

# From Bandung to R2P: Non-Western Contributions to Modern Sovereignty

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EMIL SONDAJ HANSEN, MAY 4 2021

In the wake of Chinese and Russian vetoes on the UNSC during the Syrian civil war, Ignatieff drew the battle lines in what appears to be a civilizational struggle defined by the affinity for intervention. He proclaimed that the non-Western powers wanted the West to know that “This is not your world, they want us to know, and history is not moving in your direction. You will have to reckon with us” (Ignatieff, 2012). Bosco similarly identified such a conflict between a “sovereignty bloc” in the UN led by Beijing and Moscow, trying to appeal to emerging powers such as Brazil, South Africa and India (Bosco, 2011). In a time where power is moving to non-western states (Reus-Smit, 2017), such confrontational predictions are commonplace with Mearsheimer seeing significant potential for war (2014), and Schweller expecting a breakdown of the global system and ensuing chaos (2014). The narratives promoted by both Bosco, Ignatieff, Mearsheimer and Schweller are thus that the current order belongs to the west and that non-western contestation of current norms must then be innately obstructionist, and therefore a threat to the contemporary international order.

Ignatieff, however, is wrong. History has never moved in the West’s direction, nor in the “non-West’s”. The development of the contemporary global order has been pluridirectional with the West and non-West interacting, engaging, and shaping the international order in complex ways. No one actor has had a monopoly on order-creation. I will therefore argue that the contemporary global order is not simply a product of the West. It is rather a product of important contributions by non-Western states to sovereignty, the constitutive norm of the contemporary global order.

This investigation into the origins of the global order starts in 1955 at the Asian-African Conference in Bandung. In the wake of decolonisation, the international order faced an uncertain future with its ontological nature being challenged through the transformation of empires into sovereign states. At this critical juncture I argue that the Asian and African states at Bandung contributed to the universalisation of Westphalia. They did so by extending the norm of non-interference to necessitate non-participation in great power military pacts. I then turn to the gradual erosion of this norm by Latin America and Africa through the establishment of intrusive sovereignty challenging practices such as regional election monitoring and multilateral interventions throughout the 1990s. This gradual erosion provided the basis for the articulation of sovereignty as responsibility. The Responsibility to Protect or R2P is often perceived as a Western invention and expression of Western interventionism (Hehir, 2016). I however argue that the contributions of non-Western norm entrepreneurs such as Francis Deng and Kofi Annan to R2P’s initial articulation and eventual adoption in 2005 at the UN World Summit refutes the notion that it is fundamentally a Western construction. I end my genealogy of the contemporary sovereignty regime in 2015 with the continued contestation of R2P by Russia and Brazil, showing how both reactive and proactive contestation of global norms ought to be conceived as contributions to the global order by virtue of their fortifying effects. Over this sixty- year time span I intend to show that the contemporary global order is not simply a product of the West, but rather has been shaped by non-Western engagement with and reinterpretations of global norms of sovereignty.

### Preliminaries

In examining ‘non-Western contributions’ to the global order, it is imperative to define what constitutes this spatial

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category of 'the non-West'. Such categories run the risk of reproducing and perpetuating the essentialist discourses that were inherent to the colonial project (Roy, 2018). It is therefore important to recognise that the 'non-West' is constituted by a variety of different actors with correspondingly different histories and cultures. While recognising these difficulties, I broadly understand the 'non-West' to encompass Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Yet, as will become clear, the 'non-West' is not a unitary actor and has engaged with sovereignty and the global order in distinct ways.

As Deitelhoff and Zimmerman point out, there is broad discussion of what constitutes the 'contemporary global order' (2019). Yet, there is a common agreement that it is based on the rules, norms and institutions upholding multilateralism, free trade and individual rights (Acharya, 2017; Ikenberry, 2014, 2015; 2018, Nye, 2017). The constitutive principle, or the '*grund-norm*', of this international system is the notion of sovereignty (Acharya, 2018:24). Sovereignty as the normative package consisting of non-interference, sovereign equality, and territorial integrity (Coe, 2019:1), is the principle which enables the multilateralism, free trade and individual rights mentioned above. However, despite its constitutive quality, sovereignty is by no means static (Coe, 2019). The meaning states have attributed to sovereignty has been subject to temporal and geographic variation. The way in which non-Western states have contributed to this variation is what I will investigate in this essay.

I particularly emphasise non-Western states' contributions to the universality of non-interference, otherwise known as "Westphalian sovereignty" (Krasner, 1999). The conventional narrative in IR, stresses that non-interference was cemented as guiding principle after the peace of Westphalia in 1648 ending the 30 years' war. Excellent revisionist work has exposed this narrative as a myth (de Carvalho et al., 2011; Osiander, 2001), arguing that Westphalian sovereignty either was at worst 'organised hypocrisy' (Krasner, 1999), or at its best simply a local European development (Buzan and Lawson, 2014). This essay follows this work in the assumption that the right to non-interference was not a universal principle, but rather a local European norm. The argument therefore looks at non-Western contributions to the universalisation of Westphalian sovereignty and how non-Western actors tried to turn the Westphalian myth into reality for all states, not merely powerful western ones, in the post-World War II global order.

The emergence of this global order after World War II coincided with a significant number of African and Asian states achieving independence (Krasner, 1999:187). During this time the ontology of the global order 'was in flux' as former empires transformed into Westphalian nation-states (Phillips, 2016:331). It was a moment of 'contested constitutions' in which it was unclear what form of rule would emerge as legitimate, whether pan-continental federations, empires or the Westphalian nation-state (Philpott, 1999:576). It was therefore a critical juncture in the development of sovereignty. I therefore take my starting point in 1955, at a time when a significant number of non-Western states had achieved independence. They were thus in an unprecedented position to 'contribute' to the development of sovereignty.

I understand 'contribution' to signify the act of being a part of the construction of something. In this sense, the term involves more agency than a 'reaction' or a 'response'. However, it does not necessitate equality between different 'contributing' actors. Despite the achievement of independence there remain significant material power asymmetries between non-Western states and the West. Therefore, non-Western contributions are embedded in a hierarchy and must consequently be understood against the backdrop of norms previously established by the West, such as the myth of Westphalian sovereignty. It is therefore necessary to apply conceptual tools that recognise non-Western agency as operating within a normative framework previously articulated and dominated by Western states, without automatically interpreting all non-Western contributions as reactions and thereby precluding the possibility of non-Western initiative.

Acharya's notions of subsidiarity and localisation provide these conceptual tools. Subsidiarity is understood as a process in which local actors create rules that are subsidiary to the existing norms in order to secure their autonomy against powerful actors (Acharya, 2011:97). This leads to the creation of new norms inside a broader framework (Acharya, 2018:52) Whereas the process of subsidiarity can involve active resistance and rejection of international norms, localisation is less confrontational. It is understood as a process that transforms foreign ideas through 'the active construction through discourse' into locally appropriate versions (Acharya, 2004:245). Crucial for the

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localisation process are 'cognitive priors' such as specific ideologies or norms that allow for the adaptation of the foreign ideas (Acharya, 2018:44). Acharya also highlights the need for certain 'insider proponents' to facilitate this process (2018:52).

Chua argues that the reliance on insider proponents means that Acharya's framework is unable to investigate genuinely post-colonial and non-Western contributions to the global order (2017). She argues that Acharya's framework conflates 'local agents with institutional elites (Chua, 2017:88), and therefore misrecognises 'its own essentialising politics as a celebration of difference' (Chua, 2017:91). Acharya rejects this critique by arguing that elite norm entrepreneurs are 'deeply influenced by their place of origin and experience in their home country' (2018:66), and that postcolonial leaders such as Nehru, Sukarno and Nkrumah represented their people through their democratic election (2018:65). Here Fanon's 'national bourgeoisie' that replaced the colonial officials after independence urges caution about correlating the actions and beliefs of postcolonial elites with the wider population (2001:121). In this sense, Chua's critique highlights the pertinence of asking what voices are excluded when investigating agency in international relations. Indeed, all the norm-entrepreneurs discussed in this essay- from Nehru to Kofi Annan- will be male, a nuance not adequately captured by labelling them 'insider proponents.' This is by no means deliberate, the cast at Bandung in 1955 was overwhelmingly male. My claim is merely that one must ask which voices are excluded or not present in the examples one use to demonstrate 'agency'.

Apart from NGOs, diplomacy ultimately remains an elite-led enterprise. Chua therefore lacks an alternative mechanism of exercising agency. I therefore find Acharya's framework appropriate and useful for investigating non-Western contributions to the global order with the caveat that adequate attention must be paid to which particular actors are excluded from processes of localisation and subsidiarity.

## **The Conventional Narrative of the Emergence of the Global Order**

The contemporary global order is traditionally conceptualised as originating through 'the expansion of the international society of European states across the rest of the globe' (Bull and Watson, 1984:5), followed by the creation of an American-led liberal order through processes of hegemonic socialisation (Ikenberry, 2001). Philpot thus writes that the history of sovereignty 'largely is the history of Westphalia's geographic extension' (1999:582). In this narrative, sovereignty has been an 'essentially uncontested concept' (Walker, 1990: 159).

I will challenge this narrative by first showing how the expansion of Westphalian sovereignty was facilitated by the cementation of non-interference that took place at Bandung. Second, I question Ikenberry's claim that the impetus for the development of the global rights-based order emerged in the West. The gradual erosion of non-interference in Africa and Latin America, as well as the contributions to R2P by non-Western norm entrepreneurs challenge the notion of non-Western states as passive recipients in processes of hegemonic socialisation. If non-Western states have been as instrumental as I show in shaping the sovereignty underpinning the contemporary global order, then the traditional conception of sovereignty described above neglects important processes of contestation and non-Western agency.

## **The Universalisation of Westphalia at Bandung**

From April 18-24<sup>th</sup> in 1955, in the wake of decolonisation, 29 African and Asian states met in Bandung at the Asian-African conference for what Indonesian President Sukarno in his opening speech called the 'first intercontinental conference of coloured peoples in the history of mankind' (Sukarno cited in Kahin, 1956:39). This was a time of 'radical systemic fluidity' where the eventual dominance of a 'sovereign-state monoculture' by no means was given (Phillips, 2016:331). In this context, the participating states made important contributions to the universalisation of Westphalian sovereignty. They did so through contestations about what constitutes colonialism and whether the principle of non-interference necessitated non-participation in great power alliances.

To grasp Bandung's contribution to the development of sovereignty it is imperative to understand how unsettled the global order was in 1955. Following the end of WWII, generally seen as the point of conception for the contemporary global order, the imperial powers Britain and France did not intend a full abandonment of the colonial project

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(Philpott, 2001:160). While India had gained independence in 1947, Britain had no plans of universally shedding its colonies (Philpott, 2001:160). Upon Churchill's election in 1951, Britain articulated a grand strategy based upon the notion that its remaining parts of the empire would sustain the British economy and its role as a great power (Darwin, 2009: 566). Non-interference was therefore not a globally robust norm prior to 1955 and had generally 'been a luxury restricted to the great powers' (Lawson and Shilliam, 2009:661). Philpott points out that even Latin American states who gained their independence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, repeatedly had their sovereignty violated by European interventions (2001:153). As Phillips argues, the fledgling global order in 1955 was therefore caught in a contradiction between consolidating sovereign states and 'decaying but still salient' empires (2016:332).

Such contradictions were also evident in the creation of the United Nations in 1945 in San Francisco. Mazower argues that the founders of the UN were not committed to the universal spread of self-determination and sovereignty (2009). South African Statesman Jan Smuts played a particularly large role at the negotiations, illustrating the influence of a vision of global order that was based on white imperial rule (Mazower, 2009: 30). Bandung was a response to a feeling of exclusion from these negotiations, and that non-interference and self-determination were not adequately emphasised in the Charter (Anghie, 2017). Out of the 50 states present in San Francisco, only twelve African and Asian States participated (Jansen, 1966:41). Indeed, more than half of the participating states at Bandung were not even members of the UN at that point (Acharya, 2011:109). It was further motivated by a feeling that non-interference was not adequately prioritised in the drafting of the UN Charter, as the norms of territorial integrity and sovereign equality had received more attention (Acharya, 2018:92). In the context of the increasingly polarised geopolitics of the Cold War, the Bandung states increasingly feared being reduced to pawns in the power politics of the Cold War and felt the need to cement their right to non-interference (Devetak et al. 2016).

Now that they were "free, sovereign and independent" (Sukarno cited in Kahin, 1956:40), they were in a unique position to articulate an emphasis on non-interference. The conference therefore represents a case of Acharya's notion of 'subsidiarity.' Actors marginalised in the international system came together to articulate a set of norms to preserve their own autonomy from great powers in the context of the Cold War. In this sense, subsidiarity captures non-Western states contributions in the context of significant asymmetries of power. They did so to launch a normative challenge to the existing global normative framework still defined by racial and imperial hierarchies.

Their contribution to sovereignty was through contestation about whether military alliances with the US or USSR undermined the sovereignty of the newly independent states (Acharya, 2018:81). Indian Prime Minister Nehru argued that regional military pacts such as the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO), were detrimental to the preservation of postcolonial sovereignty. SEATO saw Pakistan, Philippines and Thailand form an alliance with the US, Britain and France in the Eisenhower administration's attempt to replicate NATO in Asia (Office of the Historian). Prior to becoming prime minister Nehru had previously called collective defence pacts 'a continuation of power politics on a vaster scale' (2003:539). At Bandung he described NATO as 'one of the most powerful protectors of colonialism' (1956:68), particularly because of Portugal's attempts to enlist NATO's help in preserving its colonial rule in Goa. He also explicitly challenged Pakistani president Ali by saying that his country had been 'lulled into security' (Nehru cited in Kahin, 1956:68). Through this contestation Nehru sought to portray great power alliances as violations of non-interference. This led the conference to ultimately agree on a vision of sovereignty relying on Nehru's previously articulated 'Pansheel' or five principles of coexistence, which emphasized non-interference between China and India (Anghie, 2017). The conference's Final Communique thus called for 'abstention from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of another country' (Kahin, 1956:84).

This was a distinct contribution to the development of sovereignty. By broadening the notion of colonialism to include great power alliances, they contributed to the gradual erosion of imperial legitimacy and strengthened the norm of non-interference. Prior to Bandung, states possessed sovereignty only if they fulfilled objective criteria of material power, such as 'wealth and government effectiveness' (Clapham, 1996:42). This meant that only 'civilised states' could be sovereign (Anghie, 2017:537). Therefore, the insistence on non-interference at Bandung represents an important step towards the universalisation of Westphalian sovereignty. In this sense, the contemporary international order is perhaps more '*Bandungian* than *Westphalian*' (Eslava et al., 2017:16-17).

One impact of Bandung was the immediate delegitimization of great power military alliances in Asia (Pauker,

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1955:18). While Phillips points out that it did not succeed in definitively undermining the US 'hub and spokes' alliance system in East Asia on a longer term (2016:330), Bandung did result in a distinct emphasis on non-interference in Asia compared with Latin America and Africa (Capie, 2012).

However, the most important impact of Bandung was the precedent it set for the exercise of non-Western agency in world politics. Lee argues that Bandung laid the foundations for the Non-Aligned Movement which obstructed the power dynamics of the Cold War (2009:88). Weber and Winanti further see Bandung as a catalyst for the calls for a New International Economic Order in the 1970s (2016). Roeslan Abdulgani, the Secretary General of Bandung, said that prior to Bandung colonized nations 'were not expected to be able to contribute much to the world' (Abdulgani cited in Devetak et al., 2016:362). Bandung proved that such statements no longer applied after 1955.

There is however historical controversy about the extent to which the Bandung states were united in this contribution. This partially stems from the vast diversity among the 29 participating states. The five organizers, the Colombo Powers, consisted of three socialist states, India, Myanmar and Indonesia, and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Pakistan which were loyal to the West (Eslava et al., 2017). Sukarno highlighted that the participating states professed 'almost every religion under the sun' and 'practically every economic doctrine' (1956:48). Ötzu therefore argues that the points of the Final Communique were constructed on a basis of 'quasi-legal rhetoric of Afro-Asian solidarity' (2017:294). The lack of unity among the states was illustrated when Egyptian President Nasser responded to a question about the Panscheel by asking 'What are they?' (Nasser cited in Vitalis, 2013:267). This highlights the problematic of treating the 'non-West' or 'Bandung states' as a homogenous actor. Sukarno himself had distinct interests of his own, as he saw the conference as a way to facilitate Indonesian leadership on the world stage (Abdullah, 2009:311).

However, it is the fact that their contribution the global order transcended ideologies differences that makes Bandung an interesting case. The notion of non-Western countries coming together to contest existing global norms through a construction of subsidiarity norms has profound implications for the way we understand contemporary shifts in power (Acharya, 2011). There remain significant differences among contemporary non-Western states, ideologically and culturally. Yet Bandung reveals that the non-West coming together despite internal differences as existed in 1955 to reformulate existing norms remains a historical possibility.

It is important to note that Bandung did not issue calls for pan-continental federations or other alternatives to the sovereign nation-state. Instead it contributed to 'Westphalia's geographic extension' (Philpott, 1999: 582), by eroding the legitimacy of empire and cementing the norm of non-interference. Bandung thus poses an important challenge to Bull and Watson's narrative about the naturalised expansion of international society and Westphalian sovereignty. At this critical juncture of ontological uncertainty in the international system, the non-Western states at Bandung made an important contribution to the notion of sovereignty underpinning our contemporary global order. This shows that Westphalian sovereignty did not simply emanate from the European centre to the global periphery but was shaped through contestation between non-Western states.

## **Gradual Erosion of Non-Interference in Africa and Latin America**

After providing an important contribution to the global order at Bandung by cementing the norm of non-interference, non-Western states also played a key role in carving out multilateral interventionist exceptions. Through contestations by Latin America and Africa, different interventionist and sovereignty-challenging practices emerged. These practices were embedded in a proceduralist framework, in contrast to the general infringements on sovereignty which had been widespread in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Krasner, 1999:155). This represents processes of 'localisation', since African and Latin American states engaged with the global norm of sovereignty by adapting it to regionally specific contexts. Processes of localisation in Africa and Latin America were thereby catalysts for the gradual erosion of the norm of non-interference which eventually paved the way for the articulation of sovereignty as responsibility.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century Latin America saw various contestations about how to engage antidemocratic regimes. In 1930 the Mexican Foreign Minister put forward the 'Estrada Doctrine', which urged recognition and continued diplomatic

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relations with regimes regardless of regime type (Atkins, 1989:228). This doctrine was first challenged through the Venezuelan President Betancourt's practice of diplomatic nonrecognition of military regimes (Coe, 2019:96). The explicitly multilateral Lareta Doctrine proposed by Uruguay in 1954 furthered this principle by calling for inter-American cooperation in protecting democracy and human rights (Long and Friedman, 2019). The early Cold War period was thus marked by a 'persistent concern about confronting antidemocratic regimes with a multilateral approach' (Muñoz, 1998:6). This erosion of non-interference on the level of discourse, ultimately led to changes in practice with the establishment of a regional election monitoring scheme in the 1960s (Coe, 2019:100). This gradual erosion of non-interference culminated with the Organisation of American States which defended constitutional governments through the 1990's in both Guatemala, Haiti and Peru (Dominguez, 2007: 84).

The US' efforts to promote a liberal rights-based order throughout the Cold War poses a possible challenge to seeing Latin America's challenges to non-interference as a uniquely non-Western contribution. Following Ikenberry's framework of hegemonic socialisation, intrusive democracy and human rights promotion could be seen as a by-product of the liberal rights based order promoted by the United States (2001). Coe rejects this argument by arguing that a discourse of liberal pan-Americanism was present before the US took leadership of a liberal world order, and that the superpower only haphazardly supported the development of sovereignty challenging practices during the Cold War (2019). The Latin American practices were distinct from the ones promoted by the US, as they were based on multilateral regional inter-American cooperation instead of US unilateral interventionism. However, it is difficult to rule out the possibility that the order described by Ikenberry did not create conditions that made Latin America particularly conducive to the gradual erosion of non-interference. This illustrates how Latin America occupies a unique space in the 'non-West'. The legacy of settler societies and immediate proximity to the Western hegemon of the US complicates binaries of West and 'non-West' (Fawcett, 2012). This once again highlights the problematic nature of portraying the non-West as a homogenous and unitary actor.

A more definitively non-Western contribution to the erosion of non-interference emerged in the 1990s in Africa, after contestations about the apparent contradiction between non-interference and human rights. Non-interference was first challenged in 1963 at the founding of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU), where the prominent Pan-Africanist, Ghanaian president Kwame Nkrumah, called for the establishment of a supranational African High Command (Adebajo and Landsberg, 2000). Nkrumah's proposal was not adopted at the time, and non-interference was thus upheld in face of the vast human suffering in the 1967-1970 Biafran civil war in Nigeria (Coe, 2019:107). This lack of intervention combined with Idi Amin's human rights abuses against the Ugandan people throughout the 1970s, provided a platform for Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere to challenge the OAU's insistence on non-interference in the face of atrocities (Coe, 2019:107). Welch argues that Nyerere's challenge to non-interference was instrumental in the eventual establishment of a regional human rights system in 1979 (1981: 402). The OAU thus launched its first peacekeeping mission in Chad in 1981, which Coe describes as 'exceptional for the Cold War period' (2019:112).

The erosion of non-interference intensified in the 1990's as Africa underwent a shift from non-interference to 'non-indifference' (Smith, 2016:393). Sampson argues that parts of what came to be known as R2P 'were already institutionalized in Africa' at this time (2011:5). These practices were explicitly multilateral and undertaken by the OAU. The gradual erosion of non-interference in Africa culminated with the Constitutive Act of the OAU's successor, the African Union in 2000, which established 'the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State ... in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity' (The African Union, 2000: 7).

Coe explicitly describes this as an 'R2P provision' (2019:194), and Adebajo similarly describes the Constitutive Act as one of the most interventionist systems in the world (2006:4). Bellamy argues that this 'alone should dispel the idea that sovereignty as responsibility was an entirely western notion' (2011:13). These developments in Africa represent a case of non-Western agency through a process of localization, in which African leaders engaged with the global norm of sovereignty in the ideological context of Pan-Africanism. In doing so, they gradually eroded the importance of non-interference in a regional context plagued by civil war and human rights abuses.

However, this erosion of non-interference did not occur in Asia, again highlighting how the 'non-West' is not a unitary actor. Asia did not experience an erosion of non-interference, and R2P continues to be less robust in this region than

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in the rest of the world (Capie, 2012). Acharya views this continued insistence on non-interference as fundamentally intertwined with the legacy of Bandung (2018:90). The lack of a cohesive pan-continental ideology such as pan-Africanism could explain the continued robustness of non-interference among the Asian states compared to their African counterparts. This illustrates the necessity of 'cognitive priors', existing ideologies and norms, for localisation to take place (Acharya, 2018:123)

Nonetheless, the examples of Latin America and in particular Africa, show important instances of non-Western contributions to the contemporary global order. Through contestations about the relationship between human rights and sovereignty, they gradually eroded the norm of non-interference on the level of discourse and practice. This provided the normative and intellectual background as well as actual precedents of intervention, that would be instrumental for the future development of sovereignty as responsibility and thereby R2P.

## **Development of Sovereignty as Responsibility**

The emergence of R2P has been described as 'possibly the most dramatic normative development of our time' (Thakur and Weiss, 2009:23). It consists of three pillars; the state's obligation to its population, that other states can assist them in doing so, and that the obligation to intervene if the state fails this responsibility (Sandholtz, 2019). The third pillar is generally seen as an expression of aggressive Western interventionism (Hehir, 2016). However, I argue that on the basis of the gradual erosion of non-interference described above, non-Western norm entrepreneurs were instrumental in articulating sovereignty as the responsibility of protecting a population rather than simply authority over a territory (Whyte, 2016:309). R2P is therefore not simply 'a Western construct' (Serrano and Weiss, 2014: 4).

Non-Western norm-entrepreneurs such as Francis Deng and Kofi Annan, were crucial to the emergence of this norm. In the wake of the atrocities of the 1990s, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan issued a challenge in his 2000 Millennium Report by asking the international community how cases like Rwanda and Srebrenica ought to be handled if humanitarian intervention was an 'unacceptable assault on sovereignty' (Annan, 2000:48). In response to this challenge, the Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy, established the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) which published its findings in a report in 2001, recommending a reconceptualization of sovereignty as responsibility (Etzioni, 2006). The report drew on previous work on internally displaced people by the Sudanese diplomat Francis Deng (Orford, 2011). While the ICISS report never explicitly embraced any link to Deng's work, Axworthy acknowledged that he first encountered the notion of 'responsibility to protect' in a conversation with Deng (2003:414). After the ICISS report, the norm of R2P was repeatedly contested and negotiated until its unanimous approval at the 2005 World Summit (Bellamy, 2011a). Bellamy argues that a key catalyst for the eventual acceptance of R2P as a global norm was Annan's mediation in intercommunal violence Kenya in 2008 (2011), where he used the prospect of international involvement as leverage in the negotiations (Annan 2013:189-220). The contributions of Annan and Deng thus represent important contributions to the global order by non-Western norm entrepreneurs.

A plausible objection to this account is that the Carter administration had already articulated a vision of sovereignty as responsibility in their human rights promotion efforts in the late 1970's. The administration emphasized 'accountability and responsibility on the part of governments to their citizens' (Schneider cited in Cohen 2012). However, Cohen argues that this conception was fundamentally a unilateral one, and in this sense distinct from the conception of sovereignty of responsibility that emerged through the work of the ICISS (Cohen, 2012).

The development of R2P was not solely a non-Western endeavour as the role of Canada shows. Yet, the important contributions of Deng and Annan in the articulation of the concept, and the unanimous approval of the norm at the UN World Summit in 2005 does refute conceptions of R2P as an inherently western invention forced upon the Global South.

## **Continued Normative Contestation of R2P in a 'Post-Western Order'**

As power shifts to non-Western states (Reus-Smit, 2017), so will the operational capacity to intervene (Stuenkel,

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2016). China's rise, combined with the relative decline of the US caused partly by failed interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, raises question about the extent to which the interventionism underpinning the global order will persist. China is in the process of setting up a peacekeeping force of 8000 soldiers, pledged to donate 100 million dollars from 2015 to 2020 to the African Union, and has pledged to contribute 1 billion dollars for a China-UN "Peace and Development Fund" (Pickerell, 2015). Such changes to the international security architecture allow for different international dynamics as in the case of Russia's applicatory transgression of the R2P framework, as well as Brazil's questioning of lack of accountability during the Libya intervention. While often conceived of as obstructionist and weakening of global norms (Stuenkel, 2016b), I argue that these forms of contestation can strengthen and fortify the normative framework of R2P.

In 2008 Russia invoked the R2P framework to justify their intervention in Georgia claiming the need to protect South Ossetians (Badescu and Weiss, 2010), and provided similar justifications for the 2014 intervention in Ukraine (Bellamy, 2015). In this sense Russia provides an example of Wiener's reactive contestation (Wiener, 2017), as it has consistently raised objections to R2P, which it sees as an infringement on state sovereignty (Kreutz and Laskaris, 2015). McKeown argues that norms always lose strength and robustness "just in virtue of being publicly challenged" (McKeown, 2009, p. 11) Yet, the case of Russia's misapplication of the R2P framework, does not seem to have weakened the norm, but the applicatory contestation that ensued (Welsh, 2019), rather seems to have strengthened and clarified the norm by providing a clear example of when it does not apply (Badescu and Weiss, 2010, pp. 358-359).

The example of Russia's contestation of the R2P framework seems slightly at odds with Acharya's framework that highlights the importance of reinterpretation and contestation on a local level. Adler-Nissen challenges Acharya by arguing that he neglects processes of defining the "different or abnormal" on a global level (Adler-nissen, 2014, p. 151). In this conception, transgressions of accepted norms become constitutive of the global order. Therefore, while transgressions such as Russia's misapplication of R2P is seen as obstructionist and destructive, they can indeed be conceived of as contributions to the global order through cementing and clarifying existing normative frameworks. This conception supports Wiener's framework that sees contestation as necessary for the robustness of norms (Wiener, 2018), as well as Hakimi's claim that disagreement is necessary to fortify international governance (Hakimi, 2017). Hence, conflict about norms is not necessarily a sign of decay of the global order, but rather a constitutive process through which the order is strengthened.

In the wake of the controversial intervention in 2011 in Libya, Brazil put forward its proposal of "Responsibility while Protecting" (RWP) during an open debate in the UNSC (Kreutz and Laskaris, 2015). The intervention had been controversial as it had been the first time the UNSC had applied the R2P framework to authorize the use of force against the wishes of a state (Bellamy, 2011). Brazil put forward a proposal arguing that the three pillars of R2P ought to be sequential, so that intervention should be the last step and emphasised the need for accountability and checks and balances during intervention (Kreutz and Laskaris, 2015). Ultimately, the concept did not gain traction, partly because Brazil retreated from its position of advocacy (Stuenkel, 2016b). This could arguably be because of a lack of the solidarity or cohesion among non-Western states, which the case of Bandung shows is important for the success of non-Western agency. Brazil's engagement with R2P illustrates Wiener's concept of proactive contestation, as it did not involve an explicit objection of the norm, but rather a critical engagement with the concept, and there was as such nothing revisionist about RWP (Stuenkel, 2016b, p. 383).

Brazil's constructive contestation combined with the non-Western origins of the R2P framework provides an important correction to narratives promoted by Ignatieff about non-Western states necessarily being against the notion of intervention, or the "collective opposition" of the Global South described by Rao (2010, p. 80). Indeed, as the Brazil case shows non-western states are capable of constructive engagement with the R2P norm. Non-western states are therefore by no means are hostile to the notion of intervention, but rather are capable of constructive engagement with international norms, which instead of weakening global norms might indeed strengthen and fortify them.

## Conclusion



# From Bandung to R2P: Non-Western Contributions to Modern Sovereignty

Written by Emil Sondaj Hansen

In this essay I have argued that the contemporary global order is not simply a product of the West. Non-Western states have made important contributions to the expansion of Westphalian sovereignty as well as carving out the interventionist exceptions to it.

In 1955, at a time of ontological uncertainty and systemic fluidity, the states participating at Bandung made important contributions to the expansion of Westphalian sovereignty. By broadening the notion of non-interference to rule out participation in great power alliances, they succeeded in delegitimising imperial rule. They further cemented the notion of non-interference against the backdrop of the UN not yet fully committed to sovereign self-determination. The states were able to transcend ideological differences to articulate a clear vision of sovereignty in a postcolonial world. Through this, they planted the seeds of the Non-Aligned Movement and created a precedent for the exercise of non-Western agency in world politics.

Given the unsettled nature of the global order in 1955, the cementation of non-interference was an important contribution to the universalisation of Westphalia. This raises a significant challenge to the conventional narrative of Westphalian's expansion from the European centre to the peripheries of the international system. Bull and Watson's narrative therefore neglects the contestation and exercise of agency that took place in the non-West.

African and Latin American discursive and practical contributions to the erosion of non-interference, further show how interventionism is not simply a product of the West. Through localised engagement with the global of norm of sovereignty, non-Western actors articulated specific visions of sovereignty that contributed to a gradual erosion of non-interference. This provided the normative and intellectual background for non-Western norm entrepreneurs such as Deng and Annan to reframe 'sovereignty as responsibility' rather than simply territorial authority.

These contributions of non-Western states and norm entrepreneurs challenge narratives about the natural expansion of international society or the construction of a global order solely by American hegemony. Instead, normative contributions by non-Western actors to R2P, were crucial in shaping the contemporary global order. My argument has thus shown how Ikenberry's framework neglects the extent to which history has been 'pluridirectional' with non-Western states contributing to and engaging with global norms in complex ways (Stuenkel, 2016:2).

Yet, such engagement has varied among non-Western states, and the 'Non-West' is therefore not a unitary actor. At Bandung, the states had vast differences in ideology and strategic objectives. The comparison between Africa, Latin America and Asia also shows how the regions have developed distinct conceptions of sovereignty. My argument therefore illustrates the problematic aspect of creating an essentialised spatial category of the 'non-West'.

By highlighting the non-Western origins of the interventionism of the contemporary global order, I have also provided a framework for understanding how non-Western states will continue to contribute to the R2P framework. The cases of Brazil and Russia show that contestation can strengthen and fortify global order. Terms such as 'obstructionist' or 'rejectionist' therefore obscure the important contributions of non-western states to the cohesion of the contemporary global order. I have therefore called for a broader notion of order that incorporates transgression and contestation to avoid the status quo bias inherent to traditional conception of order.

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