed the situation little. As a BTF memo in 1995 noted, “The Serbs...used their control of all access routes to limit supplies going to UN peacekeepers and civilians in the regions.”<sup>114</sup>

Over protests, US policy moved toward a more a more robust approach to policing the enclaves. In July 1994, the State Department argued for the “strict enforcement” of exclusion zones and accepted the need to redeploy UNPROFOR. It pushed for the UN force to be moved “...from exposed positions (such as heavy weapons sites); withdraw[n] from the safe areas; or withdraw[n] completely from Bosnia.”<sup>115</sup> The memorandum explained “NATO’s Military Committee [saw] these steps as virtually undifferentiated, simply stages in a withdrawal process. UNPROFOR should be prepared to redeploy on short notice.”<sup>116</sup> Provisions would need to be taken to get UNPROFOR beyond the reach of the BSA while supplying adequate “instructions” to UNPROFOR so that their key would be turned when necessary—meaning NATO would have the *de facto* final say over the use of force.<sup>117</sup>

The NIC protested, arguing that the Serbs effective controlled the living conditions within the enclaves and that any attack would bring violence and attacks on UNPROFOR.<sup>118</sup> During the 17 October 1994 Principals meeting, Advisor Lake, Secretary of State Christopher, and Secretary of Defence Perry agreed that lifting the arms embargo was to be avoided, given that an increase in Muslim resources had brought

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<sup>114</sup> Redacted, "Bosnian Military Situation after the Withdrawal of Un Peacekeepers," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1995), 2.

<sup>115</sup> "New Exclusion Zones and Strict Enforcement," (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 1994), 1.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 1-2.

<sup>118</sup> "Strict Enforcement of the Exclusion Zones: Military and Political Implications," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 1.2, 4.

violence. However, the US would press for “robust enforcement of the exclusion zones.”<sup>119</sup> This was followed by an important summary report by the BTF. Though the overall territorial situation would likely remain stable, Serb counteroffensives would be provoked by Government attempts to enlarge their territory or take control of supply routes. The BTF argues that “While Bosnian Serbs probably can make some gains against the Bosnian Government and worsen the humanitarian situation in Sarajevo, they no longer have the overwhelming superiority needed to threaten government control of Central Bosnia.”<sup>120</sup> Though the tussle over supply routes would worsen the humanitarian situation, the use of airstrikes was unlikely to deter future Serb actions. However, the continued deployment of UNPROFOR to the enclaves would deter outright attacks.<sup>121</sup>

It was at this point that the conflict space interrupted again, bringing a reformulation of the air power model and a more direct use of air power: Muslim forces broke out of Bihać on 25-26 October. US action in Bihać was “a failed dress rehearsal for the shift in US policy that took place the following summer” in Srebrenica and Žepa.<sup>122</sup> It also helped to transform the underlying tension between the US and UN approaches into outright hostility. Bihać forced the Administration to directly confront the tangled logics of conflict management and underspecified strategy of airstrikes that had emerged over the preceding two years. The US announced it would begin ignoring the arms embargo and proposed an exclusion zone, which got no UN support. NATO also bombed the

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<sup>119</sup> A. Norman Schindler, "Memorandum: Principals' Committee Meeting on Bosnia 18 October 1994," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 1.

<sup>120</sup> Redacted, "Prospects for Future Bosnian Serb Offensives," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 1.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>122</sup> Marko Attila Hoare, "The Bosnian War's Forgotten Turning Point: The Bihać Crisis of Autumn 1994," *Journal Slavic Military Studies* 24 (2011): 92. Cf. 89-90.

Udbina air base on the 21<sup>st</sup>, and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> attacked missile sites in North West Bosnia.<sup>123</sup>

This aggressiveness, however, was shortlived. By early December the United States had adopted a more conciliatory tone while publicly downplaying the role of air power.<sup>124</sup> However, following the Goražde crisis, there was increasing US unwillingness to temper its operational decisions to suit the UN and UNPROFOR given their actions over the course of the crisis. One event is especially interesting. A sortie of NATO planes failed to find their targets on 25 November amidst Serb shelling of the town's centre.<sup>125</sup> It was later confirmed that the mission's failure was the result of sabotage: UNPROFOR Commander Michael Rose had ordered British Special Forces in the area not to laser illuminate targets for the NATO aircraft.<sup>126</sup> The minutes of a Principals meeting held two days later attest that the group "expressed strong frustration that the UN restrictions had undercut the credibility of airstrikes."<sup>127</sup> Two days earlier, National Security Advisor Lake had clarified and articulated the tension between airstrikes, strategic balance, and UNPROFOR in a memo to President Clinton:

Bihac's fall has exposed the inherent contradictions in trying to use NATO air power coercively against the Bosnian Serbs when our Allies have troops on the ground attempting to maintain impartiality in performing a humanitarian mission. This has been exacerbated by our fundamentally different views of the parties: we see the Bosnians as victims of

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 100.

<sup>125</sup> Roger Cohen, "Nato Jets Fly but Don't Bomb as Bosnian Serbs Attack Enclave," *New York Times*, 26 November 1994, A1, A7. One BTF memorandum alludes to UN obstructionism on November 27<sup>th</sup> as well, but does not elaborate: A. Norman Schindler, "Memorandum: Principals' Committee Meeting on Bosnia 28 November 1994," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 2.

<sup>126</sup> T. Sebastian, 'Did our man given the Serbs a Hand?' *Night and Day*, 24 September 1995. Cited in: Hoare, "The Bosnian War's Forgotten Turning Point: The Bihac Crisis of Autumn 1994," 99.

<sup>127</sup> A. Norman Schindler, "Memorandum for the Record: Principals' Committee Meeting on Bosnia 28 November 1994," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1994), 1.

aggression; the Allies (despite having been the first to recognize Bosnia-Herzegovina as a sovereign state) regard all the parties as morally equivalent; they have been quick to blame the Bosnians' recent offensive as the cause of Bihać's demise. Against this backdrop, our efforts to use NATO airstrikes to prevent the fall of Bihać have only intensified transatlantic frictions. The absence of U.S. troops on the ground is cited as disqualifying us from the right to tell our allies what to do.<sup>128</sup>

In a 27 February 1995 report, the National Security Council argued that the US could "claim some success over the past two years in containing the spread of the war, reducing the level of violence, keeping relief supplies flowing to most areas, and maintaining cohesion with Allies and Russia."<sup>129</sup> Efforts to date had failed to create the foundation for a negotiated settlement that could be seen as fair, "let alone just."<sup>130</sup> The problem was taken to be a "lack of leverage" given the ineffectiveness of sanctions and the political problems concerning air power. A new track was needed if an escalation of violence in Bosnia and return to outright conflict in Croatia was to be avoided.<sup>131</sup> The State department favoured a continuation of current policy that included enhancing UNPROFOR's equipment and rules of engagement. The Office of the Vice President advocated further isolation of the Bosnian and Krajina Serbs while providing aid to the Government while the DOD favoured shifting toward a more neutral position on negotiated settlement with an eye to obtaining an agreement and containing the conflict.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Anthony Lake, "Memorandum for the President: Bosnia Policy after the Fall of Bihac," (Washington, DC: The White House, 1994), 1-2.

<sup>129</sup> "Former Yugoslavia Policy Review," (Washington, DC: National Security Council, 1995), 1.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 1-2.

<sup>132</sup> "Former Yugoslavia Policy Review: Update for Principals," (Washington, DC: National Security Council, 1995), 2-3.

At the Principals level, it was agreed that “in view of [the US’s] limited leverage and the importance of maintaining the cohesion of NATO, we should maintain our current approach of diplomatic engagement, provision of humanitarian relief, keeping UNPROFOR in place, and measures to contain the conflict.”<sup>133</sup> But, the increasing agreement that the conflict would have to be actively managed showed up in US discussions of UNPROFOR. The force was to be re-equipped and given a more robust mandate to actively protect key airports, aid routes, ceasefire lines, and an increasing number of safe areas and exclusion zones because “diplomatic efforts...are at a dead end.”<sup>134</sup> This marked the envelopment of the peacekeeping effort by the desire to actively monitor and shape the follow of objects within the conflict space. Following a Joint Chiefs of Staff paper on strengthening UNPROFOR, senior policy makers hoped a more robust UN force would provide a “carrot” for keeping the Bosnian Government from going on the offensive.<sup>135</sup>

This was an important point in time for UNPROFOR, given that it had increasingly become the target of BSA harassment.<sup>136</sup> As a traditional peacekeeping force, UNPROFOR was unable to address the increased BSA shelling of Sarajevo in spring 1995, which the State Department argued was designed to humiliate the

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<sup>133</sup> "Summary of Conclusions for Meeting of the Nsc Principals Committee 17 March 1994," (Washington, DC: National Security Council, 1995), 1.

<sup>134</sup> "Summary of Conclusions for Meeting of the Nsc Principals Committee 28 March 1995," (Washington, DC: National Security Council, 1995), 1. John Roberti, "Information Paper," (Washington, DC: Military Command Center, 1995), 1-2. Quote from: A. Norman Schindler, "Memorandum: Principals' Committee Meeting on Bosnia and Croatia--14 April 1995," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1995), 1.

<sup>135</sup> Schindler, "Memorandum: Principals' Committee Meeting on Bosnia and Croatia--14 April 1995," 2.

<sup>136</sup> "Unprofor: Watchful Waiting," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1995), 1-2.

international community in preparation for assaults on all of the enclaves.<sup>137</sup> Though UNPROFOR was still seen as necessary for preventing the deployment of US ground troops, it was clear that the inability to supply the safe areas or deter fighting was eroding.<sup>138</sup> The Principals maintained that keeping UNPROFOR was “critical to U.S. interests and agreed to support...UNPROFOR Commanders calling for enhancement of UNPROFOR’s ability to fulfil its existing mandate.”<sup>139</sup> The US Embassy reported that General Rupert Smith, UNPROFOR Commander in Sarajevo, stated

...that the machine is essentially broken, and the bleak alternative is to “make war” or to become unsustainably weak. To refine the mandate and configuration of UNPROFOR is to avoid the essential “one-thousand-dollar question.” In fact, a reconfiguration or redeployment simply “pretends that we are making war” when we are not.<sup>140</sup>

All that was keeping back the Serbs was that they were stretched thin defending against the emboldened Muslim forces; though the threat of airstrikes would likely push back their final assault, the BSA would not be deterred for more than a few months.<sup>141</sup>

The fears of US policy makers were realised in July when violence increased, and the BSA attacked Srebrenica. The fall of Srebrenica was followed by attacks on Goražde and a successful assault on Žepa. The BSA’s success was taken as further evidence that the reorganisation of UNPROFOR and more direct NATO control over future air strikes

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<sup>137</sup> "Bosnia Diplomatic Strategy: Sarajevo Airport," (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 1995), 1-2.

<sup>138</sup> "Bosnia: Strategic Choices Discussion Paper," (Washington, DC: National Intelligence Centre, 1995), 1.

<sup>139</sup> Jens Bartelson, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty* (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 1995), 1.

<sup>140</sup> "Cable: Smith: 'We Either Fight or We Don't'," (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 1995), 1.

<sup>141</sup> Redacted, "Prospects for the Eastern Enclaves Following a Un Retrenchment," (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 1995), 1-3.

were essential.<sup>142</sup> Though the threat of retaliation against UN forces undermined allied support for airstrikes before, the BTF noted that “[o]ur Allies admit that UNPROFOR’s role is becoming increasingly untenable in any event, and thus we should be able to drag them along,” specifically in terms of creating and maintaining exclusion zones and making the force “more aggressive.”<sup>143</sup> Berger argued that “[o]ur priority is to shore up UNPROFOR in Sarajevo and Central Bosnia by reducing its vulnerability, using the RRF to open secure routes to Sarajevo, and making more aggressive use of NATO air power (under a single key) to halt Serb artillery attacks on the exclusion zones.”<sup>144</sup>

Over the coming months, amidst increasing violence, Muslim and Croat offensives, and the fall of Žepa, the international community did rally around the policy of airstrikes and agreed to the creation of a NATO-run, combat ready Rapid Reaction Force. Eventually, peace was negotiated during the US-hosted summit in Dayton, Ohio in the fall of 1995 after a Croat offensive upended the territorial balance. Though the war was ended, over the course of 1992-1996 the US had created a strategy for engaging the conflict that focused on managing the movement of heavy weapons to manage the conflict. The entanglement of US air power with ground forces was severed, just as much due to the material machinations of the conflict space as the politics between the US and NATO. The final effort, a show of international resolve through sustained bombing, was ultimately a mark of downward causality created by a nascent assemblage.

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<sup>142</sup> "Summary of Conclusions for Meeting of the Nsc Principals Committee, 14 July 1995," (Washington, DC: National Security Council, 1995), 2.

<sup>143</sup> Anthony Lake, "Memorandum: Bosnia-Next Steps," (Washington, DC: The White House, 1995), 2.

<sup>144</sup> Sandy Berger, "Memorandum: Bosnia Strategy," (Washington, DC: National Security Council, 1995), 2.

### **3.5 Safe Areas: Virtual Logics, Lived Environments**

What this analysis clarifies is the dynamic, complex, and pluralistic process of heterogeneous engineering which underpinned international engagement with the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. But, to this point the analysis has concentrated on how provisional but discernable strategies of conflict management formed within the affordances created by the interrelationship of the conflict space and materialisations of international intervention. In coming to foreground the conflict as a problem of circulation, however, a gap emerged between the stated humanitarian purpose of the intervention and its effect. This managerial approach was a method of policing (dis)order, but in so doing contributed to the creation of a crude biopolitics—a politics concerning the sanctity of life and the proper context of its existence. This biopolitics was premised on the maintenance of order and accompany spaces, not the direct protection of individuals. Ultimately, the indecipherability of individual bodies to the assemblage that formed to make intervention possible came to enact a specific, violent politics upon those whose protection was the purported purpose of international efforts. The safe areas were designed as bulwarks against ethnic cleansing, making them a rudimentary technology for protecting life. Yet in practice, this foregrounding of objects, which was influenced by air power technology and the extension of the traditional peacekeeping model, actively contributed to the death and suffering that legitimated their creation. The practical, physical elements that came to engender the form of international response to the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina translate into a very specific form of lived environment for civilians.

This ultimately meant a stripping of refugees' political and individual agency in the interest of maintaining the purportedly humanitarian spaces because their mobility had to be actively curtailed to ensure an appropriate political environment. It is important to note that elaborating on such negative effects does not necessarily undermine the international community's humanitarian claims, but it does show how the way they were materialised created very real practical shortcomings. Curtailing the mobility of refugees, and stripping them of their political agency in the process, is not a newly discovered side effect of humanitarian efforts.<sup>145</sup> Forced internment in the safe areas was itself a function of the general spatial considerations of diplomatic efforts, namely the creation of what could be considered a fair territorial arrangement between Bosnia-Herzegovina's ethnic groups. The policies of the US/NATO and UN were attuned to these spatial considerations, and it is unsurprising for this reason that the movement of refugees was actively prevented. Appeals to humanitarian necessity shaped by approaches to conflict management that foregrounded spaces and things, rather than refugees as either political or even physical beings, legitimated this form of management despite the squalor and violence of the safe areas. The individual refugee was removed from the frame of reference and supplanted by rough demarcations of space and precision targeting meant to be enforced by international dictate.

Visitors to the enclaves left with dramatic impressions regarding how the spaces sequestered, rather than sheltered, their inhabitants. One Dutch military officer explained that, "[o]n his first visit there [Srebrenica] in mid-March 1994, the Chief of Defence Staff

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<sup>145</sup> For instance Weizman brings this up in his study of refugee camps: Weizman, *The Least of All Possible Evils*, 146-147.

had the distinct impression that the task of Dutchbat was that of a 'guard in a concentration camp' ... Srebrenica was an 'open-air prison' and Dutchbat was in fact also locked up inside."<sup>146</sup> The safe areas themselves had created, or at least ensconced, the humanitarian disaster many had feared in 1991 and 1992. The UN mandate, while specifically humanitarian in purpose, did little to alleviate suffering. As one witness attested in 1993:

The white protection force vehicles have consistently refused to help women and children leave besieged Dobrinja, even when they had reached the end of their rope. "It's against the rules." ... All we can do at this time is to watch and remember. We tell them what we call them here: Smurfs, or simply the Un-Protection Force.<sup>147</sup>

The first international aid convoy to reach the recently created Srebrenica safe area entered the town on the 19 March 1993. The following day 674 wounded people were evacuated amidst a frenzy of individuals attempting to flee in a similar manner.<sup>148</sup> On 29 March, trucks delivering aid to Srebrenica were to transport 2,300 people to Tuzla. In the process, however, several died of asphyxiation.<sup>149</sup> This situation was repeated two days later, this time with children trampled and desperate mothers trying to throw their children on the departing trucks.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Blom, "Srebrenica - a 'Safe' Area: Reconstruction, Background, Consequences and Analyses of the Fall of a 'Safe' Area," 1113.

<sup>147</sup> Zlatko Dizdarevic, *Sarajevo: A War Journal*, trans. Anselm Hollo (New York, NY: Fromm International, 1993), 50-51.

<sup>148</sup> Larry Hollingworth, *Merry Christmas Mr. Larry: The Inspirational Memoir of the Man Who Has Brought Comfort, Hope, and Life to Victims of War and Famine All Round the World* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1996), 211-213.

<sup>149</sup> Blom, "Srebrenica - a 'Safe' Area: Reconstruction, Background, Consequences and Analyses of the Fall of a 'Safe' Area," 728; Chuck Sudetic, "Thousands Jam U.N. Trucks to Flee Bosnian Town: Two Children Die in Rush from Srebrenica," *New York Times*, 30 March 1993, A6; Hollingworth, *Merry Christmas*, 217.

<sup>150</sup> Blom, "Srebrenica - a 'Safe' Area: Reconstruction, Background, Consequences and Analyses of the Fall of a 'Safe' Area," 728.

Though it never much raised the quality of life in the enclaves, the UN was forced to try to make gains in terms of the security of the spaces and the aid available to them.<sup>151</sup> This meant ensuring the enclaves remained populated. To ensure the safe areas remained bulwarks against ethnic cleansing both the UN and Muslim militia groups began using force to restrict the movement of refugees and keep the enclaves populated. In 1993 Bosnian civilians were eager to leave the areas and attempted to do so *en masse*. International forces worked quickly to keep refugees from leaving in the interest of making a moral stand against the Serbs.<sup>152</sup> So fervent was the desire to leave that General Morillon had to station peacekeepers tasked with preventing the refugees from leaving once it became clear they would not stay of their own accord. Even the Bosnian Muslim forces in Srebrenica used their military resources to prevent an exodus from the safe areas to ensure their control over the area.<sup>153</sup> In besieged Sarajevo, suffering and black marketeering were stabilised rather than alleviated by international efforts.<sup>154</sup> This process had violent and sometimes deadly effects. In 1993 *Medecins Sans Frontières* reported that the enclaves had become scenes of violence over food which regularly led to the loss of life.<sup>155</sup> The locations of the (limited) international airdrops of aid also

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 729.

<sup>152</sup> David Rieff, *Slaughterhouse : Bosnia and the Failure of the West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 208-209; J. Di Giovanni, "Morillon Takes Flak in Finest Hour," *The Sunday Times*, 4 April 1993, 18.

<sup>153</sup> Blom, "Srebrenica - a 'Safe' Area: Reconstruction, Background, Consequences and Analyses of the Fall of a 'Safe' Area," 741.

<sup>154</sup> Peter Andreas, *Blue Helmets and Black Markets: The Business of Survival in the Siege of Sarajevo* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2008).

<sup>155</sup> Cited in: Blom, "Srebrenica - a 'Safe' Area: Reconstruction, Background, Consequences and Analyses of the Fall of a 'Safe' Area," 949; Hollingworth, *Merry Christmas*, 194.

became dangerous, due both to Serb shelling of those collecting packages and the killing of 35 to 40 people by the crates of supplies themselves.<sup>156</sup>

Support for the safe areas also meant a continuing inability of those living there to provide for themselves in an already harsh, rural environment. This meant they were, in many ways, left prey to Serb interference and pushed into various states of reliance on the UN and illicit profiteers. The increase in cases of goitre in the Srebrenica area is one example of how moves to protect and secure the enclave exacerbated human suffering. Srebrenica's location has historically meant measures had to be taken to ensure residents had enough iodine in their diets. Thus, goitre was a perpetual issue that required special government programmes to provide residents with salt. From 1993-1995 the BSA worked to prevent salt from reaching the town, causing many residents to fall ill.<sup>157</sup> The interaction between Serb and Muslim civilians frequently led to trading between friendly groups. Such relationships may have provided resources for international negotiations, but they were officially denounced by the Bosnian Muslim forces and punishment was doled out to those who were caught.<sup>158</sup>

UNPROFOR also took measures to try to close the gaps in its perimeter in order to curtail illegal smuggling and prevent the Muslim militias from using the enclave as a base for guerilla raids.<sup>159</sup> Such measures, while they followed the operational logic of separating the warring factions in order to maintain peace, had the effect of creating a

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<sup>156</sup> Blom, "Srebrenica - a 'Safe' Area: Reconstruction, Background, Consequences and Analyses of the Fall of a 'Safe' Area," 949.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 981; Sheri Fink, *War Hospital: A True Story of Surgery and Survival* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2003), 220-223.

<sup>158</sup> Blom, "Srebrenica - a 'Safe' Area: Reconstruction, Background, Consequences and Analyses of the Fall of a 'Safe' Area," 1118-1119.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 1108.

black market and a shortage of basic necessities as individuals tried to survive cut off from most sources of essential goods.<sup>160</sup> Maintaining “balance” stabilised the “safe” space at the same time that it acted upon suffering individuals, including creating dynamics that were decidedly un-humanitarian. Food shortages lead to UNPROFOR using rations to “pay” for basic cleaning and sanitation.<sup>161</sup>

On a number of OPs, the men of the population also received free bread. For other services such as laundry, road maintenance, fetching water, filling sandbags and setting up roadblocks, Dutchbat members made payment in the form of rations. The services also related to burning rubbish around the OPs. Every two to three days, the rubbish was collected in a pit and burned. After burning, a new pit had to be dug, and for this too, emergency rations were the usual wages.<sup>162</sup>

This example, coupled with the larger efforts by all sides to control the flow of essentials into and out of the Eastern enclaves, illustrates how actions designed to help individuals can very easily render them dependent and politically incapacitated. Further, the bustling black market created wealth for some while stabilising the safe areas just enough to prevent collapse from within.<sup>163</sup> It is striking that this is consistent with, rather than a departure from, the logic of managing the spaces by creating stability.

This argument should not be misconstrued as stating that the safe area policy was inherently misguided or deliberately designed to aggravate suffering. However, it is clear the safe area policy emerged from the larger process of heterogeneous engineering, and it had its own materially mediated effects. Mirroring the argument made by Zanotti, who

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 981.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 1150, 1154.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 1150.

<sup>163</sup> Andreas, *Blue Helmets*.

critiques internationally mediated attempts to resettle displaced groups following the Dayton Accords while remaining cognisant of the equally violent alternatives, the point is to highlight practical shortcomings in actual policies in the interest of better implementation.<sup>164</sup>

### **3.6 Conclusion**

The failure of the safe area policy, as well as the heinous living conditions experienced within them, is well documented and has since soured the idea of “safe spaces”. The experience of Bosnia-Herzegovina fundamentally reconfigured how the US, NATO, and the UN engaged in violent conflicts. Such safe areas would not be enacted again, though those who see the efficacy of international interventions as a function of resolve rather than embedded socio-material practices have made calls for their creation in other conflict spaces. Further, NATO would not allow UN forces to deploy to conflict areas in Kosovo and Libya until a formal peace emerged. This political context was borne directly of international engagement with Bosnia-Herzegovina, and its visible failure in the summer of 1995. The debacle of Srebrenica, however, was only the most visible point of failure in a long process whereby UN engagement with the conflict emerged and dissolved, only to be replaced by a roughshod alternative of policing from the air. Regardless, the use of air power itself as a means of policing conflict and “protecting” vulnerable groups have endured, in no small part, because of its seeming decisiveness. In future cases, the air power logic, which foregrounded objects and engaged conflict as a problem of circulation, would be refined. Vulnerable civilians would remain a source of

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<sup>164</sup> Zanotti, *Governing Disorder*.

political legitimacy for military operations, but they would not be the reference point of such operations. The experience of the Bosnian war, though only a partial success of heterogeneous engineering, did create a relationship between managing space via the targeting of discrete categories of objects and realising humanitarian intervention.

It was in Bosnia that air power became “humanitarian” in terms of its ability to undermine the technological and material infrastructure used to inflict harm, and the protection of individuals was translated into a specific kind of military action. But it is over the course of NATO’s later humanitarian operations, in Kosovo and Libya, that a more elaborate logic was stabilised in relation to both material and political elements. Having established a strategy that, though initially designed to support the UN mission actually became an alternative to it, the need to target heavy weapons during humanitarian interventions is the foundation for future actions. The solidification of this approach, however, was first evidenced by the NATO intervention in Kosovo in 1999.

## 4 Operation Allied Force and the Politics of Seeing and Acting

*All that becomes known of the course of events in War is usually very simple, and has a great sameness in appearance; no one on the mere relation of such events receives the difficulties connected with them which had to be overcome... The reflections, mental doubts, and conflicts which preceded the execution of great acts are purposely concealed because they affect political interests, or the recollection of them is accidentally lost because they have been looked upon as mere scaffolding which had to be removed on the completion of the building.<sup>1</sup>*

*...Sometimes to try and save mankind, in general, there is sometimes a bit of a sacrifice and pain that has to be experienced.<sup>2</sup>*

At 11:40am on 12 April 1999, a NATO F-15E Strike Eagle fired two AGM-130 electro-optically guided munitions at the Leskovac railway bridge in the Grdelica Gorge, about 250 kilometres south-east of Belgrade. The missiles, however, did not strike the bridge—at least they did not *only* strike the bridge. Instead, the two precision munitions struck passenger train Number 393, on route from Belgrade to Thessaloniki, Greece, via Ristovac on the Macedonian border. Ten civilians were killed, and at least fifteen were left injured.<sup>3</sup> Per the Final Report issued to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) Chief Prosecutor:

After launching the first bomb, the person controlling the weapon, at the last instant before impact, sighted movement on the bridge. The controller was unable to dump the bomb at that stage and it hit the train, the impact of the bomb cutting the second of the passenger coaches in half. Realising the bridge was still intact, the controller picked a second aim point on the

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<sup>1</sup> Carl Van Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. J.J. Graham (London, UK: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), Vol. I, Bk. I, Chp. IV, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Admiral Whitby: 4 April 1999 NATO briefing

<sup>3</sup> "Kosovo Update," *New York Times*, 14 April 1999, A15; "The Crisis in Kosovo," Human Rights Watch, <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2000/nato/Natbm200-01.htm>, para. 15-17; "Final Report to the Prosecutor by the Committee Established to Review the Nato Bombing Campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia," (De Haag, NL: International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, 2000), para 58.

bridge at the opposite end from where the train had come and launched the second bomb. In the meantime, the train had slid forward as a result of the original impact and parts of the train were also hit by the second bomb.<sup>4</sup>

The ICTY report found the incident to be accidental and devoid of criminal intent: the bridge was a legitimate military target, the train was not the focus of the attack, and the speed and complexity involved in both flying the aircraft and guiding the munitions deprived the pilot of a practical means for aborting the mission.<sup>5</sup>

Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) General Wesley Clark showed footage of the event during a press briefing at NATO Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) shortly after its occurrence. The AGM-130 is deployed using a complex electro-optical targeting system that allows pilots to launch missiles from miles away, steering the munition using a video feed from the warhead projected on a small screen in the cockpit. During the briefing, General Clark narrated footage stored by the targeting system, “as the pilot stared intently at the desired aim point on the bridge and worked it, and worked it, and worked it, and all of the sudden at the very last instant with less than a second to go he caught a flash of movement that came into the screen and it was the train coming in.” He continued: “...it was an unfortunate incident which he, and the crew, and all of us very much regret. We certainly don’t want to do collateral damage.”<sup>6</sup> This was the way in which commanders, political leaders, air crew, and the general public “saw” the war—it was a virtual war.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> "Final Report to the Prosecutor," para. 58.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 60-61.

<sup>6</sup> Jamie Shea and Wesley Clark, "Press Conference," <http://www.nato.int/kosovo/press/p990413a.htm>.

<sup>7</sup> Ignatieff, *Virtual*.

Events like these became synonymous with Operation Allied Force (OAF), NATO's three month bombing of The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in 1999. OAF was perhaps the most controversial and ambiguous humanitarian intervention of the 1990s. The FRY was first threatened and then attacked for endeavouring to ethnically cleanse the once autonomous province of Kosovo of its majority Muslim Albanian population. It was NATO's choice to rely solely on air power, however, that is most compelling. As Adam Roberts put it, "How did it happen that the ancient and ever contested idea of "humanitarian intervention" came to be associated with bombing?"<sup>8</sup> For Roberts, the answer was the discrediting of ground forces and incorrect assumption that air power had been decisive during the summer of 1995 in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Such political context is, of course, important to any understanding of why OAF was a strictly airborne operation. But, one must also be aware of the fact that OAF played an important role in the ongoing process of heterogeneous engineering of the air power policing model that has come to underpin Western strategies of military humanitarian intervention.

Engaging the conflict in Kosovo through air power marked the uncoupling of the air power policing logic from the physical context within which it was engineered. The ability to uproot this strategy from central Bosnia-Herzegovina and deploy it in Kosovo hundreds of miles away and four years later was due to the virtualisation of the policing model. Relying solely on air power meant seeing the conflict through the advanced sensors that make precision airstrikes possible. Data created by these sensors, however, is by its nature disorientating and partial. Such data must be interpreted, meaning it is not only possible but necessary to juxtapose this conceptual schematic against the air power

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<sup>8</sup> Adam Roberts, "Nato's 'Humanitarian War' over Kosovo," *Survival* 41, no. 3 (1999): 110.

policing model in order to make an intervention from the air conceivable. This virtualisation, however, comes with specific costs. For technical reasons, the virtual battlespace does not foreground civilian bodies. Instead, it focuses on specific classes of objects, both because targeting systems can identify them and prevailing air power doctrine is predicated on their destruction. As a result, this assemblage of concept and technology sat awkwardly with specifics of the Kosovo conflict. Viewing the conflict in this way served to simplify its politics at the same time the human suffering that motivated it was rendered indiscernible.

What is different about OAF is that it marks the refinement of a generalised policing model which is, unlike the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, both coherent and not context specific. Specifically, in dealing with OAF, both academics and political elites came to bracket the conduct of humanitarian intervention itself from the humanitarian goals of the international community. This reconfiguration of discourse marks the downward causality of the air power assemblage that had been rendered mobile. Rather than engineering a new strategy to manage the conflict in Kosovo, OAF marked the redeployment and refinement of the air power assemblage. In the process, Yugoslav infrastructure and the material resources of the Yugoslav Army (VJ) and Ministry of Interior (MUP) forces who were carrying out the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo were foregrounded.

Events like the bombing of Train 393, however, attest to the tensions created by overlaying the complexity of the Kosovar conflict with this policing model. It is here that the discourse of humanitarian intervention takes on the role of situating and legitimating the effects of the air campaign. This use of force was defended by a discourse that

defined air power as a technical process of order making and not an exercise in direct human protection. This, of course, does not present a conceptual problem for military commanders because air power doctrine is premised on the material trappings of agency, not on human bodies themselves (see Chapter Two). In this way, an analysis of the collateral damage created by OAF provides a window into unpacking the relationship between this strategy of humanitarian intervention, the human bodies it seeks to protect, and the discursive configurations that have emerged to legitimate the resulting assemblage. Much like in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the negative humanitarian effects of the intervention are due to the social and technical indiscernibility of individual lives to the model of air power policing. However, in Kosovo, these effects are actively construed by a particular discursive formation contrived by the US DOD and NATO.

This discourse identified humanitarian intervention as a precise, highly technical military activity, in the process obscuring its political, historically situated, and materially inflected character. Denoting Kosovo as a clear example of a coercive military campaign plays into the ongoing attempt, echoed in US and NATO discourse, to establish the use of air power as a technical rather than political domain.<sup>9</sup> It is in this context that precision, a watchword for the assumedly liberal and efficient use of force, came to provide a humanitarian credential for virtual war.<sup>10</sup> Aboard the *USS Theodore Roosevelt* on 21 June 1999, US Secretary of Defense William Cohen “salute[d the] triumph over tyranny” accomplished by the “most precise display of air power “anywhere, anytime in the

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<sup>9</sup> This of course clearly fits the argument that US, and by extension NATO, warfighting sees conflict as an abrogation rather than a manifestation of politics. See: Carvin and Williams, *Law, Science, Liberalism*.

<sup>10</sup> On the assumedly liberal character of precision weapons see: *ibid*.

history of this entire globe.”<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the DOD after action report to Congress was as much a recounting of success as it was an argument for the expanded refinement, procurement, and reliance upon stockpiles of advanced weaponry.<sup>12</sup> These weapons would become the backbone of later operations, specifically NATO’s 2011 intervention in Libya, because of their order making potential rather than their humanitarian or political efficacy.

#### **4.1 The Political and Physical Context of Conflict in Kosovo and Metohija**

NATO leaders, including Secretary General Javier Solana and General Clark, argued that military intervention brought about a political agreement that both reversed the ethnic cleansing and created a firm foundation for political and social reconciliation.<sup>13</sup> The basis for such a statement was not actually the creation of a stable government in Kosovo; the province became a UN protectorate in 1999, and NATO troops remain deployed to the now semi-recognised state at the time of writing. Instead, the measure of success was paralysing Belgrade, in turn forcing its concession to international demands that federal forces be removed from Kosovo, the establishment of the UN protectorate, and the implementation of the 1999 Rambouillet agreement.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Linda D. Kozaryn, "Cohen Salutes Triumph over Tyranny," U.S. Department of Defense (Washington, DC: American Forces Press Service, 1999). <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=42797>

<sup>12</sup> "Report to Congress: Kosovo/Operation Allied Force after-Action Report," (Washington, DC: Department of Defense 2000).

<sup>13</sup> Javier Solana, "Nato's Success in Kosovo," *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 6 (1999).

<sup>14</sup> The Rambouillet agreement was the result of an internationally mediated peace conference between the Yugoslav government and the nascent shadow state in Kosovo. The agreement called for the cessation of hostilities in the province and a mechanism for the province to pursue its political goals. See: Marc Weller, "The Rambouillet Conference on Kosovo " *International Affairs* 75, no. 2 (1999).

Ongoing tensions in the region are in fact a product of the unresolved ethnic politics of the province, which were even more complicated than in other areas of the Former Yugoslavia. In Kosovo, the air power model was separated from the socio-material context of the conflict. The effect was a roughshod application of force that imperfectly engaged the politics of the conflict. Kosovo-Metohija (generally referred to as Kosovo) was home to the overlapping territorial claims of both Serbs and Kosovar Albanians.<sup>15</sup> Unlike in Bosnia-Herzegovina, however, Kosovo did not splinter into discontinuous and thereby expansionary statelets that could serve as the focus of an international policing effort. The conflict in Kosovo was between two overlapping governing apparatuses: the official, Serb dominated government directly controlled by Belgrade and a competing “shadow state” led by Ibrahim Rugova. Albanian resistance to Serb administration had its roots in the post-Second World War annexation of the province to Serbia, but the emergence of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), an antigovernment paramilitary group in the 1990s, brought forth the violent response of the VJ and MUP that provoked NATO intervention. Air power did not provide a means to disentangle these apparatuses, short of forcing a complete withdrawal of government forces, and contributed to a depoliticisation-cum-simplification of the province’s politics.

Both Serbs and Kosovar Albanians claim to be the rightful inheritors of modern Kosovo, a territorial entity that corresponds to its demarcation within the Socialist

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<sup>15</sup> The territory which became an autonomous province of the SRY and is now a semi-recognized state is made up of two regions referred to as Kosovo and Metohija. Metohija is the area that was conquered by Serb King Stefan Dusan in 1346 before becoming the spiritual homeland of Serb Orthodoxy. See: Miranda Vickers, *Between Serb and Albanian: A History of Kosovo* (New York, NY: Columbia UP, 1998), 9-11. In common usage the area is referred to simply as Kosovo, and this usage is adopted here for reasons of familiarity.

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SRY). The complexity of these competing claims, however, springs from the fact that the territory has changed hands, often violently, several times. Albanians claim “first possession” through their Illyrian ancestry, where Serbs contend the Slavic expansions of the sixth and seventh centuries established their control over the region.<sup>16</sup> Serb lore contends that the collapse of factionalised feudalism and the emergence of a unified Serb community began with the defeat of Serbian Prince Lazar by Ottoman Sultan Murad in 1389 at Kosovo Polje—the Field of Blackbirds—located in the heart of modern Kosovo.<sup>17</sup> Serbs then forcefully annexed the territory during the first Balkan War (1912).<sup>18</sup> Under the control of the Kingdom of Serbia, the Kaçak rebellion emerged that brought violent reprisals and legitimated the colonisation of Kosovo by a growing Serb population.<sup>19</sup> While annexed by Italy during the Second World War Kosovo returned, with violent consequences, to Albanian control.<sup>20</sup>

Tito’s founding of the SRY halted rather than resolved this conflict by balancing these competing claims by making Kosovo an autonomous province of Serbia. As would become crucial, however, the resultant political unit was predominantly Albanian and,

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<sup>16</sup>Tim Judah, *Kosovo: War and Revenge* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 2000), 2.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-5.

<sup>18</sup> The territory of Kosovo would be annexed by the Kingdom of Serbia during the First Balkan War, but for Albanians in the region this is seen as a forceful overriding of the League of Prizren which was designed to prevent such encroachment of foreign powers on Albanian territory while shaping relations with the Ottoman Porte. See: Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans Vol. 2: Twentieth Century* (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 1983), 84; Judah, *Kosovo*, 12-13.

The complexity of this period prevents a full unpacking here. For a detailed summary of Balkan politics during the collapse of Ottoman rule see: Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History* (New York, NY: New York UP, 1998), 239-263.

<sup>19</sup> Malcolm, *Kosovo*, 272, 278-279.

<sup>20</sup> Michael J. Dziedzic, "Kosovo," in *Twenty-First-Century Peace Operations*, ed. William J. Durch (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace/Henry L. Stimson Center, 2006), 322. A summary recounting of the history of Kosovo before its emergence as a province of the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia can be found in: Judah, *Kosovo*. Chp. 1. For a more complete history of the politics of the Second World War in the region see: Malcolm, *Kosovo*. Chp. 15

due to a divergence in demographic trends between Serbs and Albanians, became increasingly more so.<sup>21</sup> As Serb nationalism resurged in the 1980s, the “plight” of Kosovo’s Serbs (along with other Serb minorities in SRY’s other constituent Republics) became a key focus, with notable Serb nationalists publicly contending a genocide would be visited upon them by Kosovar Albanians.<sup>22</sup> Tensions had been roiled in 1981 when, following Tito’s death, Kosovar Albanians began protesting for equal status as a constituent republic of the SRY (which arguably came with the right to secede) only to be harshly repressed by federal forces.<sup>23</sup> Nonetheless, instability and protest continued, leading many Serbs to flee the province and further fuel the more general nationalist fervour that would help carry Slobodan Milošević to power in Belgrade.<sup>24</sup> Citing ongoing unrest, the need to maintain order and the threat to the area’s Serb population, the JNA surrounded the Kosovar Assembly on 23 March 1989. Its purpose was to force a vote in favour of a measure that absolved the Province’s autonomy, placing it under martial law and *de facto* Serb control.<sup>25</sup>

In the period between 1989 and the eruption of hostilities in 1998, the FRY systematically closed the governing, education, and medical systems of Kosovo to its majority Albanian population. In response, the Albanian population created a “shadow

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<sup>21</sup> Judah, *Kosovo*, 314.

<sup>22</sup> Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 31.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 34-35; Judah, *Kosovo*, 38 ff.

<sup>24</sup> Misha Glenny, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War, and the Great Powers, 1804-1999*, 1st American ed. (New York, NY: Viking, 2000), 628. Glenny insists that Milošević was not driven by nationalism himself but manipulated it in order to bring about a chain of events that left him in control of Kosovo’s seat on the FRY’s Federal Presidency.

<sup>25</sup> Judah, *Kosovo*, 55-56. For a discussion of the JNA’s re-tooling as a tool of Serb expansionism see section 3.2 above.

state” that became the foundation of a push for independence again in the late 1990s.<sup>26</sup> Further, violent excesses by government forces helped swell the ranks of the KLA, a guerilla pro-independence group whose emergence precipitated the outburst of violence in 1998 that brought international attention to the area.<sup>27</sup> Feeling that their passivity during the spasm of Balkan violence between 1991 and 1995 had denied them a voice, Kosovar political and resistance forces reevaluated their approach.<sup>28</sup> In 1996, the KLA formally announced its existence and began mounting ever-more aggressive antigovernment operations. In response, both the JNA and MUP stepped up activities in the province.

#### **4.2 Protection through/as Coercion in Kosovo**

In his oft cited book on humanitarian intervention, Thomas Weiss is clear about what kind of intervention OAF was: on “the spectrum of international military action lies a well understood concept, war fighting. Here the objective is to defeat a clearly defined adversary, and it is undertaken by fully combat capable troops. In relationship to humanitarian intervention, NATO’s 1999 air campaign in Kosovo falls into this category.”<sup>29</sup> Given that humanitarian intervention constituted an ongoing process of heterogeneous engineering the assumption that military force is “well understood” is deeply problematic, as is the contention that international objectives are “clear” in any

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<sup>26</sup> See *ibid.* Chp. 3.

<sup>27</sup> A detailed recounting of the KLA’s emergence, as well as its pre-1989 antecedents, can be found in: James Pettifer, *The Kosova Liberation Army: Underground War to Balkan Insurgency, 1948-2001* (London, UK: Hurst & Company, 2012). On the effect of the events of 1989 see Chapter 3, pp. 59 ff.

<sup>28</sup> Vickers, *Between*, 289.

<sup>29</sup> Weiss, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 8.

practical sense. However, what is most interesting about this formulation, and the many like it within the scholarly literature is the contention that OAF was designed to “defeat” the maniacal VJ, MUP, and Milošević triumvirate. What this meant in practice, however, was not a resounding defeat of these forces on the battlefield, but paralysing them through the precision targeting of their assets and the infrastructure they relied upon. The contingency of this approach is obscured by the proposition that it was merely a well-understood technical exercise.

This strategy represents a refinement of the air power based policing model which began to form in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the denotation of OAF as a familiar exercise in “warfighting” obscures the socio-material complexity at play. The mediating influence of air power is again reflected in the strategic goals of OAF, which were orientated toward paralysing the VJ and MUP, but this is only discussed in instrumental terms. The result is a decentring of the study of intervention in favour of normative, political, or legal considerations charged with muddling an otherwise straightforward military operation. This, of course, oversimplifies to some extent, but the literature, on the whole, does contribute to the bracketing of humanitarian considerations from the actual practice of military intervention. The result is an argument for the maximal use of military force, regardless of its immediate effects, to be made possible by creating normative pressure, clarifying international law, or overcoming political roadblocks. Organised in this way the academic literature comes to see military force as Seybolt does—as perhaps not

humanitarian in itself, but capable of being so through the termination of hostilities and the reestablishment of political order.<sup>30</sup>

This separation between the conduct of war and its effects echoes NATO and US discourse and becomes a site where the humanitarian credentials of the operation are constantly re-established in response to the bombing's negative effects on Kosovar civilians and inability to directly curtail ethnic cleansing. The result is an insistence that the negative effects of the intervention are technical, accidental, or a function of disorder that has not yet come to be adequately policed rather than an artefact of the intervention itself. This is not a purely discursive effect, but one that springs from the entanglement of humanitarianism with air power technology. Before addressing this entanglement, the remainder of this section outlines how it has been obscured by the current academic literature.

What was striking about OAF was that few scholars argued that NATO was not eventually successful militarily. To be sure, Belgrade was eventually brought to heel, and the negotiated agreement reached with the Kosovar Albanians at Rambouillet was enforced under the watchful eye of NATO troops. But the operation was clearly a political failure, and many would argue it was unnecessarily prolonged for a series of reasons. The Alliance failed to capitalise on diplomatic opportunities in 1998 and 1999, overestimated the vulnerability of the Milošević regime, became directly embroiled in the humanitarian crisis, and fell short of obtaining a useful peace agreement.<sup>31</sup> Sharper

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<sup>30</sup> Taylor B. Seybolt, *Humanitarian Intervention: The Conditions for Success and Failure* (New York, NY: Oxford UP, 2008), 265. Weiss specifically cites this argument, Weiss, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 11.

<sup>31</sup> Michael Mandelbaum, "A Perfect Failure: Nato War against Yugoslavia," *Foreign Affairs*, no. 5 (1999). Crawford adds that an important element of this failure was NATO's inability to *also* deter the KLA from

criticism evoked international inaction in Rwanda and Sierra Leone to argue OAF was selective, discriminatory, and self-interested. Further, unrealistic demands made before bombing commenced, including that NATO be given unhindered access to Kosovo in blatant disregard for the FRY's sovereignty, seemed designed to legitimate rather than prevent conflict.<sup>32</sup> Even noted liberal interventionists like Daalder and O'Hanlon contend that the NATO victory amounted to "winning ugly."<sup>33</sup> This "ugliness" has been attributed an unwillingness, at least initially, to use sufficient means to coerce Belgrade.

It is in the discussion of OAF as a coercive military operation that the bracketing of the intervention from its political and humanitarian effects crystallises. Coercion, in its precise sense, is a strategic logic that uses force and destruction to shape enemy behaviour, rather than attempt to defeat them outright. Thomas Schelling defined coercion as different in function, if not modality, from brute force: "To be coercive, violence has to be anticipated. And it has to be avoidable by accommodation. The power to hurt is bargaining power. To exploit it is diplomacy—vicious diplomacy, but diplomacy."<sup>34</sup> The overarching lesson taken from Kosovo was that this "vicious" form of diplomacy was not effectively unleashed, and as a result, the campaign stretched out over three months.

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becoming increasingly violent through 1998 and early 1999: Timothy W. Crawford, "Pivotal Deterrence and the Kosovo War: Why the Holbrooke Agreement Failed," *Political Science Quarterly* 116, no. 4 (2001): 501. Bellamy, in his work, has argued the international community did not even try to prevent the conflict because it was labeled a 'minorities issue' within Serbia while international attention and priorities remained focused on solving the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Alex J. Bellamy, *Kosovo and International Society* (New York, NY: Palgrave, 2002), 2, Chp. 2.

<sup>32</sup> Booth, "The Kosovo Tragedy," 7; Ayoob, "Humanitarian Intervention and International Society," 225-226; David Chandler, *From Kosovo to Kabul: Human Rights and International Intervention*, New ed. (Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto, 2006).

<sup>33</sup> Ivo H. Daalder and Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Winning Ugly: Nato's War to Save Kosovo* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2000).

<sup>34</sup> Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1966), 2.

The gradualist approach that guided targeting decisions and the operational plans drawn up by NATO are singled out within the literature for special ridicule in this regard. NATO had planned to gradually increase pressure on Belgrade as a means of forcing diplomatic concessions. In keeping with the instrumentalist reading of military affairs, this tepidness is linked to political equivocation. The very idea of gradualist military operations is highly controversial, and OAF was no exception. General Clark supported gradualism even though it was contrary to established US military doctrine of overwhelming force encapsulated in the Powell-Weinberger Doctrine. General Clark and his commanders had been professionally weaned on the institutional lessons taken from the much-maligned Vietnam quagmire, itself an exercise in the graduated and constrained use of military force. Clark would argue, both at the time and later, that even though gradualism had proven disastrous in Vietnam, the sophistication of modern air power technology made the limited use of force possible under certain circumstances, but many of his commanders disagreed.<sup>35</sup> A notable example was General Short, NATO Air Component Commander, who disagreed with the gradualist approach. General Short made it clear during his Congressional debriefing that he attributed NATO's many failures to an unwillingness to attack the Yugoslav leadership outright, upfront, and in a big way.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Future of Combat* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2001), 4-7, 418-420.

<sup>36</sup> Short made these statements publicly at a 21 October 1999 US Senate Armed Services Committee hearing. Short's comments are consistent with the argument, gleaned mostly from the US experience in Vietnam, that air power was an effective but blunt instrument, best used to overwhelm an enemy's capacity to fight and not as a means to bring increasing pressure to support diplomatic efforts. For a reading of Vietnam from this perspective see: C. Dale Walton, *The Myth of Inevitable Us Defeat in Vietnam* (London, UK: Frank Cass, 2002), 108-109.

Disagreement between Clark and his commanders was not idiosyncratic but representative of a longer running debate about the efficacy of air power and the particular political context among the Allies. Air power has historically not been strategically decisive in war, but political leaders, particularly in the US, tend to rely upon it for reasons of political expediency.<sup>37</sup> To be sure, support for combat operations across the Alliance was tenuous: bound to unravel in the face of casualties. General Clark was aware of the fragility of political support and was forced to arbitrate the politics and practicalities of OAF by reining in his operational commanders' more aggressive approaches.<sup>38</sup> As Ignatieff puts it, despite the SACEUR's "grand and imposing title... he is a man with many masters."<sup>39</sup> These circumstances should be read as creating a particular technical problem for NATO commanders, namely how to enforce international will without jeopardising political support.

The practical effect of this was a predilection toward the use of precision weapons and other advanced weapons systems that not only assuaged political fears but provided an orientating point for the deployment of the air power policing model. Under political pressure to use force sparingly and with great precision, leaders relied heavily (though far from exclusively) on advanced weapons systems and sophisticated targeting, command and control, and Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) systems. In this way Kosovo illustrated the relevance of the "Revolution in Military Affairs" to peace

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<sup>37</sup> Robert Anthony Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1996), 314-315.

<sup>38</sup> William M. Arkin, "Operation Allied Force: "The Most Precise Application of Air Power in History"," in *War over Kosovo: Politics and Strategy in a Global Age*, ed. Andrew J. Bacevich and Eliot A. Cohen (New York, NY: Columbia UP, 2001), 5.

<sup>39</sup> Ignatieff, *Virtual*, 92.

support operations because of its potential for increasing efficiency, mitigating risk, and therefore easing political strains.<sup>40</sup> Contrary to the heterodox doctrinal wisdom of the US military at the time, Clark himself endorsed this approach, but even his operation plans were stymied by political pressure. The apparent problem was that civilian leadership had developed a misplaced faith in the effectiveness and safety of limited airstrikes while confronting each other over target selection. The result of both operational and political ambiguity was a confused organisational environment; in the year leading up to OAF SHAPE created over forty different operations plans.<sup>41</sup> This discordance, many argue, spilled over into operational decision making and compromised effectiveness.<sup>42</sup> For this reason, Luttwak argued that OAF was the archetype of “post-heroic warfare”: an epoch dominated by the buzzwords of precision and the practice of risk avoidance in the pursuit of diplomatic goals best left either unrealised or pursued in more robust terms.<sup>43</sup> In all, however, this analysis foregrounds a lack of political clarity as muddling what would otherwise be a clear operational situation.

As a result, NATO proved exceedingly timid during OAF. One can attribute the fault for this differently, either citing micromanagement by political leadership that

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<sup>40</sup> Elinor C. Sloan, *The Revolution in Military Affairs Implications for Canada and Nato* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 2002), 91, 106-107. Pape also argues that this political windfall of air power, rather than its overall effectiveness, will keep it at the centre of US overseas operations: Pape, *Bombing*.

<sup>41</sup> Arkin, "Operation Allied Force," 4.

<sup>42</sup> Cordesman, *Lessons*, 17-20, 25-31. US after-action research came to see OAF as evidence of the inevitable need for US dominance and the need to spurn direct use of NATO in combat so that the US doctrine would not be muddled in future conflicts: John E. Peters et al., *European Contributions to Operation Allied Force: Implications for Transatlantic Cooperation*, Project Air Force Series on Operation Allied Force (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), 93. As Carvin and Williams point out in the context of US planning for Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Lesson drawn for OAF by the George W. Bush Administration is that they would not open themselves up to such political handwringing again: Carvin and Williams, *Law, Science, Liberalism*, 166.

<sup>43</sup> Luttwak, "Toward Post-Heroic Warfare."

denied military commanders a robust mandate, or, as Cohen argues, with the military leadership whose approach to war fighting had not kept pace with either political goals or geopolitical context.<sup>44</sup> What is interesting, however, is that the practical criticism of the intervention is largely an investigation of how coercion could have been more effectively achieved rather than whether coercion is a good operational model for human protection. Lurking here is at least a tacit assumption, which obscures important contextual factors, that humanitarian intervention is a coercive rather than protective exercise.

Scholarly work on OAF as a coercive endeavour is therefore largely concerned with questions of the efficiency with which Belgrade was brought to heel. Given the emptiness of NATO's threats to use ground troops many scholars took OAF as an example of how effective air power could be if used following sound operational principles and not limited in scope, cost, or duration for reasons of political expediency.<sup>45</sup> This assumption of air power's ultimate effectiveness gives rise to ever more fine grained analysis of NATO's targeting policy to ascertain which form(s) of bombing created this success and tease out lessons for the future.<sup>46</sup> This, of course, has been debated by

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<sup>44</sup> For the argument that doctrine had not kept pace with political realities see: Eliot A. Cohen, "Kosovo and the New American Way of War," in *War over Kosovo: Politics and Strategy in a Global Age*, ed. Andrew J. Bacevich and Eliot A. Cohen (New York, NY: Columbia UP, 2001), 45-50. For a more nuanced argument, which holds that political leaders and military practitioners must be more understanding of each other, albeit with civilian control remaining paramount, see: Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Nato's Air War for Kosovo: A Strategic and Operational Assessment*, Project Air Force Series on Operation Allied Force (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), 237-240.

<sup>45</sup> Daniel L. Byman, Matthew C. Waxman, and Eric Larson, *Air Power as a Coercive Instrument*, Project Air Force (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1999), xv. Andrew L. Stigler, "A Clear Victory for Air Power: Nato's Empty Threat to Invade Kosovo," *International Security* 27, no. 3 (2003): 124-125. Though Stigler still attributes some causal weight to the threat of ground attack, Harvey has taken the argument further and asserted that such threats hold no importance for understanding Yugoslavia's capitulation: Frank P. Harvey, "Getting Nato's Success in Kosovo Right: The Theory and Logic of Counter-Coercion," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 23, no. 2 (2006): 141.

<sup>46</sup> Daniel R. Lake, "The Limits of Coercive Airpower: Nato's "Victory" in Kosovo Revisited," *International Security* 34, no. 1 (2009): 84.

scholars resolute in their assertion that air power is a blunt instrument that must be augmented.<sup>47</sup> In the Kosovo case, had the threat of ground invasion been credible earlier (as these scholars argue it was in the closing days of the intervention when Milošević conceded, the duration of combat operations could have been significantly shortened even if political leaders never really meant to come good on threats to invade.<sup>48</sup>

The net effect was the elongation of the intervention resulting in an outsized impact on civilians and an overall lesson that military intervention must always be maximal rather than selective.<sup>49</sup> Avoiding the “ugly” win and realising a successful humanitarian intervention was a matter of robustness, and ensuring future operations were not hamstrung. The problem, from this perspective, was that the humanitarian intervention norm was still nascent and had failed to crystallise international resolve.<sup>50</sup> Dissensus at the diplomatic level, taken as an indication of normative indeterminacy, is also often discussed in the literature. Differences of perspective paralysed the UNSC in a manner reminiscent of Bosnia-Herzegovina.<sup>51</sup> China and Russia held that Belgrade’s actions amounted to a legitimate counterinsurgency operation, while Western countries

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<sup>47</sup> More general examples of this argument include: Pape, *Bombing*, 314-315; Van Creveld, *The Age of Airpower*, 424-425.

<sup>48</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*, 198-200; Daniel L. Byman and Matthew C. Waxman, “Kosovo and the Great Air Power Debate,” *International Security* 24, no. 4 (2000): 7. The relevance of increasing bombing, made possible by improving weather, and cumulative damage to the change in Yugoslav policy is also made by: Barry R. Posen, “The War for Kosovo,” *ibid.*: 82. Lambeth argues that air power/airpower on its own was enough, but a credible ground threat may have shortened the bombing campaign: Lambeth, *Nato’s Air War for Kosovo*, 233-234.

<sup>49</sup> Thakur, *Responsibility to Protect*, 49-50; Ignatieff, *Virtual*, 161-214.

<sup>50</sup> Daalder and O’Hanlon, *Winning Ugly*; Wheeler, *Saving Strangers*, 282-284; Weiss, *Humanitarian Intervention*, 153.

<sup>51</sup> Walling, *All Necessary Measures*, 152.

charged the Milošević regime with using the innocuous KLA threat to legitimate ethnic violence.<sup>52</sup>

The inability to create a consensus on the use of force, coupled with the fact that NATO chose to use force anyway, had important ramifications for the development of a humanitarian intervention norm. By standing in the way of action, the UN was beset by a legitimacy crisis. Without a UNSC mandate, OAF was a violation of international law, but many used the humanitarian merits of the operation set against the political stalemate within the UNSC to problematise this assertion.<sup>53</sup> After the intervention, the cryptic definition of OAF as “illegal but legitimate” by the Independent International Commission on Kosovo set off a legitimacy crisis for the UNSC and provided coordinates for a debate concerning the adjudication of military intervention that would ultimately end with the drafting of R2P by the ICISS.<sup>54</sup> Pro intervention scholars argued that Kosovo illustrated the sterility of UNSC debate and highlighted a need to ground the adjudication of international action in established criteria that included specific, morally sound, and standardised maxims.<sup>55</sup> This approach has been sharply criticised for its focus on extrajudicial concepts of legitimacy. Supplanting legally codified concepts with more nebulous considerations of legitimacy creates ambiguity. As a result, the use of force becomes vulnerable to the play of discourse, stifles reflection, and in so doing prevents

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<sup>52</sup> For a summary of the lead up to Yugoslavia’s revocation of Kosovo’s autonomous status see: Judah, *Kosovo*, 50-60. A summary of the legal and institutional efforts at marginalizing the Kosovar Albanian population follows, pp. 61, ff.

<sup>53</sup> Roberts, "Nato's 'Humanitarian War' over Kosovo," 105.

<sup>54</sup> Independent International Commission on Kosovo, *The Kosovo Report: Conflict, International Response, Lessons Learned* (New York, NY: Oxford UP, 2000), 4.

<sup>55</sup> Justin Morris and Nicholas J. Wheeler, "The Security Council's Crisis of Legitimacy and the Use of Force," *International Politics* 44 (2007): 228-229. Cf. Welsh, "Conclusion," 182; Bellamy, *Responsibility to Protect*, 68-70. Evans, *Responsibility to Protect*, 139.

the further refinement of legal precepts—a state of affairs that grants ultimate authority to decide upon “legitimacy” to the UNSC, which is itself a product of specific power dynamics.<sup>56</sup>

Despite the identification of Kosovo as an important point in the ongoing development of civil-military relations and the international adjudication of military intervention following the Cold War, this debate does not adequately analyse how OAF influenced the realisation of humanitarian intervention as a strategy. Both the normative and practical literatures dovetail with the political and doctrinal debates outlined above to highlight the need for conceptual clarity and political resolve regarding the use of military force. This argument not only accepts the air power policing model without critical reflection, it calls for its deployment in the most robust way possible! Completely lost in these calls for resolve is the fact that understanding humanitarianism as coercion blindly accepts a policing logic that does not directly address the humanitarian crises it is deployed to manage. Further, engineering of the air power policing model in Kosovo did not reinstate the suffering population as a reference point for the practice of intervention.

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<sup>56</sup> On the discussion regarding the play of discourse and the use of force see: Cynthia Weber, *Simulating Sovereignty: Intervention, the State, and Symbolic Exchange* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995). It has been redeveloped, and applied directly to the case of Kosovo, by: Malmvig, *State Sovereignty*. On the point that military intervention is well-intentioned but ultimately based on unhelpful concepts see: Fassin and Pandolfi, "Introduction," 13. See also the various contributors to this volume. The debate about the legality versus legitimacy question has been the focus of considerable legal scholarship: Richard A. Falk, *The Costs of War: International Law, the Un, and World Order after Iraq* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 132, 134-139. For a more detailed and clearly articulated summary of Falk's thinking on the legality/legitimacy nexus and its effects on the use of force see: Richard Falk, "Introduction: Legality and Legitimacy: Necessities and Problematics of Exceptionalism," in *Legality and Legitimacy in Global Affairs*, ed. Richard Falk, Mark Jurgensmeyer, and Vesselin Popovski (New York, NY: Oxford, UP, 2012)., as well as the accompanying pieces in this volume. Finally, on the idea that discussion of legitimacy gives the UNSC the power to decide upon exception in the Schmittian sense see: Orford, *International Authority*. For an examination of the hierarchical logic of international humanitarianism see: Fassin, *Humanitarian Reason*., Conclusion.

Instead, the acceptance of warfighting as a humanitarian exercise completely absolved any such responsibility on the part of NATO.

As in Bosnia-Herzegovina, bombing had little direct humanitarian benefit. NATO airstrikes dispersed the VJ and MUP. Political and military leaders spun this as beneficial, but in reality, this complicated targeting and did little to suspend (and maybe even hastened) ethnic cleansing.<sup>57</sup> The results have been widely noted. In response to claims that OAF actually spurred the ethnic cleansing programme carried out by the Serbs, the International Independent Commission on Kosovo noted that the complex logistical arrangements made by the MUP and VJ pointed to a pre-existing operational plan for the ethnic cleansing of Kosovo. Even so, the report conceded that the air campaign nonetheless created an environment conducive to the execution of such plans.<sup>58</sup> As a result, Milošević argued, as convincingly as was necessary to deepen international dissensus, that the refugees, “like the birds...were fleeing the NATO bombs.”<sup>59</sup> Greater international audacity in the form of more robust military operations was argued to have been the correct course of action, but this cemented the aerial policing logic, bracketed the operation from its humanitarian purpose, and simplified Kosovar politics.

### **4.3 Humanitarianism through the Bombsite**

While the decision to bomb may be reducible to political pressures, the precise strategy undertaken by NATO during OAF attests to the mediating influence of air power and its

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<sup>57</sup> Lambeth, *Nato's Air War for Kosovo*, 231.

<sup>58</sup> Kosovo, *The Kosovo Report*, 3. Speculation exists that NATO and the UN had intelligence suggesting the violent deportation of Kosovar Albanians would follow military action, but such reports were ignored, not fully understood, or interpreted in an idealised way: Judah, *Kosovo*, 240-241; Ignatieff, *Virtual*, 96.

<sup>59</sup> Ignatieff, *Virtual*, 41.

use as a means of policing conflict is only understandable in socio-material terms. The air power policing model and the technology employed in service of it created an assemblage that could be mobilised and deployed, but which made the suffering of those it was supposed to protect indiscernible. The terms on which this indeterminacy is managed creates a political register within what is usually understood to be a technical domain. The air power policing model provides a narrative for making the data created by these systems discernable, and in the process, a specific class of physical objects are foregrounded. As a result, human protection becomes a secondary effect of creating paralysis—of ordering the conflict in specific ways. The events seen in the Grdelica Gorge and the others discussed below attest to socio-material terms on which this politics plays out. What becomes clear is that these politics simultaneously emerge from, and mobilise in particular ways, the air power assemblage. The key here is that these negative effects result from the mediation of international goals through this particular, historically situated assemblage and do not require assuming nefariousness on the part of international actors. What is deeply unsettled, however, is the argument that air power is a purely technical domain that should be mobilised as robustly as possible in pursuit of humanitarian goals. Ethical, legal, and normative arguments can be made as to why these effects do not become a subject of productive debate, but only a socio-material analysis can account for how this indiscernibility emerged.

OAF was an early example of a new approach to war; a “virtual war” waged by 1,500 aircrew personnel and 30,000 technicians using advanced munitions and weapons systems.<sup>60</sup> Unlike Douhet’s classic battlefield—constrained by the distance a weapon

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 4.

could travel and bounded by the geographic coordinates of where forces could meet—the virtual battlefield is an immense space wherein huge distances sit between target, attacker, and commander.<sup>61</sup> Crawford argues that the immense distances which hallmark modern war make attributions of responsibility problematic.<sup>62</sup> Der Derian has outlined how the modern “virtual” battlefield, through its reliance on visual data presented on screens, has become sanitised and video game-like, making it unnecessary for those who conduct war to face in violent effects.<sup>63</sup> Taken to its extreme this can result in the conduct of war, not in relation to individuals, but to abrogation in lifestyle patterns teased out from ever broadening seas of intelligence data.<sup>64</sup> As has been outlined in Chapter Two, normative scholars do not see this as a problem with air power technology as such, but of the mistaken ideas policy makers have about its use. These are all important considerations, but each fails to foreground the complex socio-material politics the RMA produces. Critical theorists have devoted much of their attention to the panoptical ambitions of this system.<sup>65</sup> Normative theorists worry about perceptions falling out of step with reality. What is missing here is an engagement with air power as a mediating and therefore active participant in the politics of intervention.

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<sup>61</sup> See discussion of Douhet in Chapter Two.

<sup>62</sup> Crawford, *Accountability*.

<sup>63</sup> Der Derian, *Virtuous War*.

<sup>64</sup> Chamayou, *Theory*, 46-52.

<sup>65</sup> ‘Panoptical’ here refers, as most of this literature does, to Foucault’s analysis of modern surveillance in relation to Bentham’s work on the ‘perfect’ prison—a structure designed so that each inmate does not know whether he or she is being watched or not, and their behavior is thereby shaped by this uncertainty without the need of direct engagement by the watchmen. See: Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York, NY: Vantage, 1995), 195-228. For Neocleous the drone is the ‘perfect’ mobilization of ‘everywhere police’ designed to ensure order globally, see *War Power, Police Power*, 162. This argument is based, in part, on Gregory’s argument that the modern drone has completely dissolved the spatial categories of warfare in favour of ‘war everywhere’: Gregory, “The Everywhere War.” Chamayou’s work on drones is more reticent given its acceptance of the practical limits to current drone warfare, but his analysis still insists that the pursuit of total awareness is a key characteristic of such warfare. See: Chamayou, *Theory*, 38 ff. .

The technology and doctrinal thinking of RMA promise commanders and politicians a 360-degree composite picture of the battlefield at any one time. In problematising such assertions by foregrounding the technology, data, and weapons systems themselves, a different perspective, which includes a political register, comes into view. Specifically, the field of view furnished by the RMA is incomplete; it has edges, dark spots, and other points of indeterminacy. This is created by both the limits of various systems, as well the nature of the data they create. Interpretation is therefore required to transform this data into a perspective, but this interpretive process is heavily shaped by the technology whose output is under consideration. For both social and material reasons this technology is visually selective in that it does not bring all objects within its field of view clearly into the picture it creates. Essential for this analysis is the fact that individual bodies are not easily identifiable through such systems, and their traces do not become the focus of interpretation because other objects are given priority in keeping with the policing logic.

For this reason, air power technology subtly shapes the perspective of those whose activity it makes possible. Its constituent parts, which include electro-optical targeting interfaces, sensors of various kinds, battle management platforms, and GPS guided munitions, serve to create an informational composite that is unstable, heterogeneous, and indeterminate. Building upon Kurgan's engagement with GPS systems, the information composite created by the RMA can be argued to be disorientating in relation to the physical world, even though it is impossible to discern it

without reference to the physical.<sup>66</sup> As Kurgan's work points out, the "complete picture" that emerges from geospatial and satellite technology has no central reference point, nor any real point where it can be seen in its entirety. The RMA functions, much in the way GPS and satellite imagery does, by collating various kinds of information that directly reference the physical, but are, by virtue of their virtual nature, separate from the physical. Such a space makes action within the physical world possible, but the coordinates of this activity are not wholly objective or subjective.

Parks' engagement with satellite television, another technological process that makes it possible to "see" things across great distances, provides a useful starting point for engaging the politics of how this information composite is engaged and in turn animated. Satellite television, for Parks, gives rise to a "fantasy of global presence" derived from the mistaken assumption that the data created by such systems is "raw", complete, and "live."<sup>67</sup> "Put another way, the live remote signal is never seen; it is always screened, emerging through the map or the studio or being "anchored" by narration."<sup>68</sup> Data, rendered in the form of images or translated into other terms, say points on a map or a schematic of enemy activity, necessitates the simultaneous act of interpretation and/as an organisation that includes the creation of a specific narrative.

The various heterogeneous elements of the RMA, therefore, create a representation of the physical world that is organised through a specific lens, specifically the enemy as a system model that in turn sets the terms of action back into the physical

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<sup>66</sup> Laura Kurgan, *Close up at a Distance: Mapping, Technology, and Politics* (New York, NY: Zone Books, 2013).

<sup>67</sup> Lisa Parks, *Cultures in Orbit: Satellites and the Televisual* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2005), 25-29, 39.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

world. The enemy as system model provides a means for understanding the data created by targeting systems, while these targeting systems simultaneously make it possible to enact this model as a specific kind of paralysis inducing strategy. It is this mutual referencing of strategy and technology, and of technology to the narrative embedded in strategy, that allows for the transference of the policing model from one case to another. This narrative and its technological correlates represent a political enactment of strategy in a particular space, not a simply instrumental application of military power.

The durability, mobility, and potential for public scrutiny of the images created by targeting systems, which make both the military operation and the related political debate possible, is disorientating. For this reason, the politics of the conflict and the impact on civilians is lost. Reorientation is created at the nexus of data and conceptual models and is therefore not wholly objective, physical, social, or ideational but a hybrid of all four. Working in relation to each other, these elements coalesce together to a strategy of humanitarian intervention that is legitimated by human suffering but does not directly address it. In this way, the deployment of air power shaped how the operation was conceived and carried out, specifically by making human protection a derivative concern of the more general attempt to order the conflict. It is the constant interplay between technological indeterminacy and interpretation, and its ultimate effects, that is unpacked in this section.

By foregrounding air power technology, specifically the advanced targeting and command and control systems associated with the RMA, it becomes possible to tease out how a particular politics related to human life emerges. At first glance one may argue that the interpretive move, as well as the relationship to politics, being addressed here is

properly located in the television mode—a social-political process which occurs when military briefers present images and gun camera footage that are situated and narrated. But, the data that makes targeting possible is the same data that is presented to the media and is no more complete in an operational setting. It is this specific insight that allows for the problematising of how the Kosovo conflict is understood in the current literature.

Within the literature, which seeks to identify political muddling as obstructing an otherwise clear operational environment, NATO's inability to completely prevent civilian deaths is generally claimed to be an effect of its aircraft operating at excessively high altitudes, assumedly for political reasons related to force protection. Human Rights Watch (HRW) documented ninety separate incidents where NATO attacks produced civilian fatalities, together totalling 500, with between fifty-six and sixty percent occurring within Kosovo proper and several of the deadliest involving attacks on transportation infrastructure. Echoing journalists' provocations HRW tentatively argued this loss of life was due to the altitude of strike aircraft:

Because pilots' ability to identify...mobile targets properly was so important in avoiding civilian casualties, these incidents raise the question whether flying at high altitudes precluded proper target identification and caused unnecessary loss of life.<sup>69</sup>

William Arkin was less timid:

In a sense, civilians paid twice for NATO's determination to avoid its own casualties: First, NATO's reluctance not to "get down in the weeds" and attack the perpetrators of ethnic cleansing facilitated the success of Operation Horseshoe; and second, bombing conducted from higher altitude (at least in the first month of [sic] so) reduced the accuracy of NATO pilots, increasing the likelihood of civilian casualties.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> "Under Orders: War Crimes in Kosovo," (New York, NY: Human Rights Watch, 2001), 435-436.

<sup>70</sup> Arkin, "Operation Allied Force," 14.

One may argue higher operating altitudes were set just as much for operational as political reasons, given NATO's inability to completely neutralise the FRY's anti-aircraft systems, but altitude remains the reason for reduced effectiveness.<sup>71</sup>

The civilian deaths related to these operations were found not to represent a breach of the laws of war. The report to the ICTY Prosecutor argued that the higher altitudes set early in the campaign did mean targets could not be identified by the naked eye, but nonetheless, "it appears that with the use of modern technology, the obligation to distinguish [between civilian and military targets] was effectively carried out in the vast majority of cases during the bombing campaign."<sup>72</sup> Such findings have, however, been argued to be a product of the permissive international legal environment that allows for the transference of risk from intervening forces to civilians.<sup>73</sup> The problem, however, is that a closer examination of the events shows that these deaths, and the relationship between airstrikes and civilian life in general, were the result of the air power model's deployment. Though legal or normative permissiveness may have kept the effects of the airstrikes from becoming a focus of social reasoning, foregrounding air power technology itself unsettles the idea that distance is the key factor that explains civilian death.

What goes unmentioned in much of the literature—mainly because scholarship has continued to cite contemporary media reports—was that NATO changed the ROEs regarding operational altitude in April 1999, but this did not prevent further misdirected

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<sup>71</sup> Frederick W. Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Encounter, 2006), 192.

<sup>72</sup> "Final Report to the Prosecutor," para. 56.

<sup>73</sup> Smith, "Protecting Civilians...or Soldiers? Humanitarian Law and the Economy of Risk in Iraq."; Smith, "The New Law of War: Legitimizing Hi-Tech and Infrastructural Violence."

attacks. Though NATO was tight lipped about operational hard decks during hostilities, first-hand accounts of the operation attest that following the 14 April attack on civilian vehicles on the Djakovica-Prizren road AFACs were allowed to operate at 5,000 feet, fighters at 8,000—well below the 15,000 foot altitude usually cited.<sup>74</sup> Still, notable incidents of mistaken bombing followed, including the 7 May inadvertent killing of civilians during a raid on the Niš airfield and the 13 May bombing of IDPs in the Koriša Woods, both of which postdate changes to NATO ROEs.

One must also be sensitive to the fact that, while operating at lower levels may make the identification of smaller targets easier, as the technical manuals for the US F16 and O/A-10 point out this comes as a trade off with sharply increased workloads and decreased reaction time for pilots. The F-16 Multi-Command Handbook (circa 1996) notes that medium altitude operations (10,000 to 30,000 feet) provide more time for attack aircraft pilots to make decisions and understand the larger context surrounding them.<sup>75</sup> Similar considerations exist for the planning of air-to-surface operations of the O/A-10, which was commonly given an AFAC role during OAF.<sup>76</sup> The notion that closer is better is falsely lauded because the technical demands of the aircraft themselves are not discussed. A close examination of the Djakovica incident (which is discussed at length below), further unsettles any critique premised upon altitude, at least insofar as it

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<sup>74</sup> Christopher E. Haave and Phil M. Haun, *A-10s over Kosovo: The Victory of Airpower over a Fielded Army as Told by the Airmen Who Fought in Operation Allied Force* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AB: Air University Press, 2003), 144.

<sup>75</sup> Air Education and Training Command Air Combat Command, National Guard Bureau, Pacific Air Forces, United States Air Forces in Europe, "Multi-Command Handbook 11-F16 Volume 5: F-16 Combat Aircraft Fundamentals," (1996), 126., ff.

<sup>76</sup> Air National Guard Air Combat Command, Pacific Air Forces, United States Air Forces in Europe, "Multi-Command Instruction 11-a/Oa10 Volume 3: Pilot Operational Procedures--a/Oa-10(Pacaf)," (1997), 12-13.

assumes aircraft operating at 15,000 feet could not differentiate targets on the ground. The misguided airstrikes were stopped by an O/A-10 AFAC from 20,000 feet. A key difference between this aircraft and the F-16 that authorised the strikes was that the O/A-10 allowed its pilot to use hand held binoculars to verify the vehicles were civilian.

It must also be understood that this was a dynamic, emergent targeting process. Many of the targeting practices used in OAF were "...perfected and in many cases invented during the course of the battle."<sup>77</sup> In the case of the Djakcova incident, for example, the attack was legitimated based on the oblique physical characteristics of the vehicles as well as the physical space they inhabited—travelling down a main road known to be an important resupply route. What is most important here is that the doctrinal schematic of infrastructural warfare does not simply overwhelm or suture around this data, as one would expect from an orthodox approach to discursive analysis. The infrastructural model resonates with this data because it provides coordinates for interpreting what can be seen but is, in its simple state, disorientating. The key here is that the various types of data that make "virtual war" possible are never "raw" in the same way that a single actor or group does not maintain enough agency to be singled out as central. However, this data does shape the overall effort, and in turn, has to be implicated in engaging the politics at play. The sections which follow investigate intermediary nodes in this system, specifically electro-optical sights and Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) targeting pods, to discern the process whereby the social-technical politics of virtual war are played out. Disorientation within this heterogeneous system is overcome via discourse and the concepts inherent to US air power doctrine, but

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<sup>77</sup> Kenneth H. Bacon, John P. Jumper, and Charles Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 14 May 1999."

the tension between this model and its effects becomes clear in these circumstances. The result is a debate over how to understand these effects, which is charted through a discourse analysis of US and NATO public statements in the following section.

There are both technological and political consequences to the development of precision targeting systems, which in turn gave humanitarian intervention a specific character. First, realising the air power strategy of attacking the enemy system requires, under many circumstances, the use of means beyond the magnification of human vision. Systems like the dual pod Low Altitude Navigation and Targeting Infrared for Night (LANTRIN), which several Alliance aircraft used heavily during OAF, provide a means of “seeing” targets when the pilot’s eyes cannot. Secondly, the experience of the Norden bomb site during the Second World War points to a more general infrastructure and a set of influencing factors beyond the aircraft itself. This role is played both by internal guidance, GPS, and radar and sensor based systems mounted on other aircraft, such as the E-8 Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (Joint STARS or JSTARS) and increasingly by Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). These systems are, following Kurgan, “disorientating” in that they are either reliant on internal calculation (inertial guidance) or the relative location of other technical objects (GPS), in so doing making it possible to address the physical world. One month into the seventy-eight-day campaign, the events around Djokovica were the first of several highly-publicised instances of NATO bombing gone awry. Beyond the attacks outside Djokovica NATO airstrikes killed civilians working at a Serb Radio and Television facility, mistakenly bombed a hospital in Niš using cluster munitions days before (in)famously striking the Chinese

Embassy in Belgrade,<sup>78</sup> and struck a group of refugees hiding in the forest outside Koriša.<sup>79</sup> The following exegesis of some of these events and others is undertaken to uncover the techno-political elements of OAF, which situates them as outcroppings of a longer development of air power doctrine as the management of systems and how this transforms and in turn influences the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo.

#### **4.3.1 The Train to Ristovac and Hunting Tanks: Discerning the Edges of “Total” Awareness**

Some of the details of the 12 April 1999 incident on the Leskovac railway bridge were provided above. The F-15E involved struck the bridge and train using an AGM-130 Surface Attack Munitions, officially denoted as “a retargetable, precision-guided standoff weapon.”<sup>80</sup> The AGM-130 itself is an amalgam; a modular system wherein a solid fuel rocket booster and television or infrared targeting system is mounted to a GBU-15 bomb, allowing for increased accuracy at a longer and presumably safer (for attacking pilots) distance.<sup>81</sup> An AXQ-14 datalink transports images from the camera mounted in the nose of the AGM-130 to one of four screens visible to the Weapons Systems Officer (seated in the “second”, rear seat of the F-15E), who then can manipulate the missile’s flight.<sup>82</sup> It is this inclusion of a WSO in the targeting and attack process, the so called “man-in-the-

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<sup>78</sup> Steven Erlanger, "Nato Strikes Serb State Tv; Casualties Seen," *New York Times*, 23 April 1999, A1, A11., Michael R. Gordon, "Bad Intelligence on Target List Blamed," *ibid.*, 8 May, A1, A10.

<sup>79</sup> Steven Erlanger, "Albanians Killed as Kosovo Village Is Blasted Apart," *ibid.*, 15 May, A1, A8. All of these cases, and several others, are covered in some detail by the Human Rights Watch report cited above.

<sup>80</sup> Military Affairs Network, "Agm-130," Federation of American Scientists <http://fas.org/man/dod-101/sys/smart/agm-130.htm>.

<sup>81</sup> U.S. Air Force, "Fact Sheet: Agm-130 Missile," <http://www.af.mil/AboutUs/FactSheets/Display/tabid/224/Article/104579/agm-130-missile.aspx>.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*; US Air Force, "Factsheet: F-15e Strike Eagle," <http://www.af.mil/AboutUs/FactSheets/Display/tabid/224/Article/104499/f-15e-strike-eagle.aspx>.

loop” approach, which accounts for the increased accuracy of the AGM-130 over other systems (including GPS guided ones). In many instances, this equates the overall accuracy of the weapon to the acumen of the WSO. Tom Clancy, the military novelist turned reference author, notes “WSOs assigned to operate the GBU-15/AGM-130-series weapons have to be carefully trained, and have a delicate touch, to get the most of this most accurate of [Precision Guided Munitions]”.<sup>83</sup>

However, by inverting Clancy’s statement, it becomes possible to investigate another element of the AGM-130 and weapons systems like it. The design and technical limitations of such systems define a realm of possibility for both the WSO and the larger international political goals (invariably) he serves. One must be sensitive to what makes the WSO’s perspective *possible* so that the context of his decision can be outlined; specifically, how the televisual data he relies upon is created, presented, and later preserved and circulated to provide a foundation for international discussion and investigation. Reliance on the AGM-130 not only allows action to take place at a distance, but the data it creates can be engaged as a specific, practical, and localised node in the larger virtual environment of the conflict. The inherent limitations of such nodes and their contribution to a disorientating perspective are perhaps most clearly shown by the fact that reliance on such systems actually deprives commanders of the ability to conduct battle damage assessments.<sup>84</sup> Deprived of any other perspective than that of the weapon itself the ability to see becomes specific, bounded, and limited to the moment just before impact. On another level, however, the inherent constraints of this perspective are

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<sup>83</sup> Tom Clancy and John Gresham, *Fighter Wing: A Guided Tour of an Air Force Combat Wing* (New York, NY: Penguin, 2007), 143-147.

<sup>84</sup> Rip and Hasik, *Precision*, 312-313.

readily seen in the amount of important information and agency that remains outside the frame of reference, both of the weapon and those who base their political decision making on the pictures it creates. The incoming passenger train, though operating on a set schedule, only enters the WSOs field of view at the last second. Clear here are the boundaries to awareness created by the privileging of one kind data, targeting systems, over another, the public train schedule. The field of view provided by the electro-optical targeting system is first presented to the pilot, but later it becomes the starting point of legal investigations into the airstrike. The pilot, commanders, the media, lawyers, and the general public all share the perspective of the targeting sensor. The train itself, even though it operated on a fixed schedule, is not implicated in this discussion and its destruction attests to the disorientation inherent to the targeting system.

This analysis helps to begin outlining how decentering disorientating, and thereby politically laden, this form of virtual warfare is.<sup>85</sup> Events, where technological systems served to disorient rather than overcome confusion, are also not without historical precedent; Rip and Hasik discuss an incident during the Gulf War when US Army AH-64 Apache gunships mistakenly destroyed US vehicles even after consultation with ground forces.<sup>86</sup> Even attempting to reconcile the perspective of the human eye with that afforded by other means, like UAVs, is a complex and disorientating process. A sense of disorientation, and the impact of translating and transporting such data across actors, places, and times, is readily discerned in the commentary of pilots involved in OAF. One specific example is worth citing at length:

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<sup>85</sup> Kurgan, *Close Up*.

<sup>86</sup> Rip and Hasik, *Precision*, 322-328.

The operator of a Predator on station over Kosovo located a tank and simultaneously transmitted its video image to the [Central Aerial Command Centre (COAC)] at Vicenza, Italy, and to SHAPE headquarters in Mons, Belgium. Both Lt Gen Mike Short and Gen Wesley Clark were able to watch this tank in real time while personnel in the CAOC attempted to help the AFAC visually acquire the tank by relaying directions through the ABCCC (Airborne Battlefield Command and Control Centre aircraft).

General Short's son, Capt. Chris "Junior" Short, was an 81<sup>st</sup> FS flight commander and the AFAC on duty at that location. The Predator's optics provided a highly magnified image of the tank, but one with a very narrow field of view—similar to what one would see through a soda straw. Unfortunately, Junior had a very wide field of view from his ROE altitude. The officer in the CAOC had difficulty relating the Predator image to what Junior could see. Junior could not find the tank. General Clark called the CAOC to make sure they understood that he wanted the tank killed. The CAOC called ABCCC to ensure that Junior understood that the CAOC wanted the tank dead. Junior still couldn't find it. Finally, to put more pressure on Junior, ABCCC transmitted, "[General Short's call sign] really wants you to find and kill that tank." Junior replied, "Tell Dad I can't find the [expletive deleted] tank!"<sup>87</sup>

This anecdote is interesting because of the apparent heterogeneity of the various actants and the inability of them to work seamlessly together to move an image of a tank through the target approval process and into a set of coordinates for "Junior." Inherent to the anecdote is the persistence of difference between the various perspectives involved. The Predator is able to give a highly magnified visual representation of the tank, but this is stripped of the larger context faced by the pilot, "Junior," in much the same way that the AGM-130s targeting system creates a specific, incomplete frame of its target. Additionally, the image of the tank is transformed into a target through its viewing by a commander, mutating again into a series of auditory instructions relayed to the pilot that prove either too vague or not vague enough to be of use in directing the aircraft. Finally, the network itself prefigures and resists the political decision made by General Clark. The

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<sup>87</sup> Haave and Haun, *A-10s*, 300.

system makes the tank visible so it may become a target, but this translation, in the end, prevents it being engaged as such by the pilot.

The important point here is that this disorientation, which in more regrettable times leads to expenditures of munitions that must be politically legitimated, is a function of the air power assemblage itself. It does not radiate from a single point. The process by which the object transitions into a target and finally a set of coordinates for a bomb is fraught and political, not routine or purely instrumental. The disorientation persists because the tank remains stubbornly caught in a liminal state between lost and found, discernible and indiscernible, given the heterogeneity and incomplete nature of the larger technological edifice. Of course, this anecdote should not be taken as evidence that technological tools hamstring military leaders. The opposite is, of course, true. However, what it does point to are a new set of political considerations and ethical coordinates that stem, in part, from the assemblage of these various factors into a specific model.

#### **4.3.2 The Road to Prizren: Incessant Interpretation and Action**

This incompleteness and disorientation, in turn, create a set of circumstances where any action means an imminent and ongoing interpretation coordinated by the model of system-based warfare legitimated by a humanitarian discourse. On 14 April 1999 NATO warplanes mistakenly attacked a civilian convoy outside of Djokovica, a city in southwestern Kosovo, at around 11:30 am. In the hours before, NATO pilots claimed to witness the steady progress of MUP and VJ forces setting villages on fire and forcefully evicting resident Kosovar Albanians.<sup>88</sup> In a recorded debriefing played for the NATO

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<sup>88</sup> "Final Report to the Prosecutor," para. 65.

press gallery one of the F-16 pilots involved explained that he observed MUP and VJ units “methodically working themselves from the north to the south through villages, setting them ablaze and forcing all the Kosovar Albanians out of those villages.”<sup>89</sup> According to the pilot he spent over twenty five minutes working to discern through his “eyeballs” and the targeting pod mounted on his aircraft that the vehicles he had been following were in fact military and involved in the ongoing ethnic cleansing of nearby villages.<sup>90</sup> At 10:30, the lead F-16 pilot saw three uniformly shaped green vehicles near a house that had just been engulfed in flames. After conferring with command, the pilot bombed the lead vehicle at 11:10 and handed off control to another aircraft. Subsequent bombs were dropped at 11:48, 12:19, and between 12:35 and 12:45.<sup>91</sup> HRW claims seventy three civilians died, and thirty six were injured; the report to the ICTY Prosecutor put the number at between seventy and seventy five killed with 100 injured.<sup>92</sup> Though NATO fervently denied fault for the bombing at first, it back stepped significantly over the coming days, first admitting to the involvement of one plane and one bomb and later to the involvement of more than twelve NATO aircraft in attacking two convoys, both including civilians vehicles.<sup>93</sup>

The ICTY report argued “While this incident is one where it appears the aircrews could have benefited from lower altitude scrutiny of the target at an early stage, the committee is of the opinion that neither the aircrew nor their commanders displayed the

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<sup>89</sup> Jamie Shea and Giuseppe Marani, "Press Conference, Nato Head Quarters," NATO, <http://www.nato.int/kosovo/press/p990415a.htm>. Last access 25 March 2015.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> "Final Report to the Prosecutor," para. 65.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., para. 63.

<sup>93</sup> "Under Orders: War Crimes in Kosovo," 444-446; Michael R. Gordon, "Nato Admits the Mistaken Bombing of Civilians " *New York Times*, 16 April 1999; "Final Report to the Prosecutor," para. 64.

degree of recklessness in failing to take precautionary measures which would sustain criminal charges.”<sup>94</sup> The report argued that the attack was not deliberate, adding that “it is difficult for any aircrew operating an aircraft flying at several hundred miles an hour and at a substantial height to distinguish between military and civilian vehicles in a convoy.”<sup>95</sup> According to Jamie Shea, NATO Spokesperson during OAF, the vehicles had been traveling along an “important resupply and reinforcement route,” and the pilot (NATO to this point had only admitted to the involvement of one) had “dropped his bomb in good faith, as you would expect a trained pilot from a democratic NATO country to do.”<sup>96</sup>

What is most interesting about this incident is not that NATO had mistakenly identified civilian targets as military, but the conditions under which this identification was made and then overruled. Airstrikes against the convoy did not completely destroy it but were halted when another aircraft, this time an A-10 AFAC, had been brought in to confirm that the target was military but instead identified the vehicles as civilian. As Captain Marty “JD” McDonough recounts he was dispatched to investigate because, as an O/A-10 pilot, he had hand held binoculars on board. The F-16 AFAC (call sign Bear 21) in the area had assured him on his way in that the targets were legitimate, however on arrival he explains that “[a]t 20,000 feet and with my naked eyes, I could tell the target was not military—at least most of it wasn’t.”<sup>97</sup> At “JD’s” request, the attack was immediately stopped and NATO COAC halted all air operations over Kosovo, ordering

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<sup>94</sup> "Final Report to the Prosecutor," para. 70.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>96</sup> Shea and Marani, "Press Conference, Nato Head Quarters".

<sup>97</sup> Haave and Haun, *A-10s*, 173.

all combat aircraft to return home. Captain McDonough explains that none of this was covered in the SHAPE briefing he watched later on TV.<sup>98</sup>

What this case illustrates is that the targeting process itself is political and contingent rather than a simple, practical execution of an instrumental logic. As with all FLIR based systems, the LANTRIN's optical display, shown to the pilot on a small screen within the cockpit, is not static or stable. The form data from a FLIR camera takes is intimately related to the physical environment in which it is deployed. They can be degraded by rain and cloud and hampered if the temperature between targets and the surrounding areas is not sufficiently different, an outcome related to the temperature of the air, wind conditions, and the material composition of the target and that which surrounds it.<sup>99</sup> This data is in turn vulnerable, as proved by US experience in Iraq (as well as Kosovo), to enemy deception techniques and the similar physical characteristics of classes of objects, such as vehicles, that do not respect the military/civilian classification scheme set out by ROEs.<sup>100</sup>

This critique does not support a reductionist argument that tragedies like the one at Djakovica are caused by weather, but it does unsettle the idea that the data that creates the virtual battlespace is not stable enough to be understood merely as an instrument rather than an active participant in the targeting process. The instability is overcome by reading the data that is created through the lens of doctrine. These systems retain a certain amount of indeterminacy that must be overcome through interpretation, first by the pilot

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 174-175.

<sup>99</sup> Air Combat Command, "Multi-Command Handbook 11-F16 Volume 5: F-16 Combat Aircraft Fundamentals."

<sup>100</sup> Rip and Hasik, *Precision*, 307-312, 318-321.

and later by those tasked with investigating his actions. In responding to the rather blunt criticism that a tractor cannot be easily mistaken for a military vehicle, NATO responded “several characteristics indicated it to be a military convoy including movement, size, shape, colour, spacing and high speed prior to attack.”<sup>101</sup> By juxtaposing the perspective of the F-16 pilot with that of the O/A-10 pilot, whose aircraft enabled him to fly slower and observe the targets directly, it becomes clear that targeting systems do influence the outcome of operations through the ways they allow and disallow attempts at identification. Reliance on such information, coupled with the institutional approach outlined by Warden, is what allows the spatial approach to humanitarian intervention to transfer from Bosnia-Herzegovina and be applied to Kosovo. It is also clear upon close examination that the official discourse surrounding OAF resonates with this perspective while at the same time rationalising the negative effects on civilians as part of a nonetheless “humanitarian” endeavour.

This section situates the technical and social (read doctrinal) registers of infrastructural warfare. Such a perspective illustrates how the “virtual” battlespace emerges, is related back to the physical coordinates of conflict, and its overall functioning is both political and unstable. Regarding civilian casualties, which is the main point of interest for much of this literature; their deaths are rendered “accidental” not simply because of permissive legal standards or underdeveloped norms. Seeing the enemy system is contingent on a specific heterogeneously engineered relationship that actually separates civilian bodies from the infrastructure that is targeted.

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<sup>101</sup> "Final Report to the Prosecutor," para. 67.

#### **4.4 Techno-Political Reverberations in Official Discourse**

The incessant need to re-interpret data created by advanced aerial weapons systems to make it operable unmoored the air power assemblage from the physical context in which it formed, but not without creating points of friction that became coordinates of a particular kind of politics. Materialising the Kosovo intervention through the air power assemblage reformulated the conflict into a problem of circulation to be managed from the air, but this created a series of issues that threatened the legitimacy of the practice. Thus, US and NATO spokespeople were forced to legitimise the operation given the fact that ethnic cleansing was not abated, collateral damage occurred in several instances, and the operation took far longer to reach its goals than many, at least in political circles, assumed. In the process a discourse emerged which legitimated the use of the air power assemblage, in so doing contributing to its maintenance by imbricating its effects in a specific discursive schematic that obscured the politics it created.

A key element of this legitimation effort was the differential identification of two categories of actors: the international community, including both US and NATO forces, on the one hand; the Milošević regime and its functionaries on the other. The international community was identified as behaving carefully, in a discerning, precise, and morally actuated manner. Identifying international forces in this way reflects, and in turn supports, the contention that the use of force itself is a technical, apolitical activity rather than a productive (let alone dynamic) socio-material process. The specific result was a series of displacements created by the US and NATO discourse that provide a source of legitimacy for using the air power assemblage despite these effects. First, aerial

bombing is cast as a state of violence hallmarked by technical acumen and professional prowess.<sup>102</sup> The watchwords of “precision” and “professionalism” situate collateral damage as a “mistake” and the destruction of Yugoslavia’s infrastructure as an “inconvenience”, in so doing undermining criticisms that such effects were an inherent function of the ill-suitedness of NATO’s approach. Second, ongoing violence, including continued ethnic cleansing, is taken to attest to the incompleteness of policing efforts, in so doing coming to legitimise the continuation of the bombing campaign. The net result is a moral split, much like the one Hansen identifies in the discourse surrounding Bosnia-Herzegovina, that establishes the moral imperative to act on the side of the international community, while the inherent defectiveness of the current political context and the action of Others explain the resulting patterns of violence. To complete this discursive frame, Milošević, his regime, and Yugoslav forces are identified as obstinate, irrational, and ultimately maniacal, in so doing accounting for continued violence and buttressing the case for the continued use of military force that has been defined as technical and morally actuated.<sup>103</sup>

US and NATO discourse concerning the intervention created this symbolic system, in the process rendering the use of air power conceivable by situating while simultaneously creating the subjectivities related to the intervention. In the process, it became conceivable to denote air power as a purely technical endeavour rather than a productive, political process. In so doing, the discourse yielded a moral split that made it possible to take ongoing violence as evidencing the need for further action, rather than

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<sup>102</sup> See discussion of “states of violence” in section on police in Chapter One, and on the technical approach to military affairs in Chapter Two.

<sup>103</sup> Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 125-128.

signalling a disjoint between principal and practice. What must be added, however, is that this discourse does not function solely as a means for creating symbolic meaning, but registers the downward causality of the air power assemblage. United States and NATO discourse, upon close examination, emerges as a series of *ad hoc* attempts to suture around the effects of the air war. The terms of the discourse, including what precisely must be legitimated—collateral damage, the inability to forestall ethnic cleansing, and the intransigence of Yugoslav forces—are inherent to the socio-material air power assemblage. In this way, the discourse functions in relation to a specific set of material factors. Examining the role discourse plays in mobilising, legitimising, and thus maintaining the air power assemblage brings to light how materialising humanitarian intervention through air power reformulates the terms on which international engagement with such violence is understood.

Nowhere is this downward causality more evident than in the explicit discursive process whereby NATO efforts, which are clearly designed to police order into existence through the selective destruction of objects, are emphatically differentiated from the reasons why ethnic cleansing continued to occur. The transition from protection to policing is evidenced by the fact that United States and NATO efforts were never conceived as a means of arresting ethnic cleansing, but as a tool for creating a viable political order.

What results is a discourse that affirms and legitimates the exercise of humanitarian intervention as a form of aerial warfare. The result is a reformulation of how international engagement is understood that is bounded by the affordances of the air power assemblage. The purpose of humanitarian intervention is not the protection of civilians

*per se*, but the creation of a viable political order. The air power assemblage, supported by an accompanying discourse, attenuates the complex politics of war into a technical approach to the management of circulation which gives civilian lives a rather ghostly character. Civilians are present in discourse insofar as their plight serves to legitimate the operation, but they are clearly located outside the focus of the operation. Handily, the relevant discourse displaces the fault for this lack of engagement and thereby inoculates the air power assemblage from fault.

#### **4.4.1 Intervention as *Techné***

A particularly important element of the discourse that legitimated NATO efforts was the clear formulation of the bombing as a purely technical exercise. Bearing the mediating influence of air power technology, United States and NATO discourse construed OAF as a specific application of technical knowledge. Press briefers were clear that the purpose of the bombing was the careful paralysing of Yugoslav forces, not the direct protection of civilians from ethnic cleansing. It is tempting to suggest that this commentary arises from, and seeks to suture around, NATO's tactical failures, but this reading obscures the downward causality of the air power assemblage. Though the more general political context of the intervention was set by international condemnation of VJ and MUP brutality, arresting ethnic cleansing was itself a derivative consideration of military operations because of the nature of the air power assemblage. For its part, the discourse

of the US and NATO created a categorical difference between international political ambitions related to ethnic cleaning and the technical application of air power.

Specifically, OAF was identified as a highly-calibrated use of force designed to police the conflict by way of manipulating the behaviour of the VJ, MUP, and Belgrade. General Clark explained in the early days of OAF that the operation was meant to “systematically and progressively...attack, disrupt and degrade” VJ and MUP forces in order to create circumstances conducive to NATO’s goals.<sup>104</sup> Military operations were “a matter of degradation”<sup>105</sup> meant to “diminish and degrade the Yugoslav forces to the point where the price of continuing to occupy Kosovo [became] too high.”<sup>106</sup> American briefers were direct: DOD “did not have the expectation of being able to stop ethnic cleansing with an air operation.”<sup>107</sup> In fact, the Pentagon insisted NATO “didn’t have a military objective to stop the fighting *per se*. [They] had a military objective to degrade [Milosevic’s] capability to fight.”<sup>108</sup> By early May this had become a hallmark: Kenneth Bacon, Pentagon Spokesman, stated, “We’ve always said that you can’t use air power to stop this type of depopulation that’s taking place. What we’re trying to do is establish a

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<sup>104</sup> Javier Solana and Wesley K. Clark, "Nato Press Conference, 1 April 1999." Clark repeats this at a later point: Jamie Shea and Wesley Clark, "Nato Press Conference, 13 April 1999."

<sup>105</sup> Kenneth H. Bacon, Thomas Wilson, and Charles Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 22 April 1999."

<sup>106</sup> Kenneth H. Bacon, "Dod Press Briefing, 4 April 1999." The ‘isolation’ narrative is also clear in Jamie Shae’s briefings at NATO, as an example see: Jamie Shea, "Nato Morning Briefing, 2 May 1999."; Jamie Shea, "Nato Morning Briefing, 4 May 1999."

<sup>107</sup> Kenneth H. Bacon, Charles Wald, and Thomas Wilson, "Dod News Briefing, 6 April 1999."

<sup>108</sup> Kenneth H. Bacon and Charles Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 10 April 1999." This follows statements on 3 April when Capt. Pietropaoli stated that “as we have said from the outset, you can’t stop at the unit level the violence Milosevic’s forces are perpetrating, and we’re not seeing that.”. See: Kenneth H. Bacon and Stephen Pietropaoli, "Dod News Briefing, 3 April 1999."

set of conditions.”<sup>109</sup> The fact that OAF was a policing effort was always at the forefront of official discourse.

This policing was never thought of in terms other than air power, and as a result, a particular binary was created in the discourse; bomb or stay home. There is, unsurprisingly, no room in this discursive formulation for direct human protection, and thus the discourse legitimised a more radical (re)organisation of Kosovo by way of precision bombing that included, but went well beyond, arresting ethnic cleansing. The options, as US military leaders saw them, were “either we participate in an air campaign, or we sit by and watch ethnic brutality.”<sup>110</sup> When asked to justify the intervention when bombing failed to stop ethnic cleansing Jamie Shea was resolute:

are we making a difference? I think we are... If NATO had not acted, do you believe that you would see Serb forces hunkered down in Kosovo at the moment? I don't believe that, I think they'd be out in the villages and the towns continuing to bombard so to the extent that we can stop one single tank firing one single shell, I believe the NATO mission is justified.<sup>111</sup>

NATO and Pentagon briefers were careful to argue that even if ethnic cleansing could be stopped this was only a small part of a problem that would still require resolute, ongoing, and increasingly intense operations. “First of all, when we stopped the killing which is taking place now, but that would not be enough, we have to create the conditions for the refugees to return to their homes, to their territory, to their country.”<sup>112</sup> Jamie Shea explained that:

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<sup>109</sup> Kenneth H. Bacon and Charles Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 3 May 1999."

<sup>110</sup> Kenneth H. Bacon and Charles Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 26 May 1999."

<sup>111</sup> Jamie Shea and Konrad Fretyag, "Nato Press Conference, 10 April 1999."

<sup>112</sup> Solana and Clark, "Nato Press Conference, 1 April 1999".

The best way to deal with the humanitarian situation is to stop that which causes humanitarian suffering in the first place. We are interested in tackling the causes rather than simply addressing the symptoms, and so the best thing is to make it increasingly difficult for [Yugoslav] forces to operate against the civilian population.<sup>113</sup>

As Shea said on 6 May in response to questions about OAF's ultimate utility:

“You could say: “Yes, we haven't succeeded there!” but then that is all the more reason to go for the next logical objective which is to say: “Fine! We couldn't stop it happening but my God we are going to make that man pay a price for what he has done, a very heavy price and every day that he continues, that price is going to become heavier and heavier!”<sup>114</sup>

It was clear that political decision makers had concluded that “the best thing that NATO can do for the humanitarian situation in Kosovo is to drive away the Serbs.”<sup>115</sup> Achieving anything short of this fundamental reorganisation of Kosovo, which meant policing into existence a suitable political order, amounted to NATO “chasing [its] tail.”<sup>116</sup>

Coming to terms with OAF as a policing effort shows that it was not designed in order to protect vulnerable civilians but to fabricate a political order through the precise use of military force. General Wald's explanation of NATO operations on 7 April is especially telling:

You'd have to go back to what the military objective is, what our mission militarily is, and that's degrade the VJ and the MUP military capability. It was not to stop the humanitarian outflow of personnel; it was not to, it had nothing to do with that necessarily from a military mission. Obviously, a spinoff of that is we would prefer that not to happen. But the planning was not to avoid a refugee crisis. Once again, we knew that Milošević was probably going to do something like this either before or after or whatever. Our feeling is it was inevitable he would have tried to do this one way or the other. Our best estimate was, the best way we can help -- not help, but take away his capability to do this in the future and to resolve this issue

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<sup>113</sup> Jamie Shea, "Nato Morning Briefing, 30 April 1999."

<sup>114</sup> Jamie Shea and Walter Jertz, "Nato Press Conference, 6 May 1999."

<sup>115</sup> Jamie Shea and Konrad Freytag, "Nato Press Conference, 11 April 1999."

<sup>116</sup> Shea, "Nato Morning Briefing, 2 May 1999".

now is to take on his military capability and to degrade it from having him have the capability to do that in the future, and that's exactly what we're doing.<sup>117</sup>

It becomes unsurprising that, on 19 April, General Wald was comfortable admitting “I don’t know how prevalent [ethnic cleansing activity] is. I don’t think NATO’s air has stopped that at all.”<sup>118</sup> A few days later General Wald was even more direct:

Unfortunately, [ethnic cleansing] hasn’t stopped, and that’s Milosevic’s decision. But the decision early on when we made this the objective, was never implied to be stop the ethnic cleansing [sic]. Now we certainly want to. And over time what’s happened is, just like all of us, we feel terrible about what’s happened there. We want that to stop. That was not the original problem, and it wasn’t the original objective. It’s become part of it. If air power can stop that, all the better. But just remember the objective right now is to destroy, defeat, degrade his army and we’re going to do that.<sup>119</sup>

#### 4.4.2 Spectres of Civilians

Unpacking this formulation of the operation as a specific technical enterprise in warfighting begins to illustrate the indiscernibility of ethnic cleansing and human protection to this model. Of course, the assertion that OAF itself was not designed to arrest the ethnic cleansing that provoked international condemnation had to be defended from the obvious critique that NATO was failing to reach the goals set by the international community. In some sense, the more banal argument that relying on air

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<sup>117</sup> Mike Doubleday and Charles Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 7 April 1999."

<sup>118</sup> Kenneth H. Bacon and Charles Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 19 April 1999."

<sup>119</sup> Bacon, Wilson, and Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 22 April 1999". When asked a similar question earlier on 13 April about the fact that large numbers of refugees continued to leave Kosovo despite NATO action General Wald made a similar point: “Remember what the mission was. The mission for us is to reduce the Kosovo army and police to perform repressive acts on the Kosovo Albanians. That is the mission. We’re going to reduce that, and over time I think they’ll find that they don’t have that capability anymore. So this is not an instantaneous fix, this is a long-term/longterm campaign,” Bacon and Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 10 April 1999".

power created these circumstances is correct, but there is a much more complicated process at work here. Formulating OAF in terms of a military mission to degrade and disrupt clearly formulated it as a policing exercise. Ethnic cleansing, however, was framed in terms of its intractability and irrational character, thereby rendering it a function of disorder and beyond the technical domain of air power. As a result, the moral split between international efforts and continued violence is established in such a way that air power remains a viable means for engaging with the conflict.

DOD said that “[i]t was clear [air power] couldn’t immediately stop the killing. That was known beforehand... You cannot set as an objective of military force something which the adversary can deny you simply by being obstinate, intransigent.”<sup>120</sup> General Marani at NATO explained, “For ethnic cleansing, you don’t need a very strong structure in terms of command and control. What you need is a gang or a number of gangs... We cannot totally prevent ethnic cleansing, of course... but I wouldn’t at all say that there is not much that we can do to prevent ethnic cleansing with air power.”<sup>121</sup> Jamie Shea continued: “But it is true, one thug with a Kalashnikov can be very intimidating when he is pointing it at a lot of old people, a lot of defenceless women and children, and it is very difficult for any force, any kind of iron force, to put a total stop to that in the short-term, but it can be stopped ultimately, and that is what we are going to do, we are going to stop that ultimately.”<sup>122</sup> In short, “air power alone is capable of rendering his military

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<sup>120</sup> Kenneth H. Bacon and Steve Pietropaoli, "Dod News Briefing, 5 April 1999."

<sup>121</sup> Jamie Shea and Giuseppe Marani, "Nato Press Conference, 17 April 1999."

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

ineffective, and that's what our charter is; that's what our task is, and that's what we're going to do."<sup>123</sup>

What is most interesting here is the separation of NATO operations from the realities of ethnic cleansing, which in turn obscures the fact that airstrikes were legitimated by the ethnic cleansing. In this way, the plight of civilians is almost phantom-like—it is a spectre within the discourse of the intervention but is not conceived of as part of its technical realm. As a result, the discourse clearly situates the responsibility with NATO, but the nature of its remit means any civilian death is not the result of a lack of fit between tactics and context but the fault of the “obstinate” and thuggish Yugoslav authorities—in many cases, Milošević himself was blamed.<sup>124</sup> This subjectification has a specific behavioural component as well, namely that those carrying out the ethnic cleansing are criminal or unreasonable while NATO is a calm, collected, and professional military unit work with precision tools to craft a viable political order. Within this discursive frame connoted violence is not a defect of international action, but itself a foundation for claims that NATO action is necessary.

This formulation pushed out the temporal context of both the conflict and the military intervention while making the relationship between airstrikes and the humanitarian situation ambiguous, ultimately reading fault for ongoing violence back to Milošević personally rather than create scepticism for the international community's chosen means of engagement. Measurement of success was related to the overall

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<sup>123</sup> Bacon, Jumper, and Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 14 May 1999".

<sup>124</sup> A similar discursive construction was found in the discourse around Bosnia-Herzegovina See: Hansen, *Security as Practice*.

accomplishment of NATO's political designs rather than any abatement of the suffering visited upon the Kosovar Albanian population. Air power was understood "to be effective, but it takes time."<sup>125</sup> What this also meant was that the material impact of the intervention was dismissed as a useful indicator of its progress, even though the operation itself sought to address the military capacity underlying the official ethnic cleansing policy and engagement with the material environment was nonetheless a core element of the bombing campaign. NATO briefings make clear that OAF was meant to change the behaviour of Yugoslav forces operating in Kosovo:

[The]...impact [of OAF was] not simply in terms of the numbers of tanks or vehicles or whatever that have been destroyed but also in hampering the operations and in lowering morale and those are the three areas where we want to continue to work - reduce the equipment level, decrease the mobility and impact on morale - so that those forces begin to feel cut off, isolated, increasingly under pressure and see that they have no future except to try to pull out of Kosovo as quickly as they can.<sup>126</sup>

As the operation unfolds, it becomes increasingly clear that, while the operation was meant to change behavioural patterns it was being carried out from a particular perspective that does not immediately include the kinds of behaviour most directly linked to ethnic cleansing.

One must add that this frame was linked to the social-material network that allowed NATO to both see and act within the FRY. Without a firm material set of indicators of success, such as the change of territorial control on the ground, there was an

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<sup>125</sup> Jamie Shea and David Wilby, "Nato Press Conference, 3 April 1999."

<sup>126</sup> Shea, "Nato Morning Briefing, 2 May 1999". This remained the case into June: "Overall, to date, NATO operations have delivered a significant blow to the Serbian forces in Kosovo, and the ongoing efforts to support and resupply those support forces. We have degraded their capability and capacity to conduct operations under their terms. They are finding it increasingly difficult to move, and are constantly at risk to NATO's air threat." Jamie Shea and Walter Jertz, "Nato Press Conference, 1 June 1999."

assumption of the ultimate efficacy of the system-based model, but it is important that NATO's understanding of what was occurring was contingent on imagery of various kinds.<sup>127</sup> The interpretive nature of this imagery, and ultimately its visual indeterminacy, forced a falling out of civilians, their movement, and ultimately the acts of ethnic cleansing themselves from an operational perspective. This is no clearer than in the case of 15 May when NATO mistakenly bombed a group of IDPs using cluster munitions. The attack focused on a wooded area outside Korsira and the (in)visibility of civilians in terms of the socio-material system perspective is telling: in explaining the mistake, Pentagon briefers explained "it is very difficult to see people sleeping in parking lots in the middle of the night with any of our monitoring devices. So we had been checking this area from time to time, but it's difficult to know at midnight exactly what's in a parking lot when you're flying an airplane."<sup>128</sup> DOD suggested that the civilians might have been placed there on purpose, given that this had been an area of some VJ and MUP activity, but Mr Bacon insisted "we weren't there."<sup>129</sup> Peter Daniel, tasked with explaining the incident at NATO, was more direct: "I can't tell you what is on the ground, I'm not on the ground, and you're not on the ground either. I've seen the footage."<sup>130</sup> He continued:

I can tell you that we were striking what we believed to be - what we validated to be - a legitimate military target. We're not on the ground, you're not on the ground. It would be nice to be able to go there and examine exactly what did happen. We know through our pilots that this target was on the list, it was validated according to the procedures prior to the strike being launched and that is what we know. We have gone, as you know, all through the night looking at this incident.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> A particularly good example of this logic being played out can be found in: Mike Doubleday, Charles F. Wald, and Thomas R. Wilson, "Dod News Briefing, 8 April 1999."

<sup>128</sup> Kenneth H. Bacon and Charles Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 15 May 1999."

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Peter Daniel, "Nato Morning Briefing, 15 May 1999."

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

As with the explanation of the convoy incident, the frame provided by the targeting technology itself provides a set of material coordinates that are organised via discourse. In such circumstances, the oblique characteristics of the area and the objects within it, viewed and interpreted through the social-material targeting system, complicated the relationship between the airstrikes and the humanitarian crises, which legitimates them in a very particular, physical way that reverberates between both the material and discursive registers.

The necessity of interpretation created by viewing the conflict through targeting systems was the reason why a legitimating discourse was necessary while the data from these systems set the coordinates for this legitimating discourse. In particular, the overlapping of the VJ and MUP network with the built environment of Kosovo created by the ethnic cleansing policy itself rendered targeting complicated, but actions nonetheless legitimate because the effects of such strikes were solely the responsibility of the Yugoslav forces. APCs and other military vehicles were used to transfer IDPs to the border, making the interpretation of targets difficult.<sup>132</sup> This was made all the more complicated by the fact that VJ and MUP forces began using civilian vehicles and painting the military ones with bright colours, a move which protected them and frustrated pilots given the ROEs set by COAC. Jamie Shea was clear that there was “unfortunately no easy solution to address the problem of the internally displaced persons except through ending the violence and we all agree in NATO that the best thing we can do for those people in their suffering is to get the Serb forces off their backs.”<sup>133</sup> NATO

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<sup>132</sup> Bacon and Pietropaoli, "Dod News Briefing, 5 April 1999".

<sup>133</sup> Jamie Shea, "Nato Morning Breifing, 5 May 1999."

had observed that Yugoslav forces had begun taking evasive actions against airstrikes, including operating within villages—an interesting statement given the practical effort of ethnic cleansing.<sup>134</sup> Indeed, Shea explained, “even in an instance where civilians have been killed that does not mean that the military target was not hit accurately.”<sup>135</sup> Again in reference to the events in the Korsira woods it was the “information since the beginning of the conflict” that was used to overcome the ambiguity created by the circumstances of the strike.<sup>136</sup>

#### **4.4.3 “Remember What the Objective Is”**

Formulating the use of air power as a technical consideration had another important effect: ongoing violence was not evidence of a disjoint between tactics and context but an outcome of “Milošević’s decision.”<sup>137</sup> As Major General Charles Wald explained on 8 April at the Pentagon, “Remember what the objective is. The stated military objective is for us to degrade his capability to perform repressive acts on the Albanians.” However, Wald was very clear that “When he’s ready to stop doing what he’s doing, that will be when the objective is met. We’re going to continue to degrade his capability until the time comes when he’s ready to stop.”<sup>138</sup> On at least forty-one separate occasions, briefers

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<sup>134</sup> Jamie Shea and Walter Jertz, "Nato Press Conference, 11 May 1999."; Shea and Clark, "Nato Press Conference, 13 April 1999"; Jamie Shea and David Wilby, "Nato Press Conference, 2 April 1999."

<sup>135</sup> Jamie Shea, "Nato Morning Briefing, 16 May 1999."

<sup>136</sup> Peter Daniel and Walter Jertz, "Nato Press Conference, 15 May 1999."

<sup>137</sup> Bacon, Wilson, and Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 22 April 1999". DOD repeated this on several occasions, arguing that “...the only thing that’s going to change is this Milosevic” on 20 April. Jamie Shea at NATO took a similar line arguing “[o]ne man is responsible for the Kosovo tragedy: President Milosevic” on 8 May and that “...it [was] Milosevic who has sacrificed [Yugoslav] troop, nobody else” on 13 May.

<sup>138</sup> Doubleday, Wald, and Wilson, "Dod News Briefing, 8 April 1999".

made the case that Milošević himself was personally blamed for both the ethnic cleansing and the ongoing need for military operations. Briefers were clear that “he has created a humanitarian crisis of unbelievable proportions in a short amount of time.”<sup>139</sup> DOD argued that “if Milošević wanted to cut this off he could have done it at any time”<sup>140</sup> but “he obviously [had] a lot more of a tolerance for his people’s pain than he has to take himself. So, he has no regard for what his people are having to endure.”<sup>141</sup> Addressing civilian hardship was not NATO’s goal, and it was “his problem to figure out...so Mr Milošević needs to decide how much pain he wants to put his own population under.”<sup>142</sup>

This also led to the creation of a discourse that saw civilian death as collateral and the overall degradation of Yugoslav infrastructure as “inconvenient”. On 1 April General Clark clearly explained, “this is not a campaign against the Serb people, far from it, we’ve taken very [sic] possible measure to avoid collateral damage.”<sup>143</sup> It was also clear that any “temporary inconvenience of NATO activities, even though of course any inconvenience is something that we regret, but that is the consequence of Milošević’s actions.”<sup>144</sup> Shea argued, “that Milošević is responsible for whatever suffering his own people are going through.”<sup>145</sup> As the air operation moved forward, holding Milošević solely responsible for the situation remained a key argument. On 31 May Shea argued,

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<sup>139</sup> Bacon and Pietropaoli, "Dod News Briefing, 5 April 1999".

<sup>140</sup> Bacon and Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 10 April 1999".

<sup>141</sup> Kenneth H. Bacon and Charles Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 12 May 1999." This idea of Milošević choosing to accept ‘pain’ was repeated in several instances: Bacon and Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 13 May 1999"; Bacon, Wilson, and Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 22 April 1999".

<sup>142</sup> Bacon and Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 19 April 1999". 5

<sup>143</sup> Solana and Clark, "Nato Press Conference, 1 April 1999".

<sup>144</sup> Jamie Shea, "Nato Morning Briefing, 14 May 1999." For another example of this logic from Shea can be found in: Jamie Shea, "Nato Morning Briefing, 25 May 1999."

<sup>145</sup> Shea, "Nato Morning Briefing, 14 May 1999."

“Well, what does that say about a government that then puts its military into civilian areas and exposes its population to greater risk as a result? Obviously, that is something Belgrade is responsible for, clearly.”<sup>146</sup> It was clear during this briefing and others that the moral authority of NATO was defined in relation to Milošević’s having “chosen that other way.” It had also always been NATO’s line to argue “Milošević is the one who has control...and therefore is the one who can stop this catastrophe.”<sup>147</sup> Because “kills and terrorises civilians, not by the dozen, but by the hundreds of thousands...this is a conflict and that we have right on our side.”<sup>148</sup>

Ultimately, progress towards “success” was difficult to chart because it was defined as a change in the behaviour of Milošević, itself an immaterial consideration: the “objective was to degrade the capability to perform repressive acts, not to go through a percentage of how much killing would stop.”<sup>149</sup> Pietropaoli explained on 3 April that “[i]t’s not possible for us to predict the breaking point or the combination of targets that’s going to break this.”<sup>150</sup> When asked on 13 May if NATO had any idea how many troops had been killed, General Wald tersely stated, “I really have no idea,” insisting that the destruction of military vehicles and infrastructure, even though firm numbers did not exist in this regard, was the true measure of success.<sup>151</sup> When DOD spokesperson Kenneth Bacon was asked early on if “NATO has been able to prevent even one single act of brutality” the dispersal of Government forces along with morale and supply issues

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<sup>146</sup> Jamie Shea, "Nato Morning Breifing, 31 May 1999."

<sup>147</sup> Solana and Clark, "Nato Press Conference, 1 April 1999".

<sup>148</sup> Shea and Jertz, "Nato Press Conference, 1 June 1999".

<sup>149</sup> Doubleday, Wald, and Wilson, "Dod News Briefing, 8 April 1999".

<sup>150</sup> Bacon and Pietropaoli, "Dod News Briefing, 3 April 1999".

<sup>151</sup> Bacon and Wald, "Dod News Briefing, 13 May 1999".

were taken as evidence that the VJ and MUP were being “choked off.”<sup>152</sup> “The first goal was to show the strength and unity of NATO; the second goal was to deter the type of attacks against Kosovars that have occurred; and failing that, to so degrade and diminish the Yugoslav forces.”<sup>153</sup> It became clear that NATO’s “goal from the beginning [was] to make the price so high that Milošević decides he should declare a ceasefire and pull his forces out.”<sup>154</sup>

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

Kosovo was an important moment for the ongoing process of heterogeneous engineering related to the emergence of an air power policing logic aimed at civil conflict. In deploying this model in Kosovo, the use of air power was decoupled from both its relationship to ground forces and its immediate physical context. Transferring this model between cases and across time was made possible by its virtualisation; a complex juxtaposition of the data created by advanced military systems and the nascent logic of managing conflict by foregrounding specific classes of physical objects. In practice, the disorientating effect of this virtualisation was a stabilising force in that commanders referenced air power doctrine and their own professionalised knowledge rather than the context of the conflict itself. The result was a roughshod application of this model to a complex political space, which in turn necessitated the creation of a specific discourse to defend the use of these means. Unpacking this complexity represents an exceedingly

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<sup>152</sup> Kenneth H. Bacon, "Dod News Briefing, 2 April 1999."

<sup>153</sup> Bacon and Pietropaoli, "Dod News Briefing, 5 April 1999".

<sup>154</sup> Kenneth H. Bacon, "Dod News Briefing, 23 April 1999."

useful case for interrogating how material, technological tools become part of political disagreements generally, and the legitimization of military action specifically.<sup>155</sup>

In realising OAF, human protection was further entangled with concepts of infrastructural war, while methods that foreground objects over bodies were in turn legitimated. The result was a clear bracketing of humanitarian intervention from the protection of human life that displaced the focus of both the analysis and conduct of such operations. The legitimacy of the operation was created not by a direct reference to whether, or to what extent, it aided those whose plight legitimated it, but by the entanglement of air power doctrine and targeting technology in specific ways. What is striking, however, was that even though the political, legal, and normative influence of the intervention were unclear, the idea that human protection could be understood and conducted as a coercive exercise stabilises in both professional and academic circles.

It is important to note that, ultimately, the Kosovo case ended with the removal of the formal Yugoslav military presence in Kosovo and the creation of an autonomous republic that would later claim independence. Air power was not designed to create this outcome, but to order the conflict in such a way as to make this possible. The precise and thereby humanitarian intervention was effective because it suspended Belgrade's control of Kosovo, replacing it with NATO ground forces and a nascent Kosovar government under the tutelage of an international protectorate. The effect of this has been roundly criticised, namely because long-term stability was not guaranteed and tensions with Belgrade are still evident at the time of this writing. Though the social-material

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<sup>155</sup> Walters, "Drone Strikes, Dingpolitik and Beyond: Furthering the Debate on Materiality and Security," 104.

assemblage that took form through OAF did allow NATO to reach its military goals it did not bring an end to the ethnic cleansing directly, and does not account for the political state of Kosovo today. What makes this interesting is that it begins to gesture toward an important side effect of this stabilisation of an air power policing approach to violent humanitarian crises, namely that it is functionally differentiated from other forms of peace support and nation building strategies. When this model was applied again over Libya in 2011, the importance of this differentiation, namely the extent to which “success” could be claimed even in the midst of ongoing political instability, would become painfully clear.

## 5 “TNX NATO”: R2P’s “Resounding” Success in Libya

*But clearly, the overall aim cannot be fulfilled by military means alone. We're helping to create the conditions for a political solution. But that is not NATO's job.<sup>1</sup>*

It is unclear who fired them, but on 9 January 2016, rockets landed in two refugee camps outside Libya’s second city of Benghazi—three civilians were killed, two of them children, and seven others wounded.<sup>2</sup> Violence in Libya has been common since the outbreak of the country’s Second Civil War in 2014. Tensions were left to simmer after the fall of Muammar Gaddafi’s Regime in October 2011 in the midst of a UN-sanctioned and NATO-led humanitarian intervention. Five years later four main factions, including three separate governments and Daesh’s forces in the “Libyan Province,” vie for power within a violent morass. Even this description, however, creates a false sense of coherence in that, at the local level, “a patchwork of city-states loosely governed by warlords, city councils, and tribal networks” has emerged.<sup>3</sup> In 2011, the Libya intervention was widely touted by R2P advocates and some military commanders as a harbinger of future international resolve in the face of impending humanitarian crisis, while the conflict in Syria was a disgrace born of inaction. Now both cases appear to have been prominent failures of an ostensibly increasing international commitment to the protection of civilians. As some feared, a preoccupation with military intervention seems

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<sup>1</sup> Oana Lungescu and Mike Bracken, "Nato Press Briefing on Libya," news release, 7 July, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> "Libya: Civilian Toll Mounts in Benghazi", *Human Rights Watch* (2016), <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/01/24/libya-civilian-toll-mounts-benghazi>.

<sup>3</sup> Jason Pack and Mattia Toaldo, "Why Picking Sides in Libya Won't Work," *Foreign Policy* (2015), <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/03/06/libya-civil-war-tobruk-un-negotiations-morocco/>.

to have diverted both resources and political capital away from more productive humanitarian efforts in Libya.<sup>4</sup>

Both the general and academic debates about the Libya intervention and its aftermath remain stuck at an impasse. Libya's persistent instability seemingly sits at odds with the chorus of voices who call the operation a "success" in terms of its stated goal of protecting civilians from violent reprisals by the Gaddafi Regime. As a result, where once scholars saw the solidification of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) as a key element of global order, now the stability and future of the concept are aggressively questioned. Given that R2P ostensibly weights intervention and reconstruction equally, the initial success of the intervention has become mired by ongoing violence. Further, NATO's decision to carry out military operations until the Gaddafi regime collapsed arguably transgressed its UNSC mandate, causing uproar among many nations who hesitantly supported or acquiesced to the intervention at its outset. Both the academic and general debate, as currently formulated, has proven dismayingly incapable of untangling these considerations in a satisfying manner.

Situating Libya within the longer running process of heterogeneous engineering addresses this problem. This formulation seems alien to the current work on R2P, but this is because extant literature implicitly mobilises the contention that the use of force itself is passive, purely technical, and devoid of its own history or politics. Foregrounding the use of force in Libya as a point in a longer running process of heterogeneous engineering, it becomes possible to situate R2P more effectively. This requires displacing research questions concerning the normative, principled, or legal influence of the concept that

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<sup>4</sup> Benjamin A. Valentino, "The True Costs of Humanitarian Intervention," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 6 (2011).

predominate in the Constructivist, Liberal, and Legal work that predominates in the study of R2P.<sup>5</sup> Instead, R2P functions as a linguistic and conceptual node in a larger heterogeneous assemblage; it is a social element in a socio-material network. A close reading of R2P brings to light the internal ambiguity of the concept in relation to military force, which requires and allows assemblages like the air power model to be deployed in order to realise its more militarised elements. In Libya, R2P was realised by the air power policing model, and as a result has been shaped by its effects. The result is what Connolly calls a “resonance machine;” “a cluster of energized elements of multiple types that enter into loose, reinforcing conjugations as the whole complex both consolidates and continues to morph.”<sup>6</sup> Without highlighting this heterogeneous, hybrid relationship between concept and practical edifice the effects of the air power assemblage are reified as effects of R2P as such. This is unsatisfactory whether one is a critic or supporter of R2P, given that the precise socio-material politics at play are obscured in favour of an imprecise and ultimately inconclusive debate.

The inordinate amount of focus on R2P itself needs to be offset by an unpacking of how it was conjugated in the form of air power policing, and what the ultimate political effects of the resulting hybrid politics were. The use of military force in Libya encompasses two consecutive military operations, both premised on the use of international air power: a purely US effort dubbed Operation Odyssey Dawn (OOD) between 19-31 March 2011 and the 222 day NATO intervention, Operation Unified Protector (OUP), which immediately followed. Both operations fell under the auspices of

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<sup>5</sup> Two very good examples of this include: Walling, *All Necessary Measures*; Thakur, *Responsibility to Protect*.

<sup>6</sup> Connolly, *A World of Becoming*, 135.

United Nations Security Council resolution 1973, adopted on 17 March 2011, which authorised the use of “all necessary measures...to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack...while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory.”<sup>7</sup> Though specifically calling for the creation of a no-fly zone and ruling out the possibility of a ground force at the behest of various actors, including Libya’s National Transitional Council (NTC), the realisation of the civilian protection mission itself was left open. The result was another expression of humanitarian intervention in terms of policing through precision bombing.

In this Chapter the air power model functions as what Latour and others have termed a “black box”. Black boxing occurs when the heterogeneous complexity of a technical mechanism is rendered invisible to unfolding reasoning and is engaged only in terms of efficiency—its inputs and outputs.<sup>8</sup> The air power model is “black boxed” here for analytical, practical, and argumentative reasons. First, as the analysis of Kosovo illustrates, the literature on intervention itself has successfully black boxed the use of military force by bracketing the use of force from normative considerations. Second, the detailed analysis undertaken in the previous Chapters relies on specific kinds of documentation and accounts that, in the Libya case, are not widely available at the time of writing.<sup>9</sup> Third, and building on these two considerations, the overall purpose of the Chapter is to foreground the emerging influence of R2P as a robust conceptual element that resonates with, and in turn mobilises while being shaped by, the air power policing

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<sup>7</sup> UNSC Resolution 1973 operative clause 4.

<sup>8</sup> Latour, *Pandora's Hope*, 304.

<sup>9</sup> Of course, attempts were made to requisition documentation from the US and Canadian government in relation to OOD and OUP, but these were either denied or lacked sufficient detail to be of use.

assemblage. Addressing this requires a robust engagement with R2P itself, a line of inquiry that is privileged in this Chapter. Of course, the indiscernibility of Libya's "success" is an outcome of black boxing the practice of military intervention, and the specific point of this Chapter is to problematise this by reformulating how R2P is appraised and studied. This does not mean the heterogeneous, hybrid politics of the intervention assemblage fall from view, only that the analysis of the preceding Chapters is mobilised in relation to a discursive analysis that sees the role of R2P in terms of the downward causality of the air power assemblage.

Deploying the air power model in the case of Libya materialised R2P in a particular manner that had very specific political effects which become the focus of a particular discourse that both helps to maintain this relationship while registering downward causality. This process can be unpacked through a careful analysis of both the diplomatic history of the intervention and the discourse created by both the US and NATO in terms of how the operation is legitimated. Deploying the air power policing assemblage simplified the politics of the conflict by foregrounding the objects and tools used by Gaddafi forces, in the process reformulating the "protection" aspect of R2P in terms of managing the circulation of objects. The tension inherent in realising a human protection mission in this way was in this case obscured by the attribution of an unrealistic level of political power and popular support for the NTC as a means of legitimating the circumscribed effectiveness of air power vis-à-vis the stated humanitarian goals of the operation. In this way, the rise of the NTC became synonymous with the order NATO was attempting to police into existence. As a result, the responsibility for the complex political and humanitarian effects of the intervention and

the ongoing political conflict were, via discourse, delegated to the NTC. This delegation was not a natural or pragmatic aspect of the intervention, but one that was actively created by the discursive framing military operations as technical rather than political in their own right. What is obscured here is that, by taking the use of air power to be apolitical and purely technical in its own right, resolution 1973 was designed to make intervention self-limiting to safeguard tentative international consensus for the use of force, but was undermined by the impact of the strategy employed to realise it. Further, by failing to unpack the politics of intervention itself the ambiguity of R2P's success is created.

The following sections flesh out this argument in a series of ways. First, an overview of Libya's First Civil War (2011) is provided. Understanding the complexity of the conflict provides a strong foundation for critiquing the way the conflict was situated and engaged discursively by both the US DOD and NATO. What becomes clear is that the discourse is animated and substantiated by a particular practical strategy that assumes air power as is policing logic, which in turn is visible in the related military discourse. Between these two sections, a detailed analysis of the scholarly literature of the R2P concept illustrates the need for studying the latter in terms of techno-material resonance rather than simply normativity or socialisation.

## **5.1 Reading into the Void**

One of the (by now) familiar effects of materialising humanitarian intervention as a policing activity carried out through air power is the simplification of a conflict's politics. In foregrounding specific objects, the conflict is reified as a problem of circulation, rather

than a more dynamic political context. In Libya, this simplification manifests as an attribution of political efficacy, popular support, and overall capacity to the NTC that the group did not deserve. Of course, this image of the NTC was in large part a creation of the group itself, but NATO accepted it and as such concerns about mission creep were eased. Further, this attribution of agency to the NTC made it possible for NATO to bracket the intervention from the larger political transformation of the country. There would be no successor to Dayton or Rambouillet regarding Libya. This stripping away of the diplomatic component of the intervention meant the description of OOD and OUP as purely technical exercises became largely unremarkable. As a result, the black boxing of the air power policing model was cemented.

Of course, the fractured landscape of Libyan politics, which had been obscured first by Gaddafi's rule and then by how the international community read the Arab Spring, was a function of longer running trends in the country's politics. Eastern Libya by no means had a monopoly on anti-Gaddafi sentiment in 2011, but the emergence of coordinated anti-regime efforts in this region was linked to its economic seclusion and the overall weakness of the Libyan state. During Gaddafi's forty years in power the creation of a centralised—or even functioning—Libyan state apparatus was actively prevented in favour of clientelism disguised as “traditional” decentralised tribal rule.<sup>10</sup> Further, the government in Tripoli had played upon and inflamed existing regional divisions in order to cement its power. This included largely ignoring the country's Eastern areas, playing its populace off of the regime's backers in the Western reaches of the country as a means of stabilising the leadership of the “revolution” and preventing the

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<sup>10</sup> Dirk J. Vandewalle, *A History of Modern Libya*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2012), 3.

emergence of anything resembling effective (let alone accountable) governing institutions.<sup>11</sup> Having made social factionalism and institutional weakness a fact of life in Libya it is unsurprising that violence erupted in 2011, nor is it surprising that the initial spasm of hope that followed the brutal killing of Gaddafi has given way to persistent instability.<sup>12</sup>

Libya's civil war began on 15 February 2011 with antigovernment protests in the eastern cities of Benghazi, Bayda, and Zintan following the arrest of Fathi Terbil, a noted human rights lawyer.<sup>13</sup> At least initially, protests seemed to draw legitimacy from the recent success of civilian protesters in deposing Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak in neighbouring Tunisia and Egypt. It was the Gaddafi regime's violent response, however, which crystallised an antigovernment movement that would eventually mutate into an organised rebel political structure and armed force: the NTC. Victimised by the violent police actions of 15 February, the protest movement organised a "Day of Rage" on the 17<sup>th</sup>. The "Day of Rage" saw hundreds rally in Benghazi and clash with armed regime forces which used both helicopters and snipers to fire into the crowd. A similar clash occurred the following day outside the Benghazi courthouse. In the weeks that followed, anti-regime forces gained ground quickly, turning the eastern third of the country into a safe haven controlled by the nascent NTC while pockets of resistance emerged in the Western areas of Nafusa, Nalut, and Zintan.<sup>14</sup> The next few

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 204.

<sup>12</sup> Dirk J. Vandewalle, "Libya's Uncertain Revolution," in *The Libyan Revolution and Its Aftermath*, ed. Peter Cole and Brian McQuinn (New York, NY: Oxford, UP, 2015), 17-18, ff.

<sup>13</sup> Vandewalle, *Libya*, 204.

<sup>14</sup> Peter Bartu, "The Corridor of Uncertainty: The National Transitional Council's Battle for Legitimacy and Recognition" in *The Libyan Revolution and Its Aftermath*, ed. Peter Cole and Brian McQuinn (New York, NY: Oxford, UP, 2015), 32.

weeks would bring to light the immense well of anti-Gaddafi sentiment in Libya, but they would also show the NTC to be an ineffective fighting force unable to cement its control without outside military support.<sup>15</sup>

With the NTC unable to stem the Gaddafi regime's effective counter offensive, regime forces were closing in on Benghazi by mid-March. The NTC lacked the training, resources, or organisation to fight effectively, and would really never develop them. Throughout NATO operations, military commanders were frustrated by the NTC's lack of tactical ability. In one case US Admiral Sam Locklear, commander of the US naval forces involved in enforcing the no-fly zone over Libya, told SACEUR Stavridis that rebel operations "...seemed to revolve around quick forays at enemy lines, lots of ammo discharged in that general direction, then retrenchment to Benghazi for coffee and reassessment."<sup>16</sup> Stavridis himself recounts that, in the early stages of the conflict, "the opposition...looked largely like extras from the *Mad Max Road Warrior* movies...they did not inspire a great deal of confidence."<sup>17</sup> The NTC itself was aware of its shortcomings and used its quickly emerging international legitimacy to call on the international community to stop future atrocity crimes by Gaddafi loyalists, but without "any direct military intervention on Libya soil."<sup>18</sup> Though the international community would not intervene directly on behalf of the NTC, it would begin air strikes under UNSC authorisation as Gaddafi forces neared Benghazi on 19 March.

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<sup>15</sup> Vandewalle, *Libya*, 205.

<sup>16</sup> The exchange is recounted in: James Stavridis, *The Accidental Admiral: A Sailor Takes Command at Nato* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2014), 56.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Bartu, "Corridor," 38.

Though wanting on the battlefield, the NTC did prove exceptionally good at cementing its legitimacy internationally; a task made much easier by the Regime's erratic response.<sup>19</sup> Gaddafi's rhetoric coupled with his reputation—he had become a pariah in the 1970s and 80s for his support of international terrorism and had been called the “Mad Dog of the Middle East” by Ronald Reagan—were key elements in the emergence of an international consensus regarding the use of force.<sup>20</sup> Even as Gaddafi's forces closed on Benghazi, there had yet to be a mass atrocity crime committed in Libya that would fit the standards of R2P or the Genocide Convention, even in areas where government forces had wrestled control from the retreating rebels.<sup>21</sup> Gaddafi's rhetoric, however, was unbalanced (to say the least) and motivated international political will. Two addresses, both delivered by Gaddafi on Libyan state television, were especially important in this regard. On 22 February, Gaddafi labelled rebels “cockroaches” bent on “humiliating” Libya, called on the general population to “attack them in their dens,” and promised to “cleanse Libya house by house” to ensure stability.<sup>22</sup> As many have noted, calling the protesters “cockroaches” had a very particular resonance internationally given its connotations related to the malicious rants disseminated by Radio Television de Mille Collines during the Rwandan genocide.<sup>23</sup> These comments were followed, two days later,

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 32-33.

<sup>20</sup> Jr. Robert H. Gregory, *Clean Bombs and Dirty Wars: Air Power in Kosovo and Libya* (Lincoln, NB: Potomac Books, 2015), 158-159.

<sup>21</sup> Alan J. Kuperman, "A Model Humanitarian Intervention? Reassessing Nato's Libya Campaign," *International Security* 38, no. 1 (2013): 119.

<sup>22</sup> Robert Gates and James Carwright, "Dod News Briefing with Secretary Gates and Gen. Cartwright from the Pentagon " news release, 21 April 2011.

<sup>23</sup> Brent J. Steele and Eric A. Heinze, "Norms of Intervention, R2p and Libya," *Global Responsibility to Protect* 6, no. 1 (2014): 108; Alex J. Bellamy, "Libya and the Responsibility to Protect: The Exception and the Norm," *Ethics & International Affairs* 25, no. 3 (2011): 265; Carmen Romero and Roland Lavoie, "Press Briefing on Libya," news release, 26 July, 2011.

by another diatribe wherein Gaddafi claimed the NTC were puppets of Osama Bin Laden and under the influence of “Nescafe and milk” containing hallucinogenic drugs—apparently a state of affairs similar to that facing the Queen of England.<sup>24</sup> These comments are generally taken as irrational ramblings, though their purpose (if not content) were clearly designed to play upon prevailing social factionalism and make a claim for the necessity of ensuring stability. Nonetheless, Gaddafi’s threats served to crystallise international support for UNSC Resolutions 1970 and 1972 and the use of force by the US and NATO.<sup>25</sup>

There were also signals being sent to (or at least read by) the NTC within the Regime’s rhetoric. At least initially, a portion of the NTC leadership thought a negotiated transitional government could emerge with the help of Muammar Gaddafi’s son, Saif al-Islam Gaddafi. The NTC’s Prime Minister, Mahmud Jibril, had worked with Saif al-Islam on a failed economic modernisation effort in the early 2000s. There was apparently some hope that a deal could be reached whereby Saif al-Islam would take control of Libya and agree to follow a moderate course. These hopes were dashed, however, by a speech by Saif al-Islam on 21 February which featured rhetoric similar to that of his Father’s—he said “rivers of blood” would run in Libya—and the patent dismissal of NTC’s ambitions.<sup>26</sup> For international and domestic actors the rhetoric and behaviour of the Gaddafis clearly indicated an unwillingness to negotiate and a predilection for the unacceptable use of military force.

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<sup>24</sup> William E. Gortney, "Dod News Briefing with Vice Adm. Gortney from the Pentagon on Libya Operation Odyessey Dawn," news release, 25 March, 2011.

<sup>25</sup> Kuperman, "A Model Humanitarian Intervention? Reassessing Nato's Libya Campaign."

<sup>26</sup> Bartu, "Corridor," 36.

It was amidst this inflammatory rhetoric that key officials within the Regime, and Libya's diplomatic corps, began defecting to the NTC, adding further credibility to its claims to be the true sovereign representative of the Libyan people. Most importantly, on 23 February Libya's interior minister, General Abdul Fatah Younis, defected and became the Commander-in-Chief of the NTC. Younis had been a conspirator in the 1969 coup which brought Gaddafi to power and long-time regime stalwart, making his defection a boon for the NTC's credibility, at least internationally.<sup>27</sup> The next day Younis was followed by Libya's permanent representative to the UN, Abd al-Rahman Shalgham, who defected during a 24 February interview with the BBC, going on to compare Gaddafi to Pol Pot and Hitler during a speech to the UNSC the next day. By late March the number of defections had grown, despite Gaddafi's military success, to include Gaddafi's foreign minister, Moussa Koussa, several high-level members of Libya's diplomatic corps serving overseas, and even two Libyan fighter pilots who landed their planes in Malta on 21 February in protest of being told to bomb protesters.<sup>28</sup>

Mass defections followed the regime's rhetoric, and the NTC was able to establish a dialogue with the international community and cement support for intervention in the absence of a mass atrocity crime. The group was recognised by France almost immediately, and then later by Great Britain, Qatar, Turkey, and the US by July.<sup>29</sup> More importantly, by presenting themselves as a coherent and united force, the NTC was

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<sup>27</sup> Robert H. Gregory, *Clean Bombs*, 150-154; Bartu, "Corridor," 32.

<sup>28</sup> Bartu, "Corridor," 35-36; C.J. Chivers and David D. Kirkpatrick, "Top Libyan Official Defects; Rebels Are Retreating: Opposition Flees Towns Gained Last Week," *The New York Times* 2011, A1, A11; Christopher Scicluna, "Two Libyan Fighter Pilots Defect, Fly to Malta," *Reuters* (2011), <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-protests-malta-idUSTRE71K52R20110221>.

<sup>29</sup> Vandewalle, *Libya*, 204.

able to sway sceptical policymakers. In the Obama Administration, senior officials, including UN Ambassador Susan Rice, National Security Council Senior Director for Multilateral Affairs Samantha Power, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton pushed for more decisive action, all three situating their perspective in relation the muddled international engagement in such crises during the 1990s.<sup>30</sup> For Clinton, her initial scepticism was only overcome by the clarity of regional support, the willingness of NATO allies to lead the operation, and, importantly, the perceived credibility of the rebels.<sup>31</sup> What was true of many within the Obama Administration was true also of other NATO nations, who became supportive of intervention as the NTC established itself as a legitimate interlocutor and alternative to Gaddafi.<sup>32</sup>

There were holdouts, however, who saw the lack of social and institutional coherence that lay behind the NTC's efforts. As the conflict wore on, and reconstruction became a priority following Gaddafi's death, it would become increasingly clear just how tenuous and circumstance-specific support for the NTC by the various subnational, regional, and local loyalties at play in Libya was.<sup>33</sup> Former SACEUR Wesley Clark argued against intervening in Libya specifically because the outlook for long-term stability following the intervention was bleak.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, US Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates recalls his own worries about the long-term effects of yet another US military operation in a Muslim country combined with what he saw as a lack of clear

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<sup>30</sup> Christopher S. Chivvis, *Toppling Qaddafi: Libya and the Limits of Liberal Intervention* (New York, NY: Cambridge, UP, 2013), 48-53.

<sup>31</sup> Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Hard Choices* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2014), 370.

<sup>32</sup> Chivvis, *Toppling*, 67-68.

<sup>33</sup> Vandewalle, "Libyan Revolution " 21.

<sup>34</sup> Wesley K. Clark, "Libya Isn't Worth the Risk, Says Gen. Wesley Clark, the Commander of the Kosovo War," *The Washington Post*, 13 March 2011, B01.

thinking about the realities of military operations in Libya.<sup>35</sup> In early 2011, as an international consensus developed in support of a military intervention, Gates is quoted as saying that while support of the League of Arab States (LAS) created international consensus over the need to act, this consensus did little to clarify *how* to act.<sup>36</sup> Though many would hold up the intervention that followed as a success, others would insist that, in practice, OUP was a confused, half-hearted effort which, similar to Operation Allied Force in Kosovo, amounted to “winning ugly.”<sup>37</sup>

What must be taken from this is that the humanitarian ethos and support for intervention were built upon a particular understanding of the NTC that was not consistent with its capacity on the ground. For this reason, the form the intervention took would be very specific, predicated on using force only from the air, and based on a series of assumptions and discursive constructions regarding the various players involved. What must be remembered, however, is that though working through technology would give the intervention its particular form, this form was legitimated by its resonance with R2P.

## 5.2 R2P’s “Resounding” Success in Libya

Though R2P was designed as a set of tools and concepts for protecting civilians against violence, in practice the very different practical translations of humanitarianism into strategies and tactics, in the case of Libya in terms of policing the conflict by way of air

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<sup>35</sup> Robert Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 511-513.

<sup>36</sup> Chivvis, *Toppling*.

<sup>37</sup> Michael O'Hanlon, "Libya and the Obama Doctrine: How the United States Won Ugly," Postscript, *Foreign Affairs* (2011), <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/libya/2011-08-31/libya-and-obama-doctrine>.

power, have put increasing strain on the legitimacy of such interventions. Paris has conceptualised this as the “paradox” of having a humanitarian schematic with a militarised element, but in reality, the relationship between R2P and military force is more provisional, historically situated, and heterogeneous.<sup>38</sup> The Libya case shows the effects of materialising R2P in specific ways. In this schematic, the intervention assemblage was heterogeneously engineered through the 1990s, animated as it was by finding ways to solve, via technology, the problem of protecting individual bodies and policing spaces. The move to air power, however, meant a collapse of this problem into a single strategy for policing spaces and affecting actor behaviour via precision targeting.

R2P of course springs from this same history, but its larger focus and built in ambiguity on the specifics of military strategy mean it resonates with, rather than springs directly from, the ongoing process of heterogeneous engineering related to humanitarian intervention. As a result, the shortcomings and paradoxical nature of R2P are not born of its conceptual form, but of its translation into specific strategies. In this sense R2P’s inability to see violence as a structural phenomenon, specifically, as a function of broader international or local processes, is not only a function of its conceptual development but also of the practical strategies it animates and is supported by.<sup>39</sup>

The second important insight that comes from this analysis is the impossibility to sustain the argument that R2P, on its own, means anything in practice—it is defined, emerges, is enacted, and persists or collapses based upon the repercussions of the social-

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<sup>38</sup> Roland Paris, "The 'Responsibility to Protect' and the Structural Problems of Preventive Humanitarian Intervention," *International Peacekeeping* 21, no. 5 (2014).

<sup>39</sup> This is a very general point within the critical R2P literature. A very good recent piece is: Stefanie Fishel, "Theorizing Violence in the Responsibility to Protect," *Critical Studies on Security* 1, no. 2 (2013).

material assemblages it animates. This is a more comprehensive point than the one made by Bellamy and Williams that the legitimacy of R2P will be based upon the operations it helps legitimate.<sup>40</sup> R2P *becomes* a practical expression only in terms of the particular assemblage it animates, and there is no essential relationship between the two. With this perspective in hand, it becomes possible to see how the various kinds of international action associated with R2P are a set of conflicting, overlapping, and in some cases inconsistent practices. Analysing the discourse of the Libya intervention, and following the virtualisation of the intervention model through the Kosovo case, makes clear that regardless of proponents' rhetoric, or the general acceptance of the concept, in theory, the practice of R2P is highly problematic.

R2P is not a practical charter in the strictest sense. The report, and the Alexandrian library of documents created by the UN Secretariat in its name outline ethical constructs for the use of force and assert international responsibility for aiding capacity building, but they do not dictate the form military interventions should take. On this score R2P is strategically silent, its framers and supporters insisting that some practical ambiguity must be maintained to accommodate pragmatic operational planning.<sup>41</sup> Of course, further clarification of operating procedures and best practices is often a touchstone of the R2P debate, but this is usually framed as a technical formality that will naturally follow increasing social pressure. As such, the ongoing heterogeneous engineering of a policing model predicated on the use of air power with its own ethical and humanitarian coordinates is lost. Foregrounding this socio-material assemblage is

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<sup>40</sup> Alex J. Bellamy and Paul D. Williams, "The New Politics of Protection? Côte D'ivoire, Libya and the Responsibility to Protect," *International Affairs* 87, no. 4 (2011): 225-226.

<sup>41</sup> Welsh, "Conclusion."

essential because it brings to light the political effects of realising R2P through this model.

The lack of direct engagement with how R2P is materialised has rendered it almost impossible to label Libya as a success or a failure. This indecipherability is an artefact of the bracketing off military intervention as a practical exercise from the surrounding normative, legal, or diplomatic context. In many ways, the literature on Libya is steeped in selection bias as each group, be they strong or weak normative scholars, legal analysts, or those more interested in the unfolding process of international diplomacy, arbitrate the intervention using different criteria. By foregrounding the intervention assemblage, and then comparing its operation to the political goals set by the international community, it becomes clear that the model itself was a success on its own terms, but the political and humanitarian effects it had were not compatible with the consensus that legitimated its deployment. In this way, the assemblage itself has an active role in as far as its deployment has a direct influence on the ongoing development of R2P. This should not be construed as an attack on the R2P literature, but a call for it to be more directly concerned with the practical materialisation of the concept it is attempting to study.

Stalwart R2P supporters were quick to label the NATO intervention in Libya a success. Supporters like Gareth Evans had argued that R2P was designed as a “rallying call” which would enjoin states to intervene in extreme humanitarian crises.<sup>42</sup> In a sense, R2P was a ready template for securitising violent humanitarian crises and ensuring an

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<sup>42</sup> Evans, *Responsibility to Protect*, 31-54.

international response.<sup>43</sup> Evans claimed, “the Libyan case was, at least at the outset, a textbook case of the RtoP norm working exactly as it was supposed to.”<sup>44</sup> Such comments were echoed by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who in September 2011 argued in a speech, “by now it should be clear to all that the Responsibility to Protect has arrived.”<sup>45</sup> Even hesitant supporters were cautiously optimistic—just as Weiss was when he argued:

If the Libyan intervention goes well, it will put teeth in the fledgling RtoP doctrine. Yet, if it goes badly, critics will redouble their opposition, and future decisions will be made more difficult—for one thing, because the decibel level of claims by contrarians about RtoP’s potential to backfire through “moral hazard” will increase. For the moment, however, the usual spoilers are on the defensive.<sup>46</sup>

When the intervention drew to a close a litany of voices argued that the experience in Libya would indeed serve as a model for future operations.<sup>47</sup>

This chorus included a section dedicated to praising the effectiveness of the NATO operation. Many took the 2011 intervention to be a revelation, both in the model of air warfare it employed and the flexibility it afforded countries to avoid long-term entanglements in the morass of nation building. SACEUR Stavridis and US Permanent Representative to NATO Ivo Daalder argued that OUP was “the right way to run an

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<sup>43</sup> Stamnes, "Speaking R2p."

<sup>44</sup> Gareth J. Evans, "Interview: The R2p Balance Sheet after Libya ", ed. Thomas G. Weiss, et al., *The Responsibility to Protect: Challenges and Opportunities in Light of the Libyan Intervention* (e-International Relations, 2011), <http://www.e-ir.info/wp-content/uploads/R2P.pdf>.

<sup>45</sup> Ban Ki-moon, "Secretary-General's Remarks at Breakfast Roundtable with Foreign Ministers on 'the Responsibility to Protect: Responding to Imminent Threats of Mass Atrocities'," (23 September 2011), <http://www.un.org/sg/STATEMENTS/index.asp?nid=5567>.

<sup>46</sup> Thomas G. Weiss, "Rtop Alive and Well after Libya," *Ethics & International Affairs* 25, no. 3 (2011): 287.

<sup>47</sup> Some notable examples from the popular press include: Helene Cooper and Steven Lee Myers, "Us Tactics in Libya May Be a Model for Other Efforts," *New York Times*, 29 August 2011, A9; Nicholas Kristof, "Thank You, America!," *ibid.*, 1 September, A29; Anne-Marie Slaughter, "Why the Libya Sceptics Were Proved Badly Wrong," *Financial Times*, 25 August 2011, 9.

intervention”, insisting OUP was a “teachable moment” regarding the swift establishment of international support, the precise use of military force, and the overall affordability of the campaign.<sup>48</sup> In his memoirs, Stavridis counted the Libya intervention as “one of the centerpieces of [his] four years at NATO...and one about which [he is] quietly proud today.”<sup>49</sup> In more detailed operational terms, OUP was taken as a successful elaboration of the “Afghan Model” wherein precision air power created the terms of success for allies on the ground. In Libya, support for long-term precision air strikes made it possible for the NTC to mount an attritional war against pro-Gaddafi forces, preventing a humanitarian catastrophe by ensuring a rebel victory.<sup>50</sup> What is important, however, is that the Afghan Model proved effective in bringing the NTC power, but it illustrated the deafness of the intervention to the long-term political circumstances in Libya.

Another vein within the academic literature on R2P, which follows the influential work of Alex Bellamy, heralded Libya as a turning point, but dismissed claims that the intervention was a paradigmatic moment. Libya is an important milestone because it is arguably the first time the UNSC authorised the use of force against a sovereign state for humanitarian reasons, but that does not mean the complexity of making decisions about the international use of force has been abated by R2P.<sup>51</sup> Early on in R2P’s development,

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<sup>48</sup> Ivo H. Daalder and James G. Stavridis, "Nato's Victory in Libya: The Right Way to Run an Intervention," *Foreign Affairs* 2012, 3-4.

<sup>49</sup> Stavridis, *Accidental*, 52.

<sup>50</sup> Erica D. Borghard and Costantino Pischedda, "Allies and Airpower in Libya," *Parameters* 42, no. 1 (2012): 63-64; Douglas Barrie, "Libya's Lessons: The Air Campaign " *Survival* 54, no. 6 (2012): 59.

<sup>51</sup> E.g. Paul D. Williams and Alex J. Bellamy, "Principles, Politics, and Prudence: Libya, the Responsibility to Protect, and the Use of Military Force," *Global Governance: A Review of Multilateralism and International Organizations* 18, no. 3 (2012): 275. Such statements, though common and to some extent correct, are actually less decisive than they appear. Hehir has noted that consent has never really been an important element in UNSC decision making: Hehir, "The Permanence of Inconsistency: Libya, the Security Council, and the Responsibility to Protect," 144-145. Of course, Williams and Bellamy make

specifically following its articulation-cum-institutionalisation within the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, it was clear that the concept did not supplant the complex set of considerations surrounding the use of force. Instead, R2P widened the perspective of the international community to include more than just military intervention, thereby avoiding, in some instances, the emergence of all or nothing decisions between resignation to violence or advocating direct military intervention.<sup>52</sup> From this perspective, rather than securitising humanitarian crises, R2P cements particular habits within the UNSC, specifically that they consider R2P related issues as a matter of course and need not establish their role anew in each instance as was the case throughout the 1990s.<sup>53</sup> Complex practical, diplomatic, and contextual considerations would continue to play a role, but Libya was the exception that proved this rule: Gaddafi's rhetoric made the threat exceedingly clear, the impending collapse of Benghazi drove debate, and both the NTC and LAS had voiced strong support for Western action.<sup>54</sup> The peculiarity of this is put into sharp relief by comparing the Libya intervention to the 2010 UN engagement with postelection violence in Côte d'Ivoire. The comparison illustrates how future evocations of R2P are apt to be "messier" politically and the legitimacy of military intervention is

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much of the UNSC never violating the wishes of an *internationally recognized* sovereign authority, something Orford has argued tracks with a history of the UN mediating the politics of conflict by conferring such recognition in manners conducive to its larger agenda: Orford, *International Authority*.

<sup>52</sup> Bellamy, *Responsibility to Protect*, 3. Williams and Bellamy, "Principles, Politics, and Prudence: Libya, the Responsibility to Protect, and the Use of Military Force," 274.

<sup>53</sup> Bellamy, "Added Value?," 335. *ibid.* Bellamy, "Libya and the Responsibility to Protect: The Exception and the Norm," 265-266. Williams and Bellamy, "Principles, Politics, and Prudence: Libya, the Responsibility to Protect, and the Use of Military Force," 274. Cf.

<sup>54</sup> Bellamy, "Libya and the Responsibility to Protect: The Exception and the Norm," 265-266.

unlikely to become engrained but instead fluctuate in relation to the performance of future operations.<sup>55</sup>

Understood in these terms the Libya experience evidenced the conceptual role played by R2P. International focus on Libyan civilians eased the tension between norms of state sovereignty and human rights while expert reporting and the clear support of the LAS made it exceedingly difficult for skeptical permanent members to publicly disagree with UNSC resolutions 1970 and 1972.<sup>56</sup> But this streamlining was not linked to any substantial changes in terms of R2P's legal standing or the UNSC's approach to adjudicating the use of force in such circumstances. The UNSC has actually been "remarkably silent" on R2P, having only evoked it within a handful thematic resolutions in a very particular manner.<sup>57</sup> Resolutions 1970 and 1973 did note the Council's support for the idea that states' have a responsibility to protect, but this was only in reference to the Gaddafi regime's culpability—the resolutions stopped short of using R2P as a foundation for legitimating international response.<sup>58</sup> In legal terms the language used to legitimate the Libya intervention was notable in that the definition of improper state behaviour was taken from the Rome Statute rather than developed *ad hoc* as it had been

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<sup>55</sup> Bellamy and Williams, "The New Politics of Protection? Côte D'ivoire, Libya and the Responsibility to Protect," 826.

<sup>56</sup> Walling, *All Necessary Measures*, 220-234; Williams and Bellamy, "Principles, Politics, and Prudence: Libya, the Responsibility to Protect, and the Use of Military Force," 278-279.

<sup>57</sup> Jennifer Welsh, "Civilian Protection in Libya: Putting Coercion and Controversy Back into Rtop," *Ethics & International Affairs* 25, no. 03 (2011): 265.

<sup>58</sup> This is an oft repeated point—examples include: Walling, *All Necessary Measures*, 233; Marie-Eve Loiselle, "The Normative Status of the Responsibility to Protect after Libya," *Global Responsibility to Protect* 5, no. 3 (2013): 331; Welsh, "Civilian Protection in Libya: Putting Coercion and Controversy Back into Rtop," 255. Recent history shows that this is an important distinction—the George W. Bush administration was adamant, and alone, in calling violence in Sudan's Darfur region a genocide, but was nonetheless clear that it felt no responsibility to deal with it itself. The point about Darfur, in relation to Libya, has been made by: Hehir, "The Permanence of Inconsistency: Libya, the Security Council, and the Responsibility to Protect," 150.

in the 1990s, but overall the discussion clearly resonates with trends in international jurisprudence going all the way back to Vattel and Grotius.<sup>59</sup> In terms of structure, resolutions 1970 and 1973 clearly couched the legitimacy of military intervention in relation to prevailing interpretations of Chapter VII of the UN Charter developed over the 1990s, not in relation to R2P.<sup>60</sup>

Such legal pragmatism, and the conciliatory diplomacy that supported it, is argued by many to be a positive sign of R2P's emerging influence. Libya, at least at first, seemed to showcase the *bona fides* of the reticent "Obama Doctrine" which was premised upon precision targeting, the effective use of sanctions, engagement with the Libyan opposition and regional players, and supporting the leadership of the Allies, both politically and operationally.<sup>61</sup> Further, the prominent role played by the LAS has been argued by some, like Thakur to evidence the possibility of making R2P more inclusive and shifting some of the burden of international humanitarianism to emerging powers. Thakur, as well as Glanville, argue this should be read as an opportunity to define international standards for the use of force, in the process ensuring the future stability and inclusiveness of the international human rights regime.<sup>62</sup> The prospects for this are mixed, however, especially given that international deference to the LAS, who supported Western

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<sup>59</sup> Luke Glanville, "Gaddafi and Grotius: Some Historical Roots of the Libyan Intervention," *Global Responsibility to Protect* 5, no. 3 (2013): 350-351, 360-361.

<sup>60</sup> Marie-Eve Loiselle, "The Normative Status of the Responsibility to Protect after Libya," *ibid.*: 331-338.

<sup>61</sup> O'Hanlon, "Libya and the Obama Doctrine: How the United States Won Ugly"; Simon Chesterman, "'Leading from Behind': The Responsibility to Protect, the Obama Doctrine, and Humanitarian Intervention after Libya," *Ethics & International Affairs* 25, no. 3 (2011): 283.

<sup>62</sup> Ramesh Thakur, "R2p after Libya and Syria: Engaging Emerging Powers," *The Washington Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (2013): 62; Luke Glanville, "Intervention in Libya: From Sovereign Consent to Regional Consent," *International Studies Perspectives* 14, no. 3 (2013): 337-340.

intervention in Libya, came at the expense of the African Union's efforts at mediation.<sup>63</sup>

Read back into the context of the UNSC debate it may truly be the case that an agreement on sovereign responsibility has been reached, but that it remains unclear what practical responses to regimes like Gaddafi's should be.<sup>64</sup> Perhaps even more important, NATO may have undermined even this tenuous development by being perceived to have gone beyond its mandate by engineering a regime change in Tripoli.<sup>65</sup>

In the period since the intervention, international consensus has continued to fray, evidencing the fact that such interventions are viewed in consequentialist rather than deontological terms. This relates to the work of several critical scholars who insist that the Libya intervention was a product of circumstance, rather than evidence of R2P influence upon the decision making process.<sup>66</sup> Given that R2P simply restates the extant customary approach to the legality of intervention, it fails to overcome important structural forces emanating from the UNSC, namely the veto, pointing to how it falls well short of altering the geopolitical matrix of humanitarian intervention.<sup>67</sup> Given the utter lack of support for an intervention in Syria, in either 2011 or now (September 2016) when it has created a massive migrant crisis in Europe and facilitated the expansion of Daesh, the importance of political considerations persists. Despite any conceptual

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<sup>63</sup> Alex de Waal, "My Fears, Alas, Were Not Unfounded!: Africa's Responses to the Libya Conflict " in *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention* ed. Aidan Hehir and Robert W. Murray (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan 2013).

<sup>64</sup> Daniel Silander, "R2p—Principle and Practice? The Unsc on Libya," *Journal of Applied Security Research* 8, no. 2 (2013): 265.

<sup>65</sup> Benedetta Berti, "Forcible Intervention in Libya: Revamping the 'Politics of Human Protection'?", *Global Change, Peace & Security* 26, no. 1 (2014): 24, 37-38.

<sup>66</sup> Hehir, "The Permanence of Inconsistency: Libya, the Security Council, and the Responsibility to Protect," 137-147.

<sup>67</sup> Aidan Hehir, "The Responsibility to Protect as the Apotheosis of Liberal Theology " in *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, ed. Aidan Hehir and Robert W. Murray (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 34-35.

refinement created in relation to R2P, the Syrian civil war has illustrated its persistent practical shortcomings.

In its current form this debate, between those who see Libya as an absolute or qualified success, and those who see its specific circumstances as not evidencing any real shift in international behaviour, is intractable. Moving the literature forward requires bringing to light the importance of how R2P is materialised, and this means denoting it as a part of a large, more complex, and heterogeneous process. In so doing the bracketing off of military activity as simply technical consideration is dissolved and the interaction between military tactics and more general humanitarian concepts is brought to light. To do so this analysis follows practice theory work on the UNSC debate over Libya. As such, R2P should be read as a tool actors use in their struggle for recognised competence on a certain issue, a process which creates an emergent power greater than the sum of its parts.<sup>68</sup> From this perspective the skillful framing of the issue, which included some use of R2P by specific actors, played a key role in creating specific voting patterns at the UNSC.<sup>69</sup> This approach squares well with the argument that, rather than a substantive variable, R2P is a ready linguistic vessel or conceptual “short cut” for the actions of a cohort of policy makers, particularly in the US, who feel strongly about perceived international failures in the 1990s. In relation to the Libya case, past experiences motivated these actors at the same time that R2P shaped the manner in which

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<sup>68</sup> Adler-Nissen and Pouliot, "Power in Practice: Negotiating the International Intervention in Libya," 890-894.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 901.

policymakers engaged in political maneuvering to make the intervention possible.<sup>70</sup> Of course the practice theory literatures would add that this is a quasi-material rather than simply diplomatic phenomenon, but this literature has not, as of yet, re-centred intervention as a focus of analysis.<sup>71</sup> This practice-orientated approach makes a key contribution by focusing analysis on *how* support for intervention can manifest itself. Even more important is that this support is not stable and can collapse as the socially contingent process of claiming competence wears on.

Understanding the credibility of intervention and the role of R2P in particular cases as emergent phenomena is essential. However, the scope must be expanded beyond diplomatic and jurisprudential considerations to include how intervention is materialised, which for Western states has meant, and continues to mean, the mobilisation of a policing logic predicated on air power. Marking the needs of an intervention as a technical problem approached through a pre-existing assemblage orientates the relationship between diplomatic discussion and the role of technological systems, in turn illustrating how this materialisation helped create, but then dissolve, international support for the intervention. For this reason, rather than take UNSC 1972, and the clear denouncement of ground forces it contained, as a common-sense expression of the experiences of Afghanistan and Iraq, this can be seen as conceivable only because the air power policing model had already emerged as a black box within the language of R2P.

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<sup>70</sup> Steele and Heinze, "Norms of Intervention, R2p and Libya," 91; Chivvis, *Toppling*; Williams and Bellamy, "Principles, Politics, and Prudence: Libya, the Responsibility to Protect, and the Use of Military Force," 278.

<sup>71</sup> Vincent Pouliot, "The Materials of Practice: Nuclear Warheads, Rhetorical Commonplaces and Committee Meetings in Russian–Atlantic Relations," *Cooperation and Conflict* 45, no. 3 (2010).

The relationship between human protection and intervention is an important reference point, and its instability has been at least partially grasped. However, there are two important considerations that emerge when this instability is denoted not as simply a technical problem but as a point in an ongoing process of heterogeneous engineering. First, Paris has argued that the Libya case illustrates a paradox built into R2P given its military and humanitarian elements: situations where military force is not used will elicit scorn and charges of selectivity while situations in which it is deployed will inevitably have practical repercussions inconsistent with the humanitarian ethos of R2P.<sup>72</sup> Justin Morris has similarly argued, in light of the paralysis created at the UNSC by NATO's actions in Libya, that R2P should be completely shorn of its military component.<sup>73</sup> Paris and Morris are correct to note this feedback mechanism between the ethos of R2P and the impact of its realisation in militarised terms. What must be added, however, is that in the case of R2P this feedback is the product of mobilising a particular intervention assemblage with its own social-material character and political impact.

Second, Pape has argued that the R2P agenda is too ambiguous to be of use and should be cast aside in favour of a "pragmatic approach." Such a standard would be motivated by and defined as the potential for success discerned by weighing operational considerations, the likelihood of post intervention stability, and humanitarian need, with the prospects of tangible results for suffering populations.<sup>74</sup> Such a consideration is dangerous, however, if one does not account for the fact that this pragmatism is not based

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<sup>72</sup> Paris, "The 'Responsibility to Protect' and the Structural Problems of Preventive Humanitarian Intervention."

<sup>73</sup> Justin Morris, "Libya and Syria: R2p and the Spectre of the Swinging Pendulum," *International Affairs* 89, no. 5 (2013): 1265-1266.

<sup>74</sup> Pape, "When Duty Calls: A Pragmatic Standard of Humanitarian Intervention," 61-69.

on a series of *a priori*, objective considerations but instead functions in relation to an established heterogeneous assemblage. The call for pragmatism therefore depoliticises military intervention, lending it the character of a passive conduit for basic moral action that is incompatible with its political character. What must be understood is that R2P, as a conceptual document, maintains an empty space wherein the intervention assemblage resonates, in the process lashing concept and practice together in a self-reinforcing but not completely stable manner. One must grasp this if the realisation of intervention is given its proper position in the critique of R2P, and if the merits and prospects of the concept's development are to be appropriately understood.

Such analysis makes the almost universal mistake of taking practical failures, and their resultant effect on support for intervention, as representative of a low level of political will. Instead, an investigation of how the concept emerges, stabilises, and persists in relation to heterogeneously engineered practices is required that links R2P's stability, and long-term relevance, to the technological and material systems, used to realise it. R2P, in cases like Libya, resonates with the intervention assemblage that was heterogeneously engineered out of various technological, conceptual, and discursive elements over the 1990s.<sup>75</sup> This is an important reconceptualisation because it undermines the assumption that the emergence of the Responsibility While Protecting and Responsible Protection concepts build upon R2P and will move the debate forward.<sup>76</sup> They should instead be read as competing conceptualisations of military force designed to resonate with R2P, but they may have incompatible or contravening forms that will

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<sup>75</sup> Law, "Technology and Heterogeneous Engineering."

<sup>76</sup> These concepts emerged following the 2011 NATO intervention and were put forward by Brazil and China, respectively. They are both discussed in more detail in the conclusion.

complicate international debate. This also problematises the idea that, with Libya, R2P is becoming the centrepiece of a constructive dialogue across regions.

### **5.3 Locating the Resonance of R2P**

R2P was the foundational concept of the ICISS final report in 2001. The diplomatic fallout of the NATO intervention in Kosovo, which occurred without UNSC authorisation, threatened to destabilise the yet unsolidified international acceptance of humanitarian intervention (see Chapter Four). The report argued that by focusing international attention on vulnerable groups rather than geopolitical considerations, many of the difficulties associated with humanitarian intervention could be overcome or completely avoided through adequate prevention and reconstruction efforts. In the time since the language of R2P, specifically language of international responsibility, has become the *lingua franca* of the UN Secretariat and the larger discussion of the international community's role in internal conflict, including military intervention. As a conceptual element in a larger, heterogeneous resonance machine R2P has proven very effective. However, in highlighting this resonance potential, it becomes clear that the politics swirling around the concept are not wholly its own, and must be understood as an outcome of how it is materialised.

The 2004 Report of the Secretary General's High-level Panel on Threats Challenges and Change, a study group associated with Kofi Annan's UN reform agenda, endorsed the concept as important given that the UN Charter "is not as clear as it could

be when it comes to saving lives within countries in situations of mass atrocity.”<sup>77</sup> The Panel contended that the Charter asserted fundamental human rights but made no provision for their protection—a gap that R2P could fill. In addition, the Report argued that R2P could draw legal legitimacy from the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. R2P was then made an official element of the UN’s larger human security agenda by its inclusion in the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit.<sup>78</sup>

The World Summit language, however, stripped the concept of its ambitious formulation in favour of one that still located primary responsibility for the protection of civilians with individual states. The Outcome, therefore, indicates a modicum of acceptance of international responsibility but provides no evidence that the concept fundamentally reconfigures the international community’s approach to mass atrocities that developed over the 1990s.<sup>79</sup> R2P nonetheless was taken as an important clarifying move that would alleviate, in some circumstances, the roadblocks to swift international response to violent human rights crises by clarifying that the international community did have a role to play. However, most scholars were unwilling to argue the emergence of R2P would substantively change the politics surrounding the use of military force, although it would clarify and normalise the discussion about such actions.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Challenges The Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, and Change, "A More Security World: Our Shared Responsibility " (New York, NY: UN Department of Public Information, 2004). para. 199

<sup>78</sup> UN General Assembly, "Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly on 16 September 2005: 2005 World Summit Outcome," (New York, NY: United Nations, 2005). para. 138-140.

<sup>79</sup> Bellamy, *Responsibility to Protect*.

<sup>80</sup> Evans, *Responsibility to Protect*, 31-54.

Most normative scholarship on R2P focuses on how the articulation of the “dual concepts” of sovereignty approach articulated by Former Secretary General Kofi Annan, itself indebted to the work on responsibility sovereignty done by Francis Deng and Roberta Cohen in the 1990s, opens up political space for intervention within the prevailing international order. Under this framework, the legal sovereignty of a state within the international community is linked to its protection of the human rights of its constituents. R2P reconfigures sovereignty from an innate quality of a state to a positive function that legitimates governance, meaning in turn that any competent actor can step in if a particular state fails to do so.<sup>81</sup> However, turning this move into a positive, practical understanding does create problems because there is no single way of conceiving of protection as a particular activity. This reconfiguration must be problematised and located within the broader reprogramming of the UN as a project for “managing and regulating the global population”, which includes contending biopolitical rationalities of what “life” is or should entail.<sup>82</sup> Such analysis helps to open up the investigation of “life” as a political artefact.

Using Agamben’s vocabulary this analysis helps to identify the interplay between βίος (bios), namely the human life stripped of all but its physical existence which can be termed “bare life”, and Ζωή (zoe), the spiritual or social coordinates which make life meaningful or “sacred.”<sup>83</sup> Though Agamben’s distinction is a useful fulcrum for analysing how concepts of “life” and the protection of individual bodies are not essentially related but politically demarcated, it fails to theorise adequately the role of

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<sup>81</sup> Cohen, *Globalization*

<sup>82</sup> Jaeger, "Un Reform, Biopolitics, and Global Governmentality."

<sup>83</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer*.

technology and the realisation of agency in a heterogeneous context as it relates to the terms on which this distinction operates. What can be added here is that, as Chapters Three and Four make clear, protection realised in terms of NATO's emergent strategy of humanitarian intervention as spatial management has little relationship to the protection of vulnerable groups or types of life at all, but that this stems from the realisation of intervention as a form of aerial warfare. Here the distinction between zoe and bios operates in the register of legitimation, not of practice. In essence, these distinctions stabilise because they are lashed to a particular technological assemblage that both necessitates and mobilises such a distinction. The same comment can be made about readings of R2P as a linguistic device that rallies international support given that this efficacy relates to the ability to realise action as a military practice, but this practice is not unpacked in political terms in order to ascertain its effects on life.

It is precisely R2P's specification of a semiotic device without properly articulating its relationship to specific practices that allows it to resonate with and legitimate the intervention assemblage in a manner that forecloses debate about practical repercussions and thereby perpetuates the bracketing off military force as a technical domain. R2P in this sense animates and legitimates a social-material assemblage of intervention, but it lacks any means of auto-critique in terms of the effects these mobilised assemblages have. Instead, the literature reifies these practical effects as part of R2P itself. What is missing here is an understanding of how the ultimately ambiguous practical logic of R2P is lashed to specific technological elements that are always already beyond the scope of the concept itself.

A close reading of the ICISS report illustrates that there is a practical gap within the doctrine in the sense that it seeks to comment on military operations but does not do so in terms of strategy. Instead, it separates practical considerations from the moral and legal arguments that lie at the heart of the report. What persists is a practical gap into which the specific strategy of policing by way of air power inserts itself, bringing it into resonance with a particular intervention assemblage. The aerial warfare strategy, as covered in the preceding Chapters, has its own effect, rationality, and ethical matrix. The ICISS was clear that, following their report, “there still remain to be argued all the moral, legal, political, and operational questions...[b]ut, if people are prepared to look at all these issues from the new perspective we propose, it may just make finding agreed answers that much easier.”<sup>84</sup> This perspective is always, already incomplete, however, because military force itself is accepted as a technical rather than political domain. The concept of dual sovereignty underpinning R2P muddles the concept’s engagement with military force, thereby ensuring practical ambiguity.

There is an unresolved tension in R2P in that it tries to reconcile an understanding of security as the quality of life experienced by populations and a military logic, which when carried out via air power, for instance, serves to frame humanitarian crises as a problem of circulation manageable via precision targeting. The report’s reading of the human security paradigm is telling in this respect:

One of the virtues of expressing the key issue in this debate as “the responsibility to protect” is that it focuses attention where it should be most concentrated, on the human needs of those seeking protection or assistance. The emphasis in the security debate shifts, with this focus,

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<sup>84</sup> ICISS, *The Responsibility to Protect*, para. 2.5. All references to R2P are to the ICISS report itself. Rather than page numbers references are formatted by chapter and section, as they are in the report.

from territorial security, and security through armaments, to security through human development with access to food and employment, and to environmental security.<sup>85</sup>

Though the report paints this as a shift, it is important to note that the military dimension, namely “security through armaments”, does not actually drop out of the debate. In one sense this shift is rhetorical, given that while this passage advocates a shift from a concept of security premised on military force to one defined in terms of human development, the overall context of R2P still retains a mechanism for realising “security through armaments.” In another sense, this shift is indeterminate because it assumes there is no practical strategy for intervention already, and that this should become a focus of discussion. Chapters Three and Four clearly illustrate that this is not the case in practice, meaning R2P mobilises pre-existing intervention assemblages like NATO’s.

This tension is more than a passing inconsistency. At the same time that the report undermines the concepts of traditional sovereignty it reinserts and reaffirms them in order to show how geopolitical logics of security still pertain.<sup>86</sup> Evoking the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, it contends:

global terrorism, with its roots in complex conflicts in distant lands, struck the US homeland: impregnable lines of continental defence proved an illusion even for the world’s most powerful state...In an interdependent world, in which security depends on a framework of stable sovereign entities, the existence of fragile states, failing states, states who through weakness or ill-will harbour those dangerous to others, or states that can only maintain international order by means of gross human rights violations, can constitute a risk to people everywhere.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 2.22

<sup>86</sup> This is a similar argument to the one made by De Larrinaga and Doucet regarding the compatibility of Sovereign Power (in Agamben’s sense) and Human Security. See: Miguel De Larrinaga and Marc G. Doucet, "Sovereign Power and the Biopolitics of Security," *Security Dialogue* 39, no. 5 (2008).

<sup>87</sup> R2P, 1.21

The tensions between traditional forms of state security and the need to protect the human population as such are apparent in this passage. At the same time that interdependence and common threat are evoked the fragility of the international systems is linked to failing, weak, or “ill-willed” states that represent a threat specifically because they mark an abrogation of order. This is, of course, a purely geopolitical formulation that foregrounds states and the systems built around them. The result is the evocation of a military-based geopolitical narrative of security premised on the enforcement of world order. This does not mean the two logics can be disentangled. Actually, the lasting importance of Annan’s “two concepts” model speaks to the fact that neither over-determines the other. As a result, the two-concepts-of-sovereignty-model can be read as a contemporary restatement of what Schmitt identified as the simultaneous denunciation and robust mobilisation of military force made possible by international jurisprudence.<sup>88</sup>

The use of military force to mitigate war is evoked at the same time that such an approach to conflict is denounced; the “building” of suitable states can occur by means of military intervention to construct suitable sovereigns. In terms of NATO’s intervention assemblage, this ambiguity is specific because it curtails a direct analysis of practice, instead asserting that the novelty of R2P creates a *tabula rasa* on which to create new strategies. This, of course, is problematic.

### **5.3.1 Military Commanders as Petty Sovereigns?**

Having established that military logic and technology plays an important role in the overall concept(s) of sovereignty at play in R2P, the question of what influence military

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<sup>88</sup> Schmitt, *supra. nt.* 36; See above discussion in section 1.1.

command systems, and the commanders themselves, have within the intervention apparatus becomes important. At first blush, it appears that R2P cements the status of military commanders as what Butler has styled “petty sovereigns”: individuals are given the power to decide upon the exception given the indeterminacy of the structure within which they reside.<sup>89</sup> In the R2P chapter dedicated to operational dimensions, the role of military commanders is implicated in the practice of intervention as follows:

The objective of the mandate should be to allow the executing military commander to identify his mission and his tasks properly and to propose an operational concept which promises quick success, paramount for an operation which aims at the protection of humans under attack. This will allow the commander to propose the size and composition of the necessary forces and to draft appropriate rules of engagement (ROEs) and to ask for political authorization and the allocation of resources necessary to mount and to sustain the operation.<sup>90</sup>

While this may seem inconsequential in passing, the report goes on to note that, while ultimate authority for intervention should emanate from the UN, coalitions of states are tapped to carry out intervention because the UN lacks the military, logistical, or communication infrastructure necessary.<sup>91</sup> This places significant importance on the military doctrines and technological capacities of states during the planning and execution of intervention.

This does not evidence the petty sovereignty of military leaders so much as it locates the point at which rationalities of intervention resonate and animate R2P. Military commanders are human nodes within the larger assemblage that help to translate humanitarianism into targeting decisions. As the discussion of the virtualisation of the

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<sup>89</sup> Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (New York, NY: Verso, 2004).

<sup>90</sup> *Responsibility to Protect*, 7.16.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.12.

policing model in Kosovo unpacks, it is highly problematic to attribute unencumbered agency to the human nodes of this material assemblage. Moving from humanitarian ethos to military operations necessitates a series of translations that, depending on the social-material context involved, can undermine rather than simply enforce concepts like R2P. In terms of NATO-led humanitarian interventions, the translation of an “international responsibility” occurs through the deployment of air power, and as such has a particular effect on the outcome.

Instead of petty sovereignty, the role of military commanders marks the space where the social-material elements of intervention, particularly how NATO has engineered a heterogeneous assemblage that provides a particular, stabilised lens through a reconciliation of humanitarian ends and military means can appear. They are themselves actants in a larger heterogeneous assemblage; a location that problematises the idea that they “decide” in any specific sense. Understanding how this assemblage has formed since the first such intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina shows that R2P does not really create any new form of intervention. Instead, R2P must be understood as having become part of a pre-existing assemblage and thereby been shaped by downward causality. This relationship between practice and concept has not been given sustained attention by those pushing for the more robust use of military force and the creation of an international dialogue on the use of force. This should serve as a jarring reminder to those who support R2P that the concept does not, in and of itself, represent a move toward more coherence between identity, material means, and stated principles. By paying too much attention to the debate about intervention in normative terms, and whether practice

itself meets principled and morally charged expectations, such scholarship dooms itself by missing the complex agency that material things make possible and thereby influence.

#### **5.4 Analysing the Discourse of OOD and OUP**

The effect of this resonance is a form of downward causality wherein the “protection” associated with R2P is reconfigured by its materialisation through the air power assemblage. This reconfiguration, as well as its effects, are legitimated by the creation of discourse which situates this practice within a particular field of intelligibility. In resonating with the air power assemblage, R2P is materialised in such a way that a gap emerges between the humanitarian goals of the operation, noted as the protection of civilians in Benghazi as per UNSC resolution 1973, and the actual military strategy adopted by NATO. The air power assemblage, as has been already shown, reconfigures human protection into a localised strategy for managing the circulation of objects as a means of creating order. In this way, human protection, and the long-term political stability of Libya, become derivative rather than immediate outcomes of NATO intervention.

As with Kosovo, the air power model sat awkwardly with the stated humanitarian ethos of the intervention, leading to a discursive process whereby NATO’s efforts were legitimated while the claim that the operation was in fact humanitarian is made intelligible. To do so, Western discourse creates a set of inter-linked identity constructs for the NTC, Ghaddafi forces, and NATO that make it conceivable to intervene in the conflict through air power and to define the operation as humanitarian even though it does not provide direct protection of individuals. Two particular discursive moves are

foundational to this field of intelligibility and attempt to reconcile the materially mediated realisation of R2P with its stated purpose.

The first discursive move is to identify the NTC and Gaddafi in linked but differentiated terms that situate NATO's role as the creator of order. This differentiation is based on a series of linked and dualistic identity characteristics.<sup>92</sup> The NTC is identified (rather problematically) as a coherent, rational expression of the will of the Libyan people, while Gaddafi's forces mark an authoritarian, irrational imposition of illegitimate power. This discourse is linked to the identification of the NTC as a responsible power broker, and Gaddafi as a bloodthirsty maniac, as discussed above. Not only does this discourse allow NATO to claim that support of the NTC is itself humanitarian rather than political, it situates these identity constructs as positive and negative indicators of political order. The NTC is identified as synonymous with increasing human safety *qua* an emerging political order; Gaddafi and his loyalists are identified as irrational brigands whose activities are always synonymous with disorder. In this way, human protection, and with it NATO's definition of success, become synonymous with the NTC's rise to power rather than the more circumscribed goal of protecting the citizens of Benghazi as per the UNSC resolution. Any negative effect, in comparison, is identified as evidence of disorder that rationalises further international action.

The second discursive move, which is built upon these identity constructs, is a re-articulation that the use of force is technical rather than political in itself. The deployment of this technical credential becomes a foundation for the displacement of moral responsibility for both ongoing violence and future stability to the NTC and Gaddafi,

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<sup>92</sup> Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 18-21.

rather than to NATO itself. NATO is clearly defined as an outside arbiter whose sole role is the creation of order—“space for politics”—through a highly technical application of military force. Though it was actually oversold, the highly precise, technologised, and professional manner in which NATO intervened becomes an important element in legitimating the intervention, in the process rendering humanitarianism synonymous with precision rather than protection.<sup>93</sup> There is an element of intertextuality to this position in that Libya was situated in relation to the “Afghan Model.” In particular, NATO’s defeat of the Taliban was taken as practical evidence that air power could be used to create the circumstances necessary for friendly indigenous groups to do the majority of the fighting with a modicum of ground support in the form of special forces.<sup>94</sup> In terms of the practice of intervention, such experience helped cement the black boxing of military intervention as a technical, apolitical exercise in itself. This black boxing, which contributes to the discursive identification of the use of force in purely instrumental terms, is reflected in the scholarly discourse as well, in so doing obscuring the effects of materialising the intervention. This is because, rather than problematise the relationship between the principal of R2P and its realisation, scholars have largely adopted the technical, instrumental vocabulary that has helped to black box the air power assemblage.

The US and NATO discourse surrounding Libya was predicated on a specific discursive construction of the relationship between the NTC and the pro-Gaddafi units. Similar to the split responsibility noted by Hansen in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the particular

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<sup>93</sup> Chamayou, *Theory*. Chapter 15.

<sup>94</sup> Stephen D. Biddle, "Allies, Airpower, and Modern Warfare: The Afghan Model in Afghanistan and Iraq," *International Security* 30, no. 3 (2006); Stephen D. Biddle, "Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare," *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 2 (2003).

configuration of this set of linked identities created a moral impetus for international action which (dis)placed accountability for the effects of the operation on to the pro-Gaddafi forces and the long-term stability of Libya to the NTC. This discursive construct helped to stabilise the reconfiguration of NATO's mission from the direct protection of civilians (the mission implied by resolution 1973) into the more managerial engagement with objects that hallmarks the air power assemblage. The discursive establishment of this particular ethical dynamic had the effect of situating the military operation in relation to R2P while also conditioning the understanding of success in terms that were consistent with the air power assemblage. It was not NATO's job to "win": "the NATO mission is not about winning or losing. It's about basically saving lives."<sup>95</sup> This was clear in that, unlike in Kosovo where NATO played an integral role in the humanitarian mission, Secretary General Rasmussen articulated a different perspective in Libya:

I think it is for the United Nations to be the leading coordinator of the delivery of humanitarian assistance... I do not see NATO in a leading role when it comes to humanitarian assistance. I would appreciate if the European Union could take initiatives as regards the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Having said all that, I also want to make clear that if it is requested, NATO will, of course, be able to protect the delivery of humanitarian assistance. But as you all know, it is also a bit of a controversial question to have a military organisation to take part in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. And this is the reason why I want to reiterate that once again that NATO has no intention to play a leading role in the delivery of humanitarian assistance.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Romero and Lavoie, "Press Briefing on Libya."

<sup>96</sup> Andres Fogh Rasmussen, "Nato Secretary General's Monthly Press Conference " news release, 12 April 2011.

Though NATO had proven itself successful militarily “it was for others, in particular, the United Nations and Contact Group to take the lead on the political track.”<sup>97</sup> At the practical level this differentiation of authority made it possible to carry out and legitimise OOD and OUP as a form of policing.

United States and NATO efforts were articulated as an ongoing process of creating order, an approach that hinged on the linked identification of the NTC and Gaddafi forces. As a marker of disorder, NATO engaged the Libyan leader in order to “encourage Gadhafi to end hostilities” by undertaking military operations that “affected the environment.”<sup>98</sup> Indeed, US Commanders were clear that they did not “call out specific units for attack,” instead concentrating on creating a particular environment within Libya.<sup>99</sup> The activities of Gaddafi, as well as supportive military forces, were identified as “immoral and illegal,” an ethical construct that authorised international intervention. But, the purpose of this action was specific, “to bring some space for diplomacy to take place, for political intercourse, and create a situation that will enable the people of Libya to decide their own future.”<sup>100</sup> In April 2011, NATO was clear that it saw no way to stop Gaddafi forces with air power alone. As Robert Gates explained, however, the coalition was “trying to provide enough space—and in order to protect the opposition from Gaddafi’s military to the extent we can, we are reducing his military capabilities to the point where hopefully many of these other towns....will have a better

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<sup>97</sup> Oana Lungescu and Roland Lavoie, "Press Briefing on Libya," news release, 19 July, 2011; Oana Lungescu and Charles Bouchard, "Press Briefing on Libya," news release, 28 June, 2011.

<sup>98</sup> Samuel Locklear and David Lapan, "Dod News Briefing with Adm. Locklear Via Telephone from USS Mount Whitney," news release, 22 March, 2011.

<sup>99</sup> Gerard Hueber and David Lapan, "Dod News Briefing with Rear Adm. Hueber Via Telephone from USS Mount Whitney," news release, 23 March 2011.

<sup>100</sup> Lungescu and Bouchard, "Press Briefing on Libya."

chance of being successful in bringing about change [in Libya].”<sup>101</sup> “Providing space” was essential given that, as the DOD pointed out, the anti-Gaddafi movement was “not well organised, not very robust....they’re achieving a benefit from the actions that [US forces were] taking.”<sup>102</sup> The operation itself was one designed to “create space” in a way that allowed the opposition to coalesce and advance in keeping with prevailing air power doctrine.

The problem, however, is that this advance did not include the stabilising of an alternative governing coalition or the establishment of a foundation for post-intervention stability. Instead, the rise of the NTC itself was taken as a marker of order. This discursive schematic helped to situate an understanding of the conflict space itself. The bombing campaign was contingent on the differentiation of two discrete spatial constructions that emerged in relation to the identification of the NTC and pro-Gaddafi forces. Specifically, the identification of each as a function of order or disorder, respectively, became reflected in a territorial dichotomy premised on whether the territory was controlled by pro-Gaddafi forces or the NTC. Stability and normalcy were routinely associated with the areas under NTC control, spaces where NATO argued people “basically could have returned to civilian life.”<sup>103</sup> As the operation wore on, there was an emergent assumption that normalcy and political viability had returned to the NTC controlled Eastern areas.<sup>104</sup> On one level, this is consistent with the American

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<sup>101</sup> Gates and Cartwright, "Dod News Briefing with Secretary Gates and Gen. Cartwright from the Pentagon".

<sup>102</sup> William E. Gortney, "Dod News Briefing with Vice Adm. Gortney from the Pentagon on Libya Operation Odyssey Dawn," news release, 28 March, 2011.

<sup>103</sup> Romero and Lavoie, "Press Briefing on Libya."

<sup>104</sup> Lungescu and Bouchard, "Press Briefing on Libya." *ibid. ibid.*

perspective on war as a departure from politics, the latter to be restored by the establishment of peace.<sup>105</sup> On another, however, statements like this play a dual role in making militarised R2P missions conceivable: they both (re)assert the relationship between human protection and space rather than physical protection while displacing the latter to local and other international actors.

In this way, the discourse makes conceivable a particular approach to the conflict, which itself bears the marks of the downward causality of the air power model. Clearly, in statements like this, a discursive function comes to legitimise the functional differentiation between the very specific goals of the military operation and the overall diplomatic and humanitarian goals of the international community. This downward causality is most clearly apparent in how Gaddafi's fault for the ongoing disorder in Libya was related to the actual practice of bombing campaign. In the same way that NATO operations in Kosovo did not directly target Slobodan Milošević (though he, like Gaddafi, was routinely denigrated personally for creating the violence), NATO did not directly engage the Libyan leader. Stopping Gaddafi was instead clearly located as a derivative outcome of a larger policing effort. General Carter Ham was clear that "... [it was] US policy that the current leader in Libya no longer continue in that role. However, it is not a military aim to achieve that objective."<sup>106</sup> While many may take this as a subterfuge for NATO's true goal of regime change, in fact, this approach is consistent with an operation designed to police the Libyan conflict space and can be read as evidence of downward causality emanating from the air power assemblage.

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<sup>105</sup> Carvin and Williams, *Law, Science, Liberalism*.

<sup>106</sup> Carter Ham, "Transcript: Nbc Interviews Africom's Gen. Ham on Libya Operations Transitioning to Nato," news release, 26 March 2011.

Gaddafi's behaviour, though moribund, was identified as a manifestation of underlying disorder that would be resolved through policing. Several times US and NATO leaders were asked if they would target Gaddafi if they knew his location, and in all cases answers were similar to the one given by General Ham on 26 March: "I would not. I do not have that as a mission. I don't spend any time thinking about where he is. I don't expend any of my intelligence collection assets doing that. It's not part of my mission set."<sup>107</sup> NATO spokesperson Bracken was "slightly surprised" by the interest in targeting Gaddafi given that "the location of Qadhafi as an individual is not relevant for the operation effect. The operation effect is to stop attacks on civilian personnel" by shaping the environment through precise targeting.<sup>108</sup> The point of NATO bombing was not about individuals, but about human protection realised by disrupting the command and control of Gaddafi's forces.<sup>109</sup> The NATO Secretary General had argued that Gaddafi was a political problem, one for the Libyan people to deal with and not an individual NATO would target—"The possible capture of Qadhafi is not a decisive factor".<sup>110</sup> When the former Libyan leader was tortured and killed by anti-Regime fighters in October,

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<sup>107</sup> Carter Ham, "Transcript: Us Africom Commander Gen. Ham Discusses Libya Operations with Cnn's Blitzer," news release, 26 March 2011, 2011. There would be a continuing insistence on the part of NATO that they did not know where Gaddafi was, nor did it matter given the nature of the military operation. See, for example (this is not a complete list): Cameron Romero and Charles Bouchard, "Press Briefing on Libya," news release, 22 September, 2011; Carmen Romero, "Press Briefing on Libya," news release, 13 May, 2011; Carmen Romero and Rob Weighill, "Press Briefing on Libya," news release, 29 April, 2011; Lungescu and Lavoie, "Press Briefing on Libya."

<sup>108</sup> Carmen Romero and Mike Bracken, "Press Briefing on Libya," news release, 20 May, 2011.

<sup>109</sup> Carmen Romero and Charles Bouchard, "Nato Press Briefing on Libya," news release, 26 April 2011.

<sup>110</sup> Quote from: Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "Monthly Press Briefing," news release, 5 September 2011; Andres Fogh Rasmussen, "Press Conference by Nato Secretary General on the Latest Development in Libya and Operation Unified Protector " news release, 21 October, 2011; Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "Press Conference by Nato Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen in His Capacity as Nrc Chairman, after the Informal Morning Session of the Natorussia Council in Sochi, Russian Federation," news release, 4 July, 2011. Colonel Lavoie would also echo the role of Libyans in dealing with Gaddafi. See: Romero and Lavoie, "Press Briefing on Libya."

Secretary General Rasmussen, when asked if he was disappointed about the inability to try Gaddafi in The Hague as a result, responded: "Let me stress once again, and I've done that on several occasions, neither Colonel Qadhafi nor any other individual have been targets of our operations."<sup>111</sup>

Human protection was also understood as a derivative outcome of creating order, and as such NATO operations were legitimated as humanitarian even though they did not directly realise the human protection mission outlined by resolution 1973. The lack of a ground component meant "saving lives" was not a direct military goal but a derivative one that emerged as order was created, which was linked discursively to the NTC's control of the country. In October, with operations coming to an end, the NATO Secretary General was clear, "We conduct our operations from the air and at sea, no troops on the ground... So we feel confident that the NTC forces will do all they can to prevent a humanitarian disaster and help the civilian population all they can."<sup>112</sup>

However, this did not seem to require actually knowing much about the state of affairs on the ground. The goal at this point in the operation, as Admiral Locklear explained, was to build the no-fly zone in keeping with the UN authorisation, but what such questions illustrate is the series of translations and political assumptions regarding how a human protection mission is realised.

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<sup>111</sup> Rasmussen, "Press Conference by Nato Secretary General on the Latest Development in Libya and Operation Unified Protector".

<sup>112</sup> Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "Closing Press Conference by Nato Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen after the Defence Ministerial Meetings," news release, 6 October 2011, 2011. The Secretary General repeated these comments as well: Rasmussen, "Press Conference by Nato Secretary General on the Latest Development in Libya and Operation Unified Protector".

This realisation did not come with a clear understanding of, or direct engagement with, the humanitarian situation on the ground. As General Bouchard explained:

NATO does not have anybody on the ground, and the information that I receive is information I receive through various networks and various organizations. But to give you an exact number is not something I can because I do not have such numbers. And therefore, we rely on the press also, and the media, to tell us about the events, to tell us about the harm that is being brought on the population.<sup>113</sup>

When pressed on how many individuals NATO was actually saving Bouchard's answer was "the numbers [of those killed] would be significantly larger if NATO wasn't there to help bring an end to the violence."<sup>114</sup> General Bouchard argued in September briefings that:

at the end of the day this is a victory for the people of Libya. We've shaped the environment to help them achieve their objective, to stop organized and state-sponsored violence...to create an environment for diplomacy and democratic dialogue, and finally, and ultimately, to enable the people of Libya to decide for themselves their own future.<sup>115</sup>

General Bouchard explained that success was "not a matter of numbers, but effects and the effect is to bring an end to the violence against the population...a solution that's kinetic, non-kinetic, diplomatic and political."<sup>116</sup> The desired end state was both larger than and reliant upon the military operation, which itself was constructed in very narrow terms as a means of creating a political order hallmarked by the emergence of the NTC.

As a result, NATO efforts were the stated goals of the international community (re)configured in terms management in keeping with the air power assemblage. The effect of the operation itself was also legitimised through the (dis)placement of

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<sup>113</sup> Romero and Bouchard, "Nato Press Briefing on Libya."

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Romero and Bouchard, "Press Briefing on Libya."

<sup>116</sup> Romero and Bouchard, "Nato Press Briefing on Libya."

responsibility for the intervention's effects onto other actors. From NATO's perspective, "the Interim National Council and the opposition, in general, have a very...have [sic] a big responsibility to ensure that the transition to democracy will take place in a peaceful and orderly fashion."<sup>117</sup> The fact that NATO saw its role as that of policing into existence order, rather than support any side as such, became increasingly clear. When pushed in April on how much NATO would directly aid and support rebel groups, Rasmussen had been clear: "it is for the Libyan people to decide the future of Libya. [NATO has] no intention to interfere with Libyan politics. It is for the Libyan people to shape the future of their own country."<sup>118</sup> While NATO had a moral responsibility to help create this order, responsibility for the efficacy was displaced to the NTC, thereby insulating the air power assemblage from the critique that it had not accomplished its goals. At the end of the operation this perspective remained:

NATO's mission is over. And the new Libya has been born. But the harder task remains for Libya's new leaders to shape their society into a true democracy. Because they have won their freedom. But freedom comes with responsibilities. And the National Transitional Council has an immense responsibility; to the Libyan people, and to history.<sup>119</sup>

This discursive configuration established the NATO mission as a policing effort, in so doing making its humanitarian role intelligible in terms of creating order while separating it both from ongoing violence and the long-term stability of the country. This

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<sup>117</sup> Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "Press Conference by Nato Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen after the Working Lunch of Nato Ministers of Defence with Non-Nato Contributors to Operation Unified Protector " news release, 8 June, 2011. He repeated the responsibility of the NTC at the end of NATO's operation, see: Rasmussen, "Monthly Press Briefing."

<sup>118</sup> Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "Press Conference by Nato Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen after the Working Lunch of Nato Ministers of Foreign Affairs with Libya Partners, Berlin," news release, 14 April, 2011.

<sup>119</sup> Rasmussen, "Monthly Press Briefing."

illustrates the downward causality of the air power model, the role of discourse in situating claims that it is humanitarian, and also renders visible a growing functional differentiation between intervention and other aspects of R2P. This differentiation becomes clear at precisely the point where its effects are legitimated via discourse. NATO's goal of "creating space" had a series of operational, discursive, and ultimately political effects on the realisation of OOD and OUP as R2P missions. Importantly, the arms embargo and no-fly zones were separated from the human protection mission, the latter "a distinct mission set requiring the use of air-to-ground attacks on regime forces and...capabilities."<sup>120</sup> When asked about the possibility that large numbers of weapons had been pilfered from Gaddafi's stores, a problem related to the long-term governability of Libya, Colonel Lavoie again highlighted the specificity of the Allied action:

I'm afraid I can only comment on what is under the mandate of Unified Protector, so basically which is to protect the civilian population. We do not have a role and have a presence on the ground to track and to account for weapons, and I cannot comment on behalf of other government organisations that would cooperate with the Libyan authorities to manage this issue.<sup>121</sup>

This differentiation of authority is a manifestation of the particular ethical discourse that surrounded OOD and OUP, which in turn resonates with and marks the downward causality of the military apparatus being used. What results is a reconfiguration of R2P at the level of practice, namely from a continuum of efforts to a series of functionally differentiated tasks, which is created by the need to legitimatise the role of air power.

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<sup>120</sup> Gortney, "Dod News Briefing with Vice Adm. Gortney from the Pentagon on Libya Operation Odyssey Dawn."

<sup>121</sup> Romero and Lavoie, "Press Briefing on Libya." *ibid.*

This not only related to the relationship between air power and other facets of the international response to Libya, but also created a gap between the intervention and its after-effects. Rasmussen was clear that, in relation to Libya, “reconstruction is not appropriate because for the new authorities in Libya it’s really to build from scratch...” but he argued the support necessary should come from the European Union.<sup>122</sup> Bouchard was clear that “[o]ur mission will come to an end when we can have dialogue, and I will let those above me decide that portion of it.”<sup>123</sup> The specificity of the mission, and how human protection was differentiated from other military and diplomatic operations related to the long-term stability of Libya was clear. It also completely missed the fact that the NTC was itself a marriage of convenience that lacked direct, legitimate relationships with the various armed factions implicated in the conflict.<sup>124</sup> This delegation of responsibility speaks to the fact that R2P has, at its core, a blindness to the general correlates of state violence while also empowering international organisations like the UN to make decisions regarding the nature of politics in conflict areas.<sup>125</sup> What the Libya case adds, however, is a clear example of how these modes of thinking are not simply discursive but are entangled with the more general assemblage created around air power.

The final facet that helped to situate this field of intelligibility, wherein intervention was necessary but necessarily circumscribed by the affordances of air power, was the identification of NATO efforts as purely technical rather than political. For this reason, NATO’s operations were defined by the advanced technological tools they relied

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<sup>122</sup> Rasmussen, "Monthly Press Briefing." 5 September, 2011

<sup>123</sup> Romero and Bouchard, "Nato Press Briefing on Libya."

<sup>124</sup> Bartu, "Corridor."

<sup>125</sup> Fishel, "Theorizing Violence in the Responsibility to Protect."; Orford, *International Authority*.

on. NATO was clear that it was using airborne platforms to do most of its targeting and ISR sorties, as they explained to the Press.<sup>126</sup> The politics of conceiving of humanitarian intervention in terms of air power means understanding human protection in terms of management and effectiveness. When Admiral Locklear was asked whether air power could alleviate the suffering of Libyans caught in the violence, specifically in Misrata, his answer discussed the use of precision weapons systems to “minimize the collateral damage when we have to take kinetic operations” and “be ultimately effective in ensuring that we be in a state prescribed by the Security Council and our individual leadership.”<sup>127</sup> What is interesting, however, is just how rhetorical this was in practice. Qatari Special Forces did deploy to the NTC front lines, training them in target identification and location, which yielded a steady flow of information from forward operating bases to NATO via Twitter.<sup>128</sup> Even with this reliance on ground forces, the unrelenting, persistent gaze of NATO was an important element in the construction of OUP as a viable military operation undertaken according to technical standards:

Persistent means you to have to be over the skies of Libya 24 hours a day for seven months now, every day, every night - controlling the airspace and what happens on the ground. If you want to have that incredible capacity to strike over 10,000 times without collateral damage, you need to have a persistent capacity to look at a target. First of all, find the target, then identify the target, then to ensure you can strike with precision without creating damage and finally do the strike. Well this means, we need constant, persistent ISR.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> For an example see: Lungescu and Bracken, "Nato Press Briefing on Libya." 7 July.

<sup>127</sup> Locklear and Lapan, "Dod News Briefing with Adm. Locklear Via Telephone from Uss Mount Whitney."

<sup>128</sup> Robert H. Gregory, *Clean Bombs*.

<sup>129</sup> Giampaolo Di Paolo, "Speech by Admiral Giampaolo Di Paolo, Chairman of the Nato Military Committee at the 57th Annual Session of the Nato Parliamentary Assembly, Bucharest, Romania " news release, 8 October, 2011.

Even beyond the fact that targeting information requires constant (re)interpretation it should also be noted that very few advanced ISR resources, specifically drones, were devoted to the Libya action. Even the capabilities of NATO—at least at this point in history—offer a partial view replete with gaps and black spaces filled in various political-discursive ways.

Within the confines of such operations, commanders were open about the need to “fuse information from a multitude of sources, whether they be from NATO and partners’ state-of-the-art surveillance, or from open source reports into reliably usable intelligence so that forces involved in Operation Unified Protect can carry out their military task.”<sup>130</sup> The importance of interpreting the data provided by targeting systems was very clear in Kosovo, but it was equally clear in Libya. Without “boots on the ground,” NATO had an incomplete picture of events which forced them to interpret the movement of various forces.<sup>131</sup> This of course did not provoke a more general reflection on the suitability of air power, or its focus on the movement of objects rather than the direct protection of individuals, because these effects had been situated by a particular discursive context. This context was itself shaped by the affordances of air power—its focus on objects and management of movement—and therefore must be read as registering the downward causality of the air power assemblage at the same time that the latter is legitimated as a humanitarian effort.

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<sup>130</sup> Oana Lungescu and Mike Bracken, "Press Briefing on Libya," news release, 17 June, 2011.

<sup>131</sup> A very good example of a General situating the role of interpretation and intelligence can be found in: Oana Lungescu and Mark van Uhm, "Press Briefing on Libya," news release, 5 April, 2011.

## 5.5 Conclusion

In this reading the unraveling of international support for the Libya intervention is easily understood. R2P, rather than a meaningful referent in itself, was materialised through its resonance with the air power assemblage. This created a gap between the stated purpose of the intervention and its ultimate effect. Rather than a nefarious attempt to obscure the goal of regime change, the collapse of Gaddafi's regime and the rise of the NTC emerge as functions of a particular policing effort. Both public and scholarly reflection on this reformulation of resolution 1973 into a particular socio-material practice is itself obscured and legitimated by a particular discursive schematic. The affordances of the air power model came to shape this discourse, at the same time that the assemblage itself was legitimated and thereby supported by discourse. Despite R2P proponents' contention that prevention, reaction, and reconstruction represent a non-hierarchical totality, it is clearly the case that NATO operations are separated from post-conflict reconstruction by this formulation. One must not mistake the success or failure of any particular mode of intervention as a singular failure of either R2P or international humanitarianism as such. Paris and Morris intuitively grasp that R2P's general humanitarian ethos is incompatible with its militarised acts, but this needs to be understood as a function of its materialisation as a form of policing via air power.<sup>132</sup> This is not a "naturally" occurring

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<sup>132</sup> Paris, "The 'Responsibility to Protect' and the Structural Problems of Preventive Humanitarian Intervention."; Morris, "Libya and Syria: R2p and the Spectre of the Swinging Pendulum."

strategy, but one with a history and internal politics that has receded into the political background.

The powerful influence created by the air power model is palpable--even NATO's success and local support were gleaned through the affordances of its gaze. During a press briefing on 28 June 2011, OUP Commander General Bouchard showed a picture taken of a message splayed out by thankful natives: "TNX NATO."<sup>133</sup> For General Bouchard, the message was an indication of the operation's success and the support of local Libyans. It also, much like the operation overall, evoked success in very specific, tactical terms that were deaf to the political complexity of the Libyan conflict. It would not take long for instability to assert itself, and only a bit longer for a failure of reconstruction to morph into a failure of conflict prevention as international support for the intervention collapsed. As many point out, this long-term instability has proven an important obstacle to action in Syria.

It is in relation to Syria, however, that the lessons of the Libya case become clear. R2P does not provide a foundation for action, but resonates with, mobilises, and is shaped by the military operations undertaken in its name. For this reason, R2P means little in practice itself, but it will be impacted by the operations it authorises. But this resonance must be articulated, tracked, and documented to be understood. This is not simply a technical but a political consideration. To date, practical failures are almost universally taken to be a function of an underdeveloped level of political will. The prescription is therefore further normative pressure, continuing normative entrepreneurship, and more robust action. This concentration will, however, miss the fact

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<sup>133</sup> Lungescu and Lavoie, "Press Briefing on Libya." 19 July 2011

that the most important question is not the level of support but what kind of actions are supported in the name of R2P.

## 6 Conclusion: Humanitarianism, Assemblage(s), and the Future of R2P

There was something surprising in *The Globe and Mail* on 28 March 2015. Louise Arbour, known for her role as Chief Prosecutor for the ICTY, claimed that R2P was a failure. According to Arbour, the imposition of R2P “by the UN in Libya, and the resulting chaos, severely crippled the notion of a legal intervention.”<sup>1</sup> Criticism of R2P is banal to be sure, but Arbour, while occupying several important positions within the global humanitarian and legal system, had been a staunch advocate of the concept. In 2003, as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, she joined a chorus of scholars, policy makers, and practitioners who pushed for the preservation of R2P following the US-led Coalition’s perceived abuse of the humanitarian intervention concept following the invasion of Iraq. She was unequivocal that “indifference or inaction in the knowledge of violence, deprivation and abuse allow exclusion and resentment to fester” with very real consequences for an interconnected world.<sup>2</sup> Now, as the recently retired President and CEO of the International Crisis Group, Arbour has called for “a more humble, ‘micro’ approach: a quiet, mediating role in fixing individual wrongs.”<sup>3</sup> She is also not alone in such a perspective. Janice Stein has also argued that “the activist liberal order

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<sup>1</sup> Doug Saunders, "Why Louise Arbour Is Thinking Twice," *The Globe and Mail*, 28 March 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Louise Arbour, "The Responsibility to Protect as a Duty of Care in International Law and Practice," *Review of International Studies* 34, no. 03 (2008): 445.

<sup>3</sup> Saunders, "Why Louise Arbour Is Thinking Twice."

has come to an end” and that recent debate over Libya indicates that “there is now humility and sober mindedness about what outsiders can do.”<sup>4</sup>

Of course, the R2P faithful have fervently rejected such a perspective. Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time that Canada supported the ICISS, stated that Arbour had gotten things wrong. Axworthy maintained that Arbour’s conclusions were “...ill-founded, based on faulty information and questionable assessments.” What is important here, however, is the former minister counted both Kosovo and Libya as successes, noting that lessons had to be learned but that R2P must be retained as the foundation for reforming and enhancing international capacity.<sup>5</sup> A sense of exasperation is evident in Axworthy’s writing, as it is in a plethora of work which maintains that R2P is not intervention.

This debate, as currently formulated, is indecipherable. It is indecipherable specifically because analysis has failed to grasp that concepts like R2P, and humanitarian intervention before it, must be understood in socio-material terms. This means rejecting arguments from constructivists that such practices passively materialise norms, that success or failure can be reduced to the liberal institutional study of diplomatic politics, or the realist argument that such interventions are nothing more than a biased understanding of how military force operates. What becomes clear from the analysis here is that the enlistment of air power by both the US and NATO meant that the abstract concepts of humanitarianism were mediated by the tools used to realise them; they

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<sup>4</sup> Janice Stein Rudyard Griffiths, "The Future of Global Affairs," in *The Next Debate* (Toronto, ON: Munk School of Global Affairs, 2015). A transcript of this discussion can be found here: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/munk-debates/the-next-debate-janice-gross-stein/article26550981/>.

<sup>5</sup> Lloyd Axworthy, "Louise Arbour Has It Wrong," *The Globe and Mail*, 13 April 2015.

shaped and reconfigured the affordances provided by the systems they enlisted and the spaces in which they were enacted. Materialising humanitarian intervention, and then later R2P, through air power reformulated it as a practice of identifying and attempting to manage the circulation of specific objects.

This reformulation marks the downward causality of a socio-material air power assemblage. Use of air power reformulated humanitarian intervention, and later R2P, into a specific kind of policing logic that sought to create order through the calibrated destruction of specific objects. As Chapter Three points out, this strategy begins to emerge within the complex politics and physical context of the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Events in the former Yugoslavia drove a process of heterogenous engineering that ultimately brought about the emergence of a contentious, historically situated, and materially inflected approach. The affordances of air power meant foregrounding objects, in the process reconfiguring the intervention in such a way that civilians were no longer the practical focus of the intervention. Instead, their protection was rendered as a derivative concern of a larger attempt to manage the conflict through air power. As Chapter Four illustrates, this assemblage was rendered mobile by US and NATO's reliance on advanced weapons systems during operations in Kosovo. The need to interpret data created by these systems made it possible to transpose this practice to Kosovo, but the effect was a visible disjoint between the stated purpose of the bombing and its practical effect. As a result, US and NATO discourse becomes a medium through which changes in how conflict management is understood are visible. Further, United States and NATO discourse comes to operate as a means of rendering intelligible the

claim that bombing is humanitarian, even though it does not directly provide protection for vulnerable groups.

Chapter Five illustrates that R2P has been similarly influenced by its materialisation through the air power assemblage in Libya. Rather than define a new practical agenda, R2P resonates with, and becomes reconfigured at a practical level by, the air power assemblage. As with Kosovo, the use of air power simplified the politics of the Libyan conflict in ways that made it amenable to the use of air power. The result was a reformulation of international efforts from direct human protection into a more general attempt to manage the conflict. This actually meant a functional differentiation, *contra* R2Ps stated non-hierarchical structure, between the various elements of the concept. Intervention was separated, in both practice and discourse, from direct human protection or the long-term stability of Libya. The scholarly literature has largely accepted this discourse, and in so doing has become unable to identify, let alone comment upon, the materialisation of R2P. For Axworthy, and others like him, it is the conceptual formulation of R2P that is to be defended, and any criticism of a single intervention misses this point. For those who lean more toward the perspectives of Arbour and Stein, R2P is certainly a wonderful idea, but it is falling well short. Neither formulation, however, gets to the core of the *hybrid* politics of using military force.

As it is currently organised this debate is unhelpful, largely because it does not engage, in a systematic way, the links between practice and concept. Indications are that R2P has been successful, albeit to a limited extent, in reshaping the debate about human protection, even within the UNSC chamber. Libya did show that international consensus, though naturally more provisional and less enthusiastic in nature than R2P's more

ideological adherents had wanted (and even argued it was in the early days of OOD and OUP), did evidence some change in perspective. Abstentions by both Russia and China during votes on UNSC Resolutions 1970 and 1972 were very important, especially given the level of international outrage over both Operation Allied Force and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Yet, those reading the tea leaves as indicating a meaningful change in how the international community responds to violent humanitarian crises have been put on the defensive by the continued lack of support for any kind of intervention in Syria, save an ongoing air campaign against Daesh.

R2P's emergence, however, has not been properly situated in relation to the military, diplomatic, and developmental practices whose stability the R2P concept has borrowed against to fund its diffusion and continued use. R2P does not create new practices; it animates existing, complex social-material practices, and as such its ongoing development, change, and stability are reliant upon the relationships that result. The cycle of international consensus, deployment, criticism, and return to incapacitation is impossible to engage adequately using only social theory, or plaster over with an imperative humanitarian discourse. One must engage in the back and forth between norms and practices, concepts and their realisation through material objects and in physical spaces.

At this point, the literature on R2P must move beyond legality, norms, and the careful parsing of language to include materiality, technology, and practical rationalities. As this analysis has illustrated, the politics of intervention and R2P are hybrid in nature and must be engaged as such. The strategies used to realise humanitarian interventions or the militarised elements of R2P are political in their own right. Starting with the

emergence of an air power police model in the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the politics of intervention have been mediated in specific ways. Air power foregrounds particular kinds of material objects, like heavy weapons and infrastructure, which are destroyed in an attempt to police conflicts. The result of this foregrounding, however, is that civilian bodies and the politics of specific cases are indiscernible to the resulting assemblage. Human protection is a secondary effect of order making in this model, and as such, the use of force in this way creates a specific humanitarian politics. Such politics are not a natural or logical effect of using military force, but an effect of a specific process of heterogeneous engineering.

Without enriching the literature in this way, the notion that practical problems are always best addressed through normative pressure, and the mobilisation of political will persist. To date, a consensus within the literature has formed that robustness and decisiveness are to be pursued, but precious little thought has been given to the function of intervention itself. Indeed, rigidity has been critiqued and “pragmatism” endorsed; but what are the historically situated assemblages underpinning this “pragmatism”? Which contentious logics have taken on the character of common sense? What politics is the idea of “pragmatism” obscuring? The remedy to this is the establishment of a research agenda that interrogates, disaggregates, and perhaps re-categorises the practices found under the banner of R2P based upon how they materialise and thereby translate humanitarianism. To accomplish this research must attend to the plethora of rationalities, technologies, discourses, and material objects that converge in order to make R2P realisable.

The case studies in this dissertation can be read as the first step toward such a research agenda. By re-centering the practice of intervention, it is possible to trace its development, mutation, and stabilisation over the course of time. Rather than fundamentally reengineered by the conceptual shift created by R2P, intervention is shown to have a longer history and to have stabilised, to some extent, in relation to a class of technological tools and other objects. Through the experience of Bosnia-Herzegovina, air power provided the means to realise a functionally differentiated logic of conflict management that was premised on targeting heavy weapons as a means of policing the conflict, as opposed to the traditional interpositional peacekeeping model.

This logic was further stabilised by the interpellation of humanitarian intervention more fully into the pre-existing social-material assemblage of air power. This interpellation had two key effects. First, the move away from directly addressing vulnerable individuals themselves towards a more managerial approach decentred intervention. Though it was still legitimated in terms of protecting individuals, this was a derivative element of the strategy employed by intervening forces. Second, the interpellation of humanitarian intervention involved (re)stating it in terms of air power doctrine, a move that was substantiated by the indeterminate nature of targeting technology. Such technology is dynamic, fluid, and produces data that must be interpreted, and doctrine shapes this interpretation. Finally, engaging the Libya case illustrates that this has had the effect of functionally differentiating the militarised aspects of R2P from its other constituent practices

By way of conclusion, this Chapter situates this engagement with air power based intervention in relation to some of the current research agendas relating to R2P and

humanitarian intervention. As has already been noted, this concentration on the use of force by the US and NATO via air power represents a granular approach to the study of intervention. Not all interventions are materialised in this way, and their politics and effect on R2P have the potential to be very different. Nor does this engagement with US and NATO practices mean that all ways in which air power is used, far less military force in general, cause this decentring of focus on the individual human body. It is immediately clear, for instance, that current practices of drone warfare seem to be operationalised in a radically different manner in that they *do* focus on individual bodies. Instead what this rather precise engagement accomplishes is a thorough unpacking of the social-material politics of a single governing logic. The more general lesson would be that we cannot take for granted what forms of governing logic are deployed under the aegis of concepts like R2P. By its very nature, this approach disrupts various research agendas because it destabilises the assumption that all forms of intervention operate in broadly similar terms. For this reason, it can be used to destabilise and redirect several more general research agendas.

### **6.1 Displacing and Disaggregating the Research Question(s) Surrounding R2P**

This project followed a specific research trajectory in trying to unpack how humanitarian interventions undertaken by the US and NATO are shaped and stabilised by their use of air power. Engaging the process of heterogeneous engineering that prefigured the emergence of this logic, and in the process elaborating on how it represents an alternative logic of humanitarian intervention as a policing operation, nonetheless brought into view a series of issues germane to the more general debate about peace support operations.

Traditionally peace support operations are organised along a continuum of force, ranging from intervention at one end through peacekeeping out to institution building on the other. This engagement with the particular logic of intervention from the air begins to tell a different story where these practices represent a series of contentious, plural, overlapping, and perhaps functionally differentiated practices. Of course, this study's attempt to distill lessons regarding R2P from a study of military intervention could be criticised for being too focused, too closed, insensitive to the larger scope of the concept.

To this end both the conceptual and practical form of humanitarian intervention, even if it represents the "sharp end" of a larger schematic, emerges in relation to a constellation of social and material elements that are co-constituent. In this context insisting that R2P represents a larger conceptual schematic that either erodes the focus on military force (a la Bellamy) or provides a substantive linguistic frame for mobilising political will *in extremis* (following Evans) fails to problematise how these are rendered possible by the realisation of intervention as an assemblage with its own social-material politics.<sup>6</sup> How assemblages resonate with and thereby stabilise R2P should be the focus of research that traces the materialisation process in its entirety. What this also means is that just because a practice is mobilised by R2P does not mean the materialisation of its ethical perspective is consistent with the concept's overall ethical matrix. In the case of air power, it was shown that the individual human being "protected" was actually decentered in the process of intervening, and as a result, its protection was only of derivative concern. This does not mean the R2P concept is flawed, or that it will not

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<sup>6</sup> Bellamy, *Responsibility to Protect*; Evans, *Responsibility to Protect*.

become the focus of international consensus; it means that the social-material politics are more complicated than a purely social mode of study can engage with.

Addressing this problem requires adopting a more nuanced approach that engages the complex entanglement of both the social and material elements that constitute humanitarian intervention as well as the other practices gathered under the banner of R2P. What follows from this perspective is a displacement of problematic and ultimately constraining research questions regarding socialisation and normative development that now dominate intervention and R2P scholarship. Attempts to distill knowledge of unobservable normative structures, charting their emergence and change through the identification of statements and language asserted to be indicative of social pressure, neglect the entanglement of this social structure with the material elements that necessitate and support them. Ontological heterogeneity provides a means for understanding intervention as an ever and always unfinished programme of technological problem solving, rife with points of friction and its own particular politics that reverberate out and shape the normative structure of international relations. This approach should be repeated for other R2P-related practices and concepts, including other forms of intervention (if they can be identified), peacekeeping, etc. It is not to argue that norms do not exist in a strict sense, but that they emerge, persist, and mutate through their entanglement with material factors.

To this end the understanding that R2P is a social force must be displaced, though not suspended, so that it can be engaged as a class of assemblages that are charted independently so that their effects can be understood. For this literature to progress the circumstances under which heterogeneous assemblages form, persist, and dissolve in

particular times and spaces must become a focus. The need for continuing engagement with the practice of intervention has been getting some important attention in both the academic and professional literatures. Perhaps most important in this regard is *Mass Atrocity Response Operations: A Military Planning Handbook* that was developed by the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, Harvard Kennedy School, and US Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, which has resulted in some doctrinal work within the US military.<sup>7</sup> The issue with such work, however, is two-fold. First, the departure point for this work is the mistaken assumption that because no formal doctrine of intervention exists there are no stable, mutable configurations of intervention that have already emerged and underpin current practice. Second, MARO and US Army doctrinal documents are instrumental in that they are in effect sand table exercises carried out on the back of engineered logics.

To the extent practical considerations are discussed within the larger literature, they are generally discussed in terms of overcoming operational hesitance by finding ways to cement political will.<sup>8</sup> Shortly after the 2011 intervention in Libya two concepts emerged that sought to clarify what intervention in practice should mean: the Brazilian concept of Responsibility While Protecting (RWP) and the Chinese concept of Responsible Protection.<sup>9</sup> R2P supporters, like ICISS Co-Chair Gareth Evans continue to argue such discussions are deeply rooted in the R2P framework. Evans insists R2P was a

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<sup>7</sup> Sewall, Raymond, and Chin, "Maro - Mass Atrocity Response Operations: A Military Handbook."

<sup>8</sup> An example of this kind is: Frank Chalk et al., *Mobilizing the Will to Intervene: Leadership to Prevent Mass Atrocities* (Montreal, QC: Montreal-Queen's UP, 2010).

<sup>9</sup> Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, " Letter Dated 9 November 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations Addressed to the Secretary-General (with Appendix) a/66/551-S/2011/701," (New York, NY: UN General Assembly/Security Council 2011, November 11).

broadening and clarifying invention that made international agreement on a spectrum of humanitarian responses possible, of which military intervention is only the “sharp end.”<sup>10</sup> For Evans there needs to be a rethinking of R2P in practice, but this should not be done at the expense of the capacity for R2P to build international consensus for a broad range of humanitarian operations, of which RWP focuses solely on military force. Evans suggests that “the completely effective implementation of R2P is going to be work in progress for some time yet. Renewed consensus on how to implement it in the hardest cases in future is going to be hard to achieve, and will take time to achieve...But, I think it can be achieved.” by continuing to work on concepts like RWP.<sup>11</sup> RWP and Responsible Protection grow from, rather than suggest an alternative, from this perspective.

The issue, again, is that Evans’ perspective is too instrumentalist, and as a result is deaf to the fact that RWP and Responsible Protection may reference different forms of intervention with their own politics. Indeed, Welsh observed following the Libya intervention that “the by-product of this creep toward partiality is that the ambition of the military mission no longer matches the narrowly circumscribed political objective of civilian protection”, leading to dissensus at the international level as to what the “end game” of such operations actually is.<sup>12</sup> We know now that more than a practical question this is a political one. What is more, differences in governing strategies that have emerged for humanitarian intervention are likely to vary across regional, international, and state actors. This dissertation has focused on the US-NATO approach to

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<sup>10</sup> Gareth J. Evans, "R2p and Rwp after Libya and Syria" (paper presented at the Workshop: Responsibility While Protecting: What's Next?, Rio de Janeiro, 23 August 2012).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Welsh, "Civilian Protection in Libya: Putting Coercion and Controversy Back into Rtop," 259-260.

humanitarian intervention as a means of spatial management which emerged through, and became stabilised by, a reliance upon air power and its relevant tactical rationality. However, the informed observer will know that Western European interventions in places like Sierra Leone (UK's Operation Palliser, 2000), Liberia (ECOMOG, 2005), and Mali (France's Operation Serval, 2013) all used ground forces. These operations suggest that other forms of conflict management, undertaken by other actors and through different technological means, exist. Additionally, UN peacekeeping operations have increasingly blurred the line between classic operations and counterinsurgency.<sup>13</sup> Finally, the UN missions in both the Democratic Republic of Congo and Cote d'Ivoire have been given heavy weapons and a mandate to use them. Such an array of different operational modes should not be understood as a series of acts placed along a continuum, but as a collection of materialisations that must be studied individually in order to tease out their social-material politics.

The intervention and R2P literature(s) also hold some indications of the tension created by not engaging various practices in this way. As Reinhold points out, the lack of international consensus regarding what form military operations connected to R2P should entail was brought into sharp relief by the Libya intervention.<sup>14</sup> Scholars like Reinhold, however, are quick to argue this lack of agreement represents a failure of norm crystallisation, which in the case of Libya allowed Africa's "neopatrimonial" political

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<sup>13</sup> Karsten Friis, "Peacekeeping and Counter-Insurgency – Two of a Kind?," *International Peacekeeping* 17, no. 1 (2010).

<sup>14</sup> Theresa Reinhold, "Africa's Emerging Regional Security Culture and the Intervention in Libya," in *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention*, ed. Aidan Hehir and Robert W. Murray (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 83.

culture to stymie regional engagement.<sup>15</sup> Such an argument is inherently problematic, given that, as de Waal shows, the AU was equally interested in seeing Gaddafi removed from power, but they worked through diplomatic back channels rather than support military intervention for fear of creating regional instability—which, of course, did follow NATO’s intervention.<sup>16</sup> Rather than normative indeterminacy undermining political will to act, the Libya case instead serves to illustrate that the definition of “success” is derived from the mode of action chosen by a particular group. What can be added to the analysis provided above is that this indicates a process of materialisation with its own political effects. In supporting the Libya intervention, commentators like Axworthy and Reinhold, along with the UN Secretariat, define success in a very focused military sense, where the AU, it would seem, conceived “success” in terms of ensuring stability in Northern Africa. What is not at issue here is the abstract elements of R2P, but the differences in materialising and enacting its ethos.

Even the clarity of (Western) purpose in cases like Libya may have, on its own, tainted future normative development of R2P. The content of UNSC Resolutions 1970 and 1972 indicates, given the forms of action they authorise, the Council’s move away from “mediation and compromise” and toward partiality, a move likely to have an impact on future debates.<sup>17</sup> The problem of selectivity, inherited from the history of humanitarian intervention despite claims that R2P brushed the slate clean, has also proven important. That NATO’s clear desire to oust the Gaddafi regime, which was clearly beyond the

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 95-98.

<sup>16</sup> Waal, "My Fears, Alas, Were Not Unfounded': Africa's Responses to the Libya Conflict ".

<sup>17</sup> Welsh, "Civilian Protection in Libya: Putting Coercion and Controversy Back into Rtop," 259.

UNSC mandate, has stifled debate over Syria has become something approaching common knowledge. This comes at the same time that scholars are calling for the internationalisation of R2P by bringing non-Western powers into the fold.<sup>18</sup> Merely calling for continued normative development, however, has very limited practical purchase if it is not combined with a critical study of the materialised practices such norms animate.

Of course, R2P is opaque because it was designed not to have any formal content that would specify the form military intervention should take: R2P as professed by the ICISS delegated questions of practicality to military leaders, and neither the 2005 World Summit Outcome document nor the UN reports that followed have done any different. Practical indeterminacy has actually been lauded by several scholars because it provides a means of ensuring “pragmatism” and avoiding the creation of a “laundry list” that serves to complicate rather than streamline international debate.<sup>19</sup> The problem is that this kind of focus, which is consistent with the general trajectory of R2P scholarship, adopts an implicit teleology regarding the advancement of the liberal international order. R2P offers no reformulation of international legal standards and its influence is largely assumed by a class of scholars convinced of the ability to create change in international politics socially, irrespective of structural or material considerations.<sup>20</sup> What can be added to this criticism, following the analysis provided here, is that normative scholarship, in its infatuation with the politics of the UNSC and desire to cement political will for action,

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<sup>18</sup> Glanville, "Intervention in Libya: From Sovereign Consent to Regional Consent."; Thakur, "R2p after Libya and Syria: Engaging Emerging Powers."

<sup>19</sup> Pape, "When Duty Calls: A Pragmatic Standard of Humanitarian Intervention."; Welsh, "Conclusion."

<sup>20</sup> Hehir, "The Responsibility to Protect as the Apotheosis of Liberal Theology ".

has lost sight of the practical politics of intervention and the political resonance of these politics through the more lofty halls of international power.

## Appendix: Acronyms

<b>AACTS</b>	US Army Air Corps Tactical School
<b>ABCCC</b>	Airborne Battlefield Command and Control Centre
<b>AFAC</b>	Airborne Forward Air Controller
<b>ANT</b>	Actor-Network-Theory
<b>APC</b>	Armoured Personnel Carrier
<b>BSA</b>	Bosnian Serb Army [1992-1995]
<b>BTF</b>	Inter-Agency Balkan Taskforce [US]
<b>CAOC</b>	Combined Air Operations Centre [NATO]
<b>CIA</b>	Central Intelligence Agency [US]
<b>Daesh</b>	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria [ISIS]
<b>DOD</b>	Department of Defense [US]
<b>FLIR</b>	Forward Looking Infrared Radar
<b>FRY</b>	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia [1992-2006]
<b>GPS</b>	Global Positioning System
<b>HRW</b>	Human Rights Watch
<b>ICFY</b>	International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia
<b>ICISS</b>	International Committee on Intervention and State Sovereignty
<b>ICRC</b>	International Commission for the Red Cross
<b>ICTY</b>	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced People[s]
<b>IR</b>	International Relations [Discipline]
<b>ISR</b>	Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance
<b>JCS</b>	Joint Chiefs of Staff [DOD, US]
<b>JNA</b>	Yugoslav National Army [1945-1992]
<b>JSTARS</b>	Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System
<b>KLA</b>	Kosovo Liberation Army
<b>LANTRIN</b>	Low Altitude Navigation and Targeting Infrared for Night
<b>LAS</b>	League of Arab States
<b>MUP</b>	Ministry of the Interior [FRY]
<b>NAC</b>	North Atlantic Council
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
<b>NIC</b>	National Intelligence Council [US]
<b>NTC</b>	National Transitional Council [Libya]
<b>OAF</b>	Operation Allied Force [NATO, Kosovo]
<b>ODF</b>	Operation Deliberate Force [NATO, Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1995]
<b>OOD</b>	Operation Odyssey Dawn [Libya, US]
<b>OUP</b>	Operation Unified Protector [Libya, NATO]
<b>R2P</b>	The Responsibility to Protect
<b>RMA</b>	The Revolution in Military Affairs

<b>ROE</b>	Rules of Engagement
<b>RRF</b>	Rapid Reaction Force [NATO, Bosnia-Herzegovina]
<b>RSK</b>	Republic of Serb Krajina [Croatia, 1992]
<b>RWP</b>	Responsibility While Protecting
<b>SACEUR</b>	Supreme Allied Commander Europe [NATO]
<b>SHAPE</b>	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe [NATO]
<b>SRY</b>	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia [1945-1992]
<b>TND</b>	Total National Defence [SRY]
<b>TO</b>	Territorial Defence Unites [SRY, TND]
<b>UAV</b>	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNPKO</b>	United Nations Office of Peacekeeping Operations
<b>UNPROFOR</b>	United Nations Protection Force [Bosnia-Herzegovina]
<b>UNSC</b>	United Nations Security Council
<b>US</b>	United States
<b>USAAF</b>	United States Army Air Force
<b>VJ</b>	Yugoslav Army [1992-2006]
<b>VOPP</b>	Vance-Owen Peace Plan

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