The Responsibility for Peace (R4P): Understanding the Study of Peace from a Global Justice and Development Perspective

La Responsabilità per la Pace (R4P): comprendere lo studio della pace dal punto di vista della giustizia e dello sviluppo globali

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Abstract. This article introduces a new conceptualisation of the relationship between global distributive justice, development, and the study of peace, which we label the Responsibility for Peace (R4P). In doing so, the article examines the notion of positive peace within peace studies, its relation to arguments within global distributive justice, and to what degree this important relationship is recognised in the primary international framework to prevent and protect populations from mass atrocity crimes, the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). The article argues that despite growing recognition about the links between peace and development within both R2P and global justice discussions, it remains insufficient in terms of positive peace, thus requiring a new heuristic. In response, we argue that global justice demands refocused moral commitments to *jus ante bellum* (establishing global justice before war) and that this necessitates greater focus on the study of positive peace mechanisms, the identification and reform of structural injustices (against structural violence), and a retooled emphasis on human-centred development that can transcend existing legacies. In other words, we need to better focus on causes and not symptoms. It is this triangulation that we label the Responsibility for Peace (R4P), which should operate both prior to, and independently of, the Responsibility to Protect (R2P).

Riassunto. Quest'articolo introduce un nuovo modo di concepire la relazione tra giustizia globale distributiva, sviluppo e studio della pace, che chiamiamo Responsabilità per la pace (R4P). Nel fare questo viene presa in esame la nozione di pace positiva nell'ambito degli studi sulla pace, la sua relazione con argomenti correlati alla giustizia globale distributiva e a quale grado questo rapporto così importante è riconosciuto per prevenire e proteggere la popolazione dall'atrocità dei crimini di massa, la ResponsabiIità di proteggere (R2P). L'articolo sostiene che, nonostante il crescente riconoscimento dei legami tra pace e sviluppo all'interno delle discussioni sulla R2P e sulla giustizia globale, esso rimane insufficiente in termini di pace positiva, ponendo le basi per la richiesta di una nuova euristica. In risposta, sosteniamo che la giustizia globale richiede un riorientamento degli impegni morali verso lo *jus ante bellum* (nel senso dello stabilire la giustizia globale prima della guerra). Ciò necessita, di conseguenza, una maggiore attenzione allo studio dei meccanismi per la costruzione della pace positiva, all'identificazione e alla riforma delle ingiustizie strutturali (contro la violenza strutturale), e un'enfasi riorganizzata sullo sviluppo centrato sull'uomo che può trascendere le eredità esistenti. In altre parole, dobbiamo concentrarci meglio sulle cause e non sui sintomi. È questa triangolazione che chiamiamo Responsabilità per la Pace (R4P), che dovrebbe operare sia prima che indipendentemente dalla Responsabilità di Proteggere (R2P).

Parole chiave: Responsabilità per la pace, Responsabilità di proteggere, pace positiva, giustizia distributiva, studi sulla pace, studi sulla pace e sui conflitti, *ius ante bellum*.

Introduction

The wars in Ukraine and Gaza have brought the theme of war and peace back to the centre of political debate. Once again, we hear revelations that war is a natural event of international relations and that the various attempts to avoid it with the instruments of law and diplomacy have failed. In this current environment, discussions about justice remain dominated by themes of retributive and criminal justice, with their more transformative cousins of transitional, restorative, distributive, and restitutive justice deemed as mere fantasies. What is essential, we are told, is military alliance, proxy war, greater arms supplies, redlines, allied diplomacy, readiness for intervention, and stronger symbolic gestures of unity. From this 'hawkish' point of view, peace is perpetually elusive, idealistic, and potentially dangerous.

However, the literature on global justice has traditionally been equally unsatisfactory in terms of its study and pursuit of peace. Most advocates of global justice have traditionally focused on immediate conflict conditions while suggesting that humanitarian military intervention to protect mass violations of human rights is a moral duty.[1] In arguing for humanitarian intervention, many advocates for global justice also claim there is a right to intervene in these situations and that those in a position to effectively respond must do so. Again, the logic often underpinning this position is more akin to criminal and retributive justice, where conflict must be ended, and the perpetrators brought to justice, before there can be the establishment of peace.[2] According to many global justice and cosmopolitan scholars, what is required is immediate moral action in the face of human rights abuse, to end conflict and restore a condition of domestic justice via post-conflict peacebuilding. It is from this position that the aim of a more lasting peace may one day be possible.

As suggested, this is equally unsatisfactory, and it favours two questionable assumptions. First, this proposal assumes that the mere absence of conflict equates to the foundational condition required for lasting peace. This is questionable because although subduing violence is a necessary condition for immediate peace, it may not be a sufficient condition for lasting peace. Second, it assumes that what triggers action is a moral 'responsibility' to intervene in cases of mass violence and human rights abuse within an already existing cycle of violence, but not an equal moral 'responsibility' for preventative action to reduce the social and economic structural conditions that underwrite cycles of violence in the first place. According to many scholars of global justice, it is paramount to halt physical violence, with other considerations holding a secondary, but still important, normative position. This is the logic underwriting frameworks such as the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), despite its increased lip service on the need for better 'prevention' measures.[3]

It is from this backdrop that we seek to introduce what we call the Responsibility for Peace (R4P), which represents a new conceptualisation of the relationship between global distributive justice, development, and the study of peace. To explore this new concept, the article is divided

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[1] Archibugi, *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens*; Brock, *Global Justice*; Caney, *Justice Beyond Borders*; Fabre, *Cosmopolitan War*; Fine, *Cosmopolitanism*; Hayden, *Cosmopolitan Global Politics*; Held, *Cosmopolitanism*; Kaldor, *Global Civil Society*; Pattison, "Humanitarian intervention;" Pogge, "An institutional approach;" Sangha, "The Responsibility to Protect;" Smith, "Anticipating a cosmopolitan future."
[2] Archibugi, *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens*; Fine, *Cosmopolitanism*; Hayden, *Cosmopolitan Global Politics*; Kaldor, *Global Civil Society*; Smith, "Anticipating a cosmopolitan future".
[3] Bohm and Brown, "R2P and prevention."

into six sections. Section One provides a brief overview of general trends within peace studies to identify existing areas where addressing structural conditions of violence are implicitly or explicitly understood as crucial for generating lasting peace. We are particularly interested in notions of *positive peace*. In Section Two we make the link between global distributive justice and the study of peace, arguing that a properly oriented understanding of global justice should better address the structural conditions that underwrite violence. Section Three outlines the key international framework on existing global responsibilities to prevent and protect vulnerable populations, the R2P, while Section Four explores the relationship between underdevelopment and mass atrocity crimes, arguing that there is a prima facie connection between the two. Section Five re-examines the R2P, considering recent United Nations claims that prevention and development are inherently linked, which demonstrates that recent policy has come to accept that peace and development are mutually inclusive. In Section Six we reflect on R2P's potential to act as a peacebuilding instrument, ultimately concluding that it is an overstretched norm that cannot adequately accommodate peacebuilding, thus requiring its focus on short-term protection, but which also highlights a lacuna necessitating a Responsibility for Peace. The article concludes by outlining what this R4P approach requires conceptually and its implications for the study of peace. Ultimately, we argue that global justice demands refocused moral commitments to *jus ante bellum* (establishing global justice before war) and that this necessitates greater focus on the study of positive peace mechanisms, the identification and reform of structural injustices (against structural violence), and a retooled emphasis on human-centred development that can transcend existing legacies. It is this triangulation that we label the Responsibility for Peace (R4P), which operates both prior to, and independently of, the Responsibility to Protect (R2P).

1. What is the study of peace?

Peace studies is of course the study of peace. Sometimes this incorporates studying the causes of conflicts and how to ameliorate/prevent them, as well as how conflicts end. This field of study is often called peace and conflict studies and assumes that peace and conflict are opposite sides of a coin. Other scholars prefer to look more specifically at the causes of peace rather than the absence of conflict. This field of research is often seen as embodying a *positive peace* approach, as opposed to a *negative approach*, which focuses on the drivers of violence and absence thereof. In a literature review in the *Journal of Peace Research*, Gleditsch and company note

that the term positive peace was popular for a decade, but is less so now, because it is often viewed as too diffuse and abstract to be useful.[4] Nevertheless, Galtung suggests that the conceptualisation of positive and negative peace does provide a useful distinction for the study of peace, where to focus on conflict – rather than conditions of peace – is more appropriately the remit of conflict studies than peace studies.[5]

This distinction between peace and conflict illustrates a division within the field, but also reveals a deeper debate about the definition of peace and what a condition of peace entails. As suggested above, negative peace is defined as the absence of open violent conflict. Aron, for example, defines a condition of peace as the 'more or less lasting suspension of rivalry between political units.'[6] Others still prefer a positive definition, one that includes the existence of social harmony beyond abstinence from fighting, encompassing conditions of justice, equality and human flourishing where everyone's needs are met to some basic minimum. As a result, under this definition, positive peace exists when structural violence is absent (or seriously abstaining), denoting a condition where institutions and structures within a society are actively non-discriminatory, satisfying basic needs with the objective of increasing social solidarity via reduced inequality and suffering.[7]

In terms of practice, particularly in relation to how actors in the 'international community' understand peace and seek to achieve it, at least four mainstream approaches to peace can be identified. These are:

1. The victor's peace, in which a negative peace is imposed by the winner (or another powerful actor), such as the conflicts commenced in Afghanistan in 2001 or Iraq in 2003, and perhaps Cold War peacekeeping operations such as in Cyprus or the Suez;

2. The constitutional peace which, inspired by Kantian writing, takes democracy and free trade to be the constitutional qualities of peaceful state coexistence and which helps to encourage the promotion of these qualities in other states;

3. The institutional peace, in which organisations such as the United Nations, or the Bretton Woods institutions, create peace through constitutional improvements in states, whether through peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction or administration of territories;

4. The civil peace, in which civil society, NGOs and transnational movements try to address historical injustices and other risks of war at a

[4] Gleditsch, Nordkvelle, and Strand, "Peace research–Just the study of war?"
[5] Galtung, "Peace and Conflict Studies as Political Activity," 3.
[6] Aron, *Peace and war*.
[7] Galtung, "Violence, peace, and peace research."

local level, regardless of the overall state structure or global systems in which states operate.

In explaining these approaches, Richmond argues that the idea of a neoliberal institutional peace has come to dominate international policy, so that state-building enterprises focus on stabilisation, deregulation and free markets more than human rights, democracy and other aspects of positive peace.[8] Although this reading of international order was particularly germane prior to 2020, there has arguably been a more recent shift back to the geopolitics of the 1980s, with increased emphasis on military alliance, ideological coalitions, balance of power, and revamped notions of 'peace through strength'. Consequently, notions of positive peace have been relegated to an even lower status.

Within peace studies, research has also been carried out to understand peace movements, to determine whether protesting certain wars or conflicts (or war and violence more generally), and whether incorporating wider grassroot calls for social change, are crucial for lasting peace. Some examples of these movements are the conscientious objectors of World War I and II, the anti-nuclear women's peace camp at Greenham Common in the 1980s, or more modern movements such as the anti-war organisation CodePink. Such movements tend to mobilise in response to a specific act or threat of violence from a powerful actor. In peace studies generally, the aim is to locate factors influencing the success of these movements, which are then analysed with recommendations for how to apply successful techniques to other quests for peaceful relations. What is important for our purposes is the recognition that some level of deliberation from 'the ground' is necessary for positive peace, since it acts as a mechanism to hold power to account.

Lastly, peace studies are also carried out into movements for peaceful social change and nonviolent revolution. These often relate to perceived oppression and structural violence, but which are not (yet) opposing a specific act or threat of violence. Rather, they seek to end some aspect of structural violence within a society (such as Occupy Wall Street, which formed in 2011 to protest against structural violence). These nonviolent movements for social change reflect a broader definition of peace and the study of peace, namely, that 'peace' is not simply an opposition to violence, but the promotion of nonviolence as a better way of life.

The study of peace is a diverse field with multifarious distinctions and our treatment above has merely scratched the surface. What is important to note is that the study of peace provides different and distinct definitions of peace, suggesting a contested space where understanding the determi-

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[8] Richmond, *Peace*.

nants for peace remains open. For our purposes, we are most interested in notions of *positive peace* with its focus on the removal of structural violence, promoting conditions for peace, and its emphasis on better ways of living. As we argue below, these conceptualisations of positive peace offer a link to distributive global justice and its moral critique of global structural inequalities. Yet, as will be argued later, scholars of distributive global justice have not embraced the idea of positive peace well enough, instead operating largely within concepts of negative peace without sufficiently making explicit links between structural violence and the demands of justice.

2. The relationship between global justice and the study of peace

Some links between the study of peace and global justice are obvious. Constitutional peace is built specifically on Immanuel Kant's *Perpetual Peace* which links domestic constitutional arrangements to interstate peace. According to Kant, a condition of international public right, and then cosmopolitan public right (global justice), can be promoted via a *foedus pacificum* of like-minded republics, which can assist and encourage domestic reform in other states, so that they can achieve internal equality and justice for individuals. It is from this condition of domestic public right (domestic justice) that a wider cosmopolitan public right and solidarity might 'gradually' take hold, laying cosmopolitan foundations towards perpetual peace between peoples.[9] Of course, this is an oversimplification of a considerably nuanced argument by Kant, and there is significant debate about the pacific nature of Kant's cosmopolitan vision.[10] In addition, Kant is often misappropriated and there have also been Kantian-inspired arguments promoting the use of violence in the pursuit of lasting peace.[11] As just one example, Kantian ideas of democratic peace, among other arguments, have been used to support regime change in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya. In terms of positive peace, and in relation to our argument here, one important critique of Kant's cosmopolitan vision is that it is too minimalistic in terms of global distributive justice, paying little attention to the need to address deep-rooted structural injustices beyond his basic *laws of hospitality*. In other words, although Kant promotes a negative peace that potentially grounds a future cosmopolitanism, it does not sufficiently address robust conditions of positive peace.

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[9] Brown, *Grounding cosmopolitanism*.
[10] Flikschuh and Ypi, *Kant and colonialism*.
[11] Roff, *Global Justice*.

A more promising approach toward positive peace can be located within contemporary global distributive justice discussions and its focus on global structural inequalities. This is because global justice scholarship can assist in bringing about positive peace by ameliorating the consequences of structural violence such as poverty and poor health – arguments that have been made most prominently by Thomas Pogge.[12] For example, Pogge argues that wealth redistribution would go some way to improve life for the least powerful among us, suggesting a global tax on financial transactions with proceeds going to the globally least well off.[13] In terms of positive peace, this redistribution would start to address the effects of inequality built into global structures, thus meeting some of the key demands to promote conditions for peace and better ways of living, particularly the moral demand for people to sustain a minimally decent life.

However, one critique of contemporary global distributive justice is that it often starts from a neutral standpoint in terms of how the world came to be so inequitable.[14] As a result, global justice scholars such as Pogge and Peter Singer are charged with merely arguing for wealth redistribution to help the global poor deal with the symptoms of inequality. From a positive peace studies perspective, ending structural violence and bringing in positive peace would require viewing the causes of such poverty somewhat differently. Under a positive peace view, the determinants of structural violence must be addressed, or more clearly reformed, not just the results of the structural violence itself. Such a perspective would also note that the behaviour of states/people in more affluent countries, behaviours such as instituting poor terms of trade and protectionism, is a form of structuralised violence at the level of the global system. In other words, it is a form of systemic violence, from which Pogge's most obvious and immediate solution is to provide restitutive justice, but with far less clarity about what is required to alleviate and reform the deep-rooted structural causes.

Similarly, in terms of responding to conflict, there is a tendency in the global justice literature to focus on the immediate moral demand for humanitarian intervention versus an equally important moral demand for addressing upstream determinants of violence, to promote a more consistent cosmopolitan condition for positive peace. As has been argued elsewhere, 'contemporary cosmopolitans are guilty of focusing too narrowly on justifying a responsibility to respond to the symptoms of crisis versus

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[12] Pogge, "Priorities of global justice;" Caney, "International Distributive Justice;" Caney, "Global Distributive Justice and the State."
[13] Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights*.
[14] Young, *Responsibility for Justice*.

demanding a similarly robust justification for a responsibility to alleviate persistent structural causes'.[15] As a result, according to this alternative cosmopolitan view, justice-based humanitarian interventions will remain insufficient without the incorporation of robust principles of distributive global justice that can also provide secure structural foundations for a more thoroughgoing condition of public right and positive peace.[16] What is required is a more penetrating examination of the structural conditions underwriting violence with a serious reflection about the systemic practices that allow it to occur.[17]

This focus on the unpeaceful behaviour of powerful states or other actors has led Dunford and Neu to describe such actors as 'bad international citizens' whose interventions to save the victims of violence will necessarily fail while masking their own prior involvement in perpetuating violence.[18] Brown and Bohm have suggested that it might be possible for these bad international citizens to change their behaviour and end their contributions to global systemic violence. Yet, what this requires is a demanding moral commitment to *jus ante bellum*, which is necessary before considering the moral *jus ad bellum* case for using military force to save victims of violence.[19] As examined in Section Six, this commitment will demand a complete rethink of development assistance for peace, changes in its delivery and accountability modalities, as well as its relationship to the promotion/reduction of structural violence.

As noted above, these recommendations are morally demanding, and perhaps over-optimistic in terms of the likelihood of any powerful actor being willing to change. Given experience, Swanger has argued that the neoliberal structure of modern global society contains a particular idea of the appropriate (neoliberal) domestic structures of peace and thus imposes particular forms of freedom and democracy, despite the window dressing of 'local empowerment'.[20] Consequently, the imposition of such structures does not fundamentally change the practices of domination and oppression both within a society and between the society and global actors.[21] From this perspective, a positive peace studies approach to global justice would caution against imposing a particular set of institutions, since the institutionalisation of universal values or the devaluing of local contexts could simply impose a new set of inequalities and power asymmetries.

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[15] Brown and Bohm, "Introducing *Jus ante Bellum*," 915.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] Bohm and Brown, "R2P and prevention."

[18] Dunford and Neu, *Just war and the responsibility to* protect, 3.

[19] Brown and Bohm, "Introducing *Jus ante Bellum*".

[20] Swanger, "Revisualizing (In)Justice."

[21] *Ibid.*, 5; also Thiessen, "Emancipatory Peacebuilding."

Alternatively, what is necessary is a more deliberative and procedural approach that can better capture local need, context, and identify structural drivers for reform, while amplifying reason-giving, accountability, and intersubjective agreement about what justice entails and how best to institutionalise it.[22]

Recently, this dynamic of a short-term focus on prevention within existing cycles of violence versus on structural determinants has become prominent in scholarly and policy debates in the context of discussions on R2P. We now turn to the examination of the R2P to further explore the relationship between development, distributive justice and peace. By doing so, it will be possible to identify current weaknesses in how the R2P has been institutionalised as well as introduce a new concept that incorporates these dimensions for positive peace, coined above as the Responsibility for Peace (R4P).

3. R2P and prevention

Over 170 heads of state and government at the 2005 World Summit in New York affirmed that 'each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity', as well as that 'the international community should, as appropriate, encourage and help States to exercise this responsibility' – as specified in Paragraph 138 of the Summit's outcome document.[23] Paragraph 139 goes on to detail the international community's 'responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means' to help protect populations from the four crimes (genocide, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleaning and war crimes) and its preparedness to take collective action to protect populations 'should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities are manifestly failing' in their primary protection responsibility.[24]

Four years after the Summit, the first Secretary-General report on the R2P outlined a three-pillar strategy 'for advancing the agenda mandated by the Heads of State and Government at the Summit [which] *stresses the value of prevention* and, when it fails, of early and flexible response tailored to the specific circumstances of each case' (emphasis added).[25] This implementation approach encompasses: 'The protection responsibilities of

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[22] Sen, *The Idea of Justice*; Habermas*, The Postnational Constellation*.
[23] United Nations (2005), para. 138.
[24] *Ibid.* para. 139.
[25] Report of the Secretary-General (2009), 2.

the State' (Pillar I), 'International assistance and capacity-building' (Pillar II), and 'Timely and decisive response' (Pillar III).[26] Within this architecture for the operationalisation of the R2P, '[p]revention, building on pillars one and two, is a key ingredient for a successful strategy for the responsibility to protect'.[27]

The following year, the first Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect, Ivan Šimonović, affirmed that 'there is agreement [among Member States] that prevention is at the core of R2P', and that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon 'has made a clear commitment to place prevention at the heart of his agenda'.[28] Yet, as Šimonović recognises, 'although Member States have repeatedly emphasized their support for the prevention of atrocity crimes, this has not been sufficiently translated into concrete support for preventive strategies.'[29] Since then, out of the fifteen Secretary-General reports published so far (2009-2023), five are explicitly dedicated to different aspects of prevention as indicated in their titles,[30] one focuses on assistance under Pillar II,[31] while the latest 2023 report fleshes out the link between development and R2P.[32] The debate as to what prevention should encompass remains unresolved and it is unclear in what ways the R2P supports notions of positive peace and the demands of distributive justice. Moreover, the latest Secretary-General report has put one aspect of this debate into sharp focus, namely the relationship between R2P and development. Given that positive peace stresses a relationship between conditions of peace, ways of living, and structural inequalities, understanding what prevention should include within the remit of the R2P becomes paramount.

4. The ongoing debate on the links between underdevelopment and atrocities

Prior to the publication of the latest Secretary-General report, recent contributions to the scholarly debate on the link between underdevelopment and atrocities indicate its contemporary relevance in both academic and policy circles. On one end of the spectrum, Bohm and Brown argue against the short-term nature of preventative measures within current

[26] *Ibid.*
[27] *Ibid.*, 9.
[28] Ivan Šimonović, "The Responsibility to Protect."
[29] *Ibid.*
[30] Report of the Secretary-General (2013); (2017); (2019); (2020); (2021).
[31] Report of the Secretary-General (2014).
[32] Report of the Secretary-General (2023).

R2P debates, suggesting that greater distributive justice reforms to global structures are required for long-term prevention and peacebuilding.[33] On the other end of the spectrum, Gallagher draws attention to R2P's 'controversial relationship with development which has led to divisions between both academics and governments', distinguishing 'between three camps' within R2P scholarship – 'i) minimalist, ii) middle ground, and iii) radical' – and arguing that 'the debate is hindered by the lack of data on this specific issue'.[34]

Put simply, *minimalists* reject the claim that R2P should engage with development issues, *middle ground* is the mainstream position viewing development and upstream prevention as an integral part of R2P without explicitly supporting the inclusion of socio-economic reforms in atrocity prevention strategies, whereas *radicals* (cosmopolitans and some critical genocide scholars) are either critical of the R2P because it does not engage with the structural enablers of atrocity crimes (rejecting the R2P) or call for reform of global socioeconomic structures that fuel underdevelopment and contribute to the incidence of atrocities under the umbrella of atrocity prevention.[35] As Gallagher illustrates, socio-economic concerns are also voiced by Member States as they debate the R2P in the United Nations General Assembly.[36]

Taking a minimalist stance, Gallagher argues that 'the R2P should not engage with long-term development issues'.[37] This position 'is threefold in that, a) because there is no causal relationship between underdevelopment and mass atrocities, b) we can never know that the resources we are committing toward development are actually aiding mass atrocity prevention, and as a result, c) the RtoP would be served better if resources focused on immediate prevention and response'.[38] As Gallagher expounds, some minimalists (Stamnes) argue that 'the RtoP and mass atrocity prevention should be pursued as two parallel activities with direct prevention done under the former and root cause prevention under the latter,'[39] while others (Mani and Weiss) criticise the 2005 agreement for its attempt 'to use the R2P to mobilize more support for root-cause prevention, including investments in economics and social development.'[40]

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[33] Bohm and Brown, "R2P and prevention."
[34] Gallagher, "An international responsibility to develop," 1040.
[35] *Ibid*., 1023-6.
[36] *Ibid*., 1026-8.
[37] *Ibid*., 1023.
[38] *Ibid*.
[39] *Ibid*. See Stamnes, "Speaking R2P", 78-83.
[40] Mani and Weiss, "Introduction," 4. Quoted in Gallagher, "An international responsibility to develop," 1023.

Gallagher's own defence of the minimalist argument is supported by his thematic analysis on mass atrocities and development, which examines 'thirty-seven countries and Human Development Index (HDI) data (1990-2020) to establish patterns in HDI data for countries that have experienced mass atrocities, or for which there were serious concerns of, both with regard to HDI status/absolute positions in the ranking and with regard to change/trajectory.'[41] His analysis highlights the complexity of the relationship between the two and finds 'no patterns that link mass atrocities, or serious concerns of them taking place, to [HDI] status, rank, or a particular direction of change'.[42] In the absence of compelling evidence that underdevelopment leads to atrocities, Gallagher deems the middle-ground and radical positions untenable. Namely, 'before I can support a radical overhaul of international structures in the name of mass atrocity prevention, I would need to see more definitive evidence that a) underdevelopment is a major root cause and b) that current international structures produce underdevelopment.'[43] In addition, Gallagher criticises radicals for their reliance on civil wars (rather than mass atrocity) studies to make such claims, while also ignoring the fact that atrocities can occur during peacetime.[44] Relatedly, he rejects the radical stance because 'it seems to hinge on [the unsubstantiated] idea that underdevelopment is a "significant" or "major" root cause' of atrocities.[45] Where does this leave proponents of the middle-ground or positive peace scholars who hold a more radical position?

For the sake of argument rather than taking a side, there are several reasons why the middle-ground or radical position can withstand minimalist censure. First, while Gallagher advocates that the complexity of the relationship between development and atrocities supports the minimalist position, middle ground or radical scholars could deploy the very same argument to lend support to their position. In the absence of compelling/sufficient data to either evidence a relationship between underdevelopment and atrocities or conversely demonstrate that such a relationship does not exist, the three schools of thought identified by Gallagher stand on equal footing when making normative claims as to whether the R2P should or should not engage in prevention and to what extent. Second, Gallagher recognises that there are other ways to approach the analysis of the relationship between atrocities and development. While he makes an important contribution that informs and propels the debate forward,

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[41] Gallagher, "An international responsibility to develop," 1021.
[42] *Ibid.*, 1020.
[43] *Ibid.*, 1041.
[44] *Ibid.*
[45] *Ibid.*

alternative methodologies (e.g., a different choice of datasets and/or ways to define and measure socioeconomic development) could reveal different findings regarding the presence or absence of a link between atrocities and underdevelopment. Third, his critique of Brown and Bohm presents a narrow view of the radical position targeting minor or perceived inaccuracies that could be addressed without affecting the validity of their overall argument, while generalisations covering a range of 'radical' arguments misrepresent arguments that do not hinge on the premise that underdevelopment is one of the foremost root causes of atrocities. To clarify, Brown and Bohm establish a link between underdevelopment, horizontal inequality and structural violence, which the evidence suggests leads to conflict (if not mass atrocities), and thus there is a prima facie relationship that goes underexamined in current R2P debates about prevention. Fourth, it could be argued that the lack of evidence for a direct causal relationship does not matter from a positive peace perspective, or from a moral perspective for that matter. This is because the bettering of social conditions is known to reduce violence, so by starting from the other end of the spectrum, with an eye toward social harmony as a condition of peace, there is still merit in taking development seriously. As will be examined below, this is explicit in the most recent Secretary-General R2P report.

5. The 2023 Secretary-General report on development and R2P

Bohm and Brown's analysis of Secretary-General reports on R2P up to 2020 highlights that despite acknowledging the importance of prevention and the need for long-term root-cause prevention, the reports 'reflect the assumption that the state is the site of the problem, and that the international community is the site of solutions,' thus failing to recognise that domestic structural problems (e.g., instability and armed conflict) do not emerge in a vacuum.[46] In the authors' words:

> this picture of the international community's role does not address what international community actors are already doing to seriously damage state structures, nor how the global system is structured in a way that can be damaging to resilience within state structures [nor] how the international community could fulfil its own long-term commitments beyond assisting national structural resilience (for example, its influence on risk determinants of violence like uneven growth and resource competition).[47]

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[46] Bohm and Brown, "R2P and prevention," 68; See also 65-71, for the authors' analysis of Secretary-General reports on R2P.
[47] *Ibid.*, 68.

Relatedly, Bohm and Brown point out that while prominent approaches to atrocity risk factors[48] identify both long- (e.g., weak state structures, historic serious human rights violations) and short-term risks (e.g., capacity of instigators, triggers), '[these frameworks] focus only on short-term actions that might be taken in relation to risks'.[49] The authors' critique of the mismatch between a professed commitment to long-term prevention and proposals for short-term solutions, underpinned by a lack of consideration of how the international community's activities are linked to long-term root causes of violence, is explored in detail in the context of R2P's relationship with international development and in particular the way overseas development assistance (ODA) is treated in Secretary-General reports. While the 2009 Implementation report's suggestion that increasing ODA to the bottom billion could decrease the incidence of violence through capacity-building draws attention to poverty and inequality as potential root causes of violence in the context of atrocity crimes, 'the international community's role in creating/sustaining problems within the weak state' remains obscured.[50]

The latest Secretary-General report, which 'provides an examination of the interrelationship between sustainable development and the responsibility to protect' and 'an outline of ways in which development can be leveraged towards the realization of the cardinal objectives of the responsibility to protect,' offers a timely opportunity to revisit Bohm and Brown's critique as well as Gallagher's contribution to the ongoing debate on R2P and development.[51] In particular, the report includes a whole subsection that specifies the role of the international community in leveraging development for the prevention and response to atrocities. The section starts by acknowledging the need to 'prioriti[se] the nexus between the responsibility to protect and development', which can be achieved by development approaches placing emphasis on this 'nexus' in line with R2P's second pillar.[52] According to the report, this should include the following:

1. Applying 'the principle of "do no harm"… throughout frameworks and activities to ensure that assistance does not exacerbate atrocity risk.'[53] In practical terms, this would entail development actors paying specific attention 'to governance reforms, security and economic

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[48] Specifically, the UN Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes: A Tool for Prevention and the Oxford Institute of Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict's (ELAC) Operationalizing the Responsibility to Prevent policy brief.

[49] Bohm and Brown, "R2P and prevention," 71.

[50] *Ibid.*, 69.

[51] Report of the Secretary-General (2023), 1 and para. 3

[52] *Ibid.*, para.30.

[53] *Ibid.*, para. 31.

growth assistance that have historically been insufficiently attuned to atrocity risks, such as the persecution of minorities.'[54]

2. In each development context, 'investment in governance institutions to promote peace, justice and inclusion [SDG16] can be carefully tailored to respond to specific governance-related drivers of atrocities… includ[ing] addressing patterns of discrimination, exclusion and human rights violations to enhance the ability of States to manage diversity and protect minorities, and promote transparency, accountability, peace and social cohesion.'[55] The report also recognises that in periods of transition, designing inclusive political processes could help to moderate possible sources of political instability.[56]

3. International development actors also have an important role to play in '[i]dentifying and responding to patterns of social deprivation and food insecurity that point to atrocity risk.'[57] This is germane because, as acknowledged in the report, it is the first 'recognition of food-related deprivations in the context of the responsibility to protect', including the role that famine, blockades, starvation, hunger and food insecurity may play in the commission of atrocities and the need for the development community to monitor and address patterns and issues of food insecurity.[58]

4. In line with arguments made by 'radicals' such as Dunford and Neu,[59] and Bohm and Brown,[60] the report acknowledges the need to 'target the illegal flows of small weapons and illicit trade to prevent actors from accumulating the means to commit atrocities.'[61] This would entail respecting UN-imposed arms embargoes and '[d]esigning disarmament and demobilization efforts that are sensitive to early warning signs of impending atrocities.'[62]

Overall, the report upholds a middle-ground or even a radical understanding of the relationship between the R2P and development. This is captured particularly well in Paragraph 6 of the report, which states that:

> Mass atrocities are the confluence of a set of structural factors, political dynamics, triggers to violence, and patterns of targeting during violence. However, there are clear patterns that hold across atrocities, which enables

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[54] *Ibid.*

[55] *Ibid.*, para. 32.

[56] *Ibid.*

[57] *Ibid.*, para. 34.

[58] *Ibid.*, para. 10.

[59] Dunford and Neu, "The Responsibility to Protect," 1080-102.

[60] Bohm and Brown, "R2P and development," 91-4.

[61] Report of the Secretary-General (2023), para. 36.

[62] *Ibid.*

risks and the likelihood of mass atrocities to be identified. These patterns are deeply rooted in central development concerns, including societal inequalities, weak institutions and political instability.[63]

By applying a developmental lens to R2P, the Secretary-General acknowledges that 'development can build the conditions for sustainable peace, equitable growth and accountable governance and thereby cement the prospects for realizing the fundamental purposes and objectives of the responsibility to protect.'[64] Reflecting middle-ground/radical concerns, the report further recognises that 'development deficits or exclusions have the potential to trigger and escalate mass atrocity risks, especially when combined with other critical [risk] factors' and that the risk of atrocities has 'increased with the rise of extreme poverty, inequality and conflict in recent years.'[65] This explicit recognition of the R2P-development nexus provides a timely opportunity to (re)appraise R2P's potential as a peacebuilding instrument, which is also important to take into account in our exploration of the relationship between development, distributive justice and peace before we introduce the R4P.

6. R2P as a peacebuilding instrument?

The debate about whether the R2P should focus on short-term preventative measures or whether it should also include a much wider development profile is difficult to unravel when considering where, and when, peacebuilding activities are necessary. In his contribution to the R2P and peacebuilding debate, Paris sums up the differences between the two as follows: 'peacebuilding normally refers to creating the conditions for lasting peace and preventing the recurrence of large-scale violence in countries emerging from conflict, whereas R2P focuses on averting mass atrocities.'[66] Nonetheless, he is critical of 'the tendency of policy-makers in the UN and elsewhere to treat R2P and peacebuilding as separate'.[67] His critique extents to academics, who also treat the two as isolated and shy away from studying this underexplored relationship, with the exception of *jus post bellum* scholars.[68] Paris traces the 'blurry boundary between peacebuilding and R2P' back to the 2001 report of the International Com-

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[63] *Ibid.*, para. 6.
[64] Ibid., 1.
[65] *Ibid.*, 1-2, para. 5.
[66] Paris, "Blurry Boundary," 509.
[67] *Ibid.*, 519.
[68] *Ibid.*

mission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), which conceived of the R2P as encompassing three responsibilities – a responsibility to *prevent* atrocity crimes, a responsibility to *react* to imminent or ongoing atrocities, and a post-intervention responsibility to *rebuild*.[69] The latter – defined as a responsibility 'to provide, particularly after a military intervention, full assistance with recovery, reconstruction and reconciliation, addressing the causes of the harm the intervention was designed to halt or avert'[70] – according to Paris, 'was, in effect, a call for post-crisis peacebuilding'.[71] By the time of R2P's endorsement at the 2005 World Summit, it had undergone significant reformulation and the 'responsibility to rebuild' element of the original conception was abandoned.

Paris is critical of this separation of R2P and peacebuilding, which 'is clearly visible in the Secretary-General's periodic reports on R2P and peacebuilding, which have paradoxically addressed many of the same issues and made similar recommendations without exploring—or even fully acknowledging—the close relationship between these two domains.'[72] On the contrary, Paris not only argues that the two are intertwined, but that peacebuilding 'is an integral part of the R2P', stressing some of the more obvious links between atrocities and peacebuilding, namely that 'successful peacebuilding should help to reduce the incidence of such crimes' in the context of armed conflict and that 'peacebuilding strategies aimed at reducing the risks of conflict relapse are core strategies for preventing atrocity crimes.'[73] Paris also highlights that 'studies of R2P and peacebuilding often produce very similar policy recommendations, including calls to strengthen justice systems, conduct fair elections, and address underlying grievances in vulnerable societies.'[74]

The 2023 Secretary-General report makes a brief but explicit recognition of the relationship between the two in a small paragraph dedicated to addressing armed conflict and advancing peacebuilding: 'National peacebuilding strategies aimed at the prevention of conflict and post-conflict recovery are most effective if they include the full representation and participation of populations that have experienced or are at elevated risk of atrocity crimes.'[75] While the report highlights both the *ante bellum* and *post bellum* dimensions of peacebuilding, it is far from a recognition of

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[69] International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect*.

[70] *Ibid.*, xi.

[71] Paris, "Blurry Boundary," 509-10.

[72] *Ibid.*, 509, 519.

[73] *Ibid.*, 509.

[74] *Ibid*.

[75] Report of the Secretary-General (2023), para. 28.

Paris' argument that 'the use of coercive military force to stop an imminent or actual atrocity crime creates its own requirement for post-crisis peacebuilding.'[76]

While we do not disagree that follow-on peacebuilding should be a part of decision-making considerations prior to a military intervention, we do not support Paris' argument that post-conflict peacebuilding should be a part of the R2P (i.e., what is in effect a return to the ICISS three-partite conception of R2P, including the *responsibility to rebuild)*. The latter was sidelined for a reason during the 2005 World Summit negotiations, to arrive at the agreement on the R2P as articulated in paragraphs 138-140 of the summit outcome document. As argued above, attempts to expand the scope of this agreement are not only unhelpful but also counterproductive in terms of implementing the R2P and nurturing commitment to it. In reality, the R2P is needed to protect people in cases of mass atrocity crimes, which is a necessary stopgap, since it is foreseeable that these sorts of events may occur, despite our best efforts to reduce determinants of violence. Therefore, while we want to stress that peacebuilding is an important ingredient in the prevention of structural violence that may or may not lead to atrocity crimes, we wish to refocus attention on long-term structural prevention of *jus ante bellum*, to reduce known conditions for violence to erupt, rather than post-conflict peacebuilding in our appraisal of R2P as a peacebuilding instrument.

Peacebuilding is considered as post-conflict activity, yet peacebuilding properly understood from a positive peace perspective must be entrenched in everyday life, as a better way of living, and thus promoted as such outside the confines of the R2P. Moreover, questions remain about the R2P's ability to act as a peacebuilding instrument. For example, even though the R2P captures one crucial cosmopolitan element, the idea of common but differentiated responsibility,[77] the R2P remains unfit as a potential peacebuilding instrument, because its design is lacking focus on peacebuilding as part of atrocity prevention. In addition, there are good reasons to think that the R2P cannot be the basis for a justice-based peacebuilding approach as it currently stands, because it is too focused on response and not focused enough on prevention, despite recent lip-service.

As argued above, an alternative approach suggests that global justice scholars who advocate for the R2P have been focused too narrowly on the symptoms of crisis without fully integrating cosmopolitan principles of distributive justice that could help mitigate the underlying causes that perpetuate humanitarian crises in the first place. As Brown and Bohm sug-

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[76] Paris, "Blurry Boundary," 509.
[77] Bellamy and Tacheva, "R2P and the Emergence of Responsibilities."

gest, 'it seems incoherent to claim that there is a duty to kill to save distant strangers, but not a duty to alter unjust structural conditions that will foster that need to kill in the first place'.[78] In this regard, and in line with positive peace, any policy such as the R2P, which seeks to protect vulnerable individuals from harm, requires a change of priorities away from a narrow focus on crisis situations, and towards redressing structural, systemic causes of crises before they occur. In a modern context, this will, of course, include health, employment opportunities and education. Importantly, 'it will also include the seemingly obvious, but so far avoided, restriction upon arms sales [recently acknowledged in the 2023 Secretary-General report on R2P] and unethical corporate activities in unstable regions, together with a commitment to non-military, consensual diplomatic peace processes.'[79]

From a normative perspective, Gallagher is right to note that '[s]imply speaking, the RtoP is an overwhelmed norm and the idea that states have a responsibility to develop in order to prevent is a responsibility too far.'[80] The norm has been stretched too thin through the continuous practice of testing its boundaries and considering its application in numerous cases. As Gallagher points out, 'it is now being linked to over a quarter of all UN Member States',[81] arguing that 'the RtoP's focus should be on halting mass atrocities in countries such as China, Myanmar, and Ethiopia rather than development concerns in countries X, Y, and Z which may, or may not, lead to mass atrocities.'[82]

From this perspective, Gallagher's line of reasoning that 'the RtoP should not engage with long-term development issues as it could undermine the consensus underpinning the RtoP' appeals to us.[83] Given that the norm itself is weak at best,[84] securing buy-in for expanding its scope is practically unfeasible regardless of where one sits on the spectrum of whether such an inclusion is desirable. While we are in favour of upstream prevention of structural violence and creating the conditions that nurture peace rather than conflict, we also now concur with minimalists that the R2P has a very specific function, which is the short-term prevention of, and response to, atrocities. If expanded too far, there is a risk that the R2P will be further overwhelmed.

However, the need to limit the R2P does not reduce the normative argument that we also need a normative commitment to a Responsibil-

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[78] Brown and Bohm, "Introducing *Jus ante Bellum*," 916.
[79] *Ibid.*
[80] Gallagher, "An international responsibility to develop," 1039.
[81] *Ibid.*, 1041.
[82] *Ibid.*, 1023.
[83] *Ibid.*
[84] Tacheva and Brown, "Global constitutionalism."

ity for Peace. While the commitment to collective action to prevent and halt atrocities when a state is 'manifestly failing' to protect its populations from these international crimes under the R2P is necessary, it is not sufficient. This is because these short-term preventions operate within already existing cycles of violence. And, most likely, they will be too little, too late. What is more sufficient from a positive peace and global distributive justice approach is making stronger links between the demands of global distributive justice, development, structural and systemic violence, and the study of peace.

Conclusion: The Responsibility for Peace (R4P)

We have argued that a meaningful moral commitment to global justice and positive peace demands coining a new concept, the Responsibility for Peace (R4P). We have further argued that this needs to sit outside the R2P, operating prior to, and independently of, the R2P remit. Of course, the two are conceptually and practically linked, with the R4P acting as a longer-term commitment to reduce underdevelopment conditions that underwrite violence and its potential expansion into mass atrocities. As a result, we see the R4P as complementary to the R2P, with an explicit aim to make the R2P as redundant as possible. In making this separation, it better captures a distinction between negative (R2P) and positive peace (R4P), allowing a division of labour that allows each instrument to target key aspects without also muddying the waters. Lastly, the idea of R4P strengthens a weakness in existing global justice accounts, since it makes a better conceptual link between structural violence, systemic violence, development, and distributive justice towards a positive peace. As has been argued above, although this link is implicit within global justice scholarship, it has remained understated, with a tendency to focus on the moral demands for humanitarian intervention. Here, we wish to make it an explicit component of any consistent global justice approach.

What does this Responsibility for Peace entail? First, it entails a commitment to principles *jus ante bellum*, which argues that if there is a moral demand that you kill to save people, there must also be an equal moral demand of justice to rectify the structural conditions that lead to the violence in the first place. Second, R4P requires a better triangulation between positive peacebuilding, development and the identification of global structural injustices. Third, it requires a commitment to recognising and altering unjust structures that lead to violence and underdevelopment. Fourth, it holds sustainable development to be a key aspect of human security, in terms of the promotion of internal and external mech-

anisms to create long-term stability, coexistence and, ultimately, solidarity in violence-stricken communities.

There is no doubt that this is morally demanding and there are obvious feasibility constraints given the current geopolitical and economic order. In addition, we are not asking for a new legal mechanism or doctrine. Instead, we are asking for a better recognition and reconceptualisation of a 'responsibility for peace' in the international community and what that might entail. In other words, this has been a theoretical exercise, with further details about how to institutionalise R4P beyond the scope of this article. That would require a new research agenda. Here we merely wish to give steer to such an agenda.

Consequently, the R4P requires the promotion of just political, economic and cultural conditions that allow non-violent co-existence with the potential to act as a transformative platform toward solidarity building and a more inclusive social imagination. In other words, R4P is a moral commitment to reforming unjust structures that can enable and enhance violence, whether that be national level horizontal inequalities with the potential to lead to mass atrocity, or global inequities in trade and finance that underwrite structural violence. Therefore, understanding global justice from a peace studies approach requires a triangulation between the insights of peace studies, global distributive justice, and development, where normative and practical reforms are targeted at the structures of inequality which drive fear, mistrust, and hostilities. As a result, we have argued that current mechanisms for prevention and peacebuilding such as the R2P are insufficient. What is required is a paradigm shift towards tackling long-term upstream determinants of violence.

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