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A Solution to “The Problem from Hell”?: Quantifying the Effects of International Military
Interventions During Mass Killings and Genocides

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ABSTRACT

Why are some international military interventions during mass killings or genocides successful at decreasing their severity, while others are not? I use data on military interventions during mass killings and genocides that occurred from 1955-2018 to investigate this question. Specifically, the three independent variables of military interventions being investigated are directionality, number of troops deployed, and timing of the intervention. I find that genocides that experience interventions may be more severe in terms of the number of noncombatants killed and the duration. Directionality and timing are shown to be statistically significant factors that affect the severity of killings. Pro-perpetrator and late interventions are both more likely to be associated with more deadly genocides as compared to other interventions. Ultimately, the conclusions of the research may serve to guide foreign policy during mass killings and genocides in the future.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In early January of 1994, a cable was sent by a UN official from Rwanda. It was a warning. Recent actions by the Hutu nationalists in the government and military indicated planning and preparations for a mass ethnic cleansing of the Rwandan Tutsis. Despite the gravity of the situation and mountain of evidence, the cable failed to reach the heads of power at the UN Security Council, ensuring that the Rwandan Armed Forces (RAF), who were majority-Hutu, could begin their campaign of mass killings with no resistance. On April 6, 1994, the RAF and Hutu-militias went from house to house, attacking and murdering Tutsis civilians and moderate Hutu politicians (Dieck 2015). As predicted in the now infamous cable, it was the start of a genocide. The international community scrambled to respond, pulling out a smaller peacekeeping mission after it failed to protect the Rwandan Prime Minister, wasting valuable time. Deployments came too late, the second UN peacekeeping mission only approved May 17, 1994, with some UN troops touching ground as late as August when the genocide was over. Over 800,000 Tutsis, 84% of the Tutsis population, were murdered (Dieck 2015).

With mass killings and genocides continuing to occur at an alarming frequency (e.g., the genocide of the Yazidis in 2014, the current genocidal campaign in Nagorno-Karabakh, and the ongoing mass killings in the Tigray Region of Ethiopia), research investigating how the episodes can be stopped is absolutely critical. This paper seeks to answer: why are some international military interventions during mass killings or genocides successful at decreasing their severity? I investigate this question using a dataset of mass killings and genocides that occurred between 1955 and 2018. Statistical analyses are run to see the effect of military interventions (when they occurred) using three independent variables, directionality, number of troops deployed, and timing of the intervention.

My findings shed important light on the effectiveness of interventions. A comparison between episodes of genocide that experience interventions against those that do not found that interventions may potentially increase the duration of a genocide and the severity of killings. Within genocides that experience interventions, models reveal that timing and directionality are statistically significant variables in determining the severity of killings. Earlier interventions are associated with less killings than later interventions. Conversely, pro-perpetrator interventions are associated with more deadly genocides than neutral interventions. Ultimately, the conclusions of the research may serve to guide foreign policy during mass killings and genocides in the future.

Chapter 1 offers an introduction to the topic of interventions during genocides and highlights its potential importance. Chapter 2 provides definitions under international law and reviews relevant literature in the field of mass killings, genocides, and military interventions. Chapter 3 outlines the theories that guide the analyses. Chapter 4 details the methodology used. Chapter 5 presents the findings and offers a discussion of their relevance. Chapter 6 concludes the thesis, highlighting the most important findings, shortcomings, and recommends areas where more investigation is needed.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Definitions

To begin, it is necessary to review important definitions relevant to mass killing and genocide scholarship. International military interventions are defined as an instance in which a nation or a coalition like the UN, NATO, or AU, dispatches its troops or forces into another sovereign state in response to a political issue or dispute (Pearson & Baumann 1993; Pickering & Kisangani 2009, 590). Due to the difficulties that arise from determining the intention behind an intervention, many scholars do not look solely at cases in which the intention of the intervention was to decrease the severity of a mass killing or genocide. Scholars also study instances in which a nation intervened for some other reason during a mass killing or genocide (e.g., India during the mass killings of Bangladeshis by Pakistan). However, the military intervention must have occurred after the killings started as the literature is not focused on studying prevention.

The definition of a mass killing is typically uniform, though there are differences in the number of deaths that must have occurred for it to be classified as a mass killing. For the most part, mass killings are defined as the intentional killing of at least 1,000 noncombatants where victims may belong to any group or the intent is not to kill an entire group (Valentino et al. 2004, 378; Ulfelder & Valentino 2008, 2; Anderton 2016, 53).

On the contrary, there is some disagreement on the definition of genocide, particularly between the definition the United Nations utilizes and the one that scholars utilize (Powell 2007, 529). The United Nations currently defines genocide as

... any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group (Definitions).

Meanwhile, the existing literature has argued that the United Nations' definition is too broad. Moreover, mass killings could be classified as genocides under such a definition, making it difficult to distinguish between the two. Instead, scholars tend to use the definition of genocides as a mass killing "of members of a group, negatively identified by perpetrators, because of their actual or perceived group affiliation" (Simon 1996, 244) where the intent is to completely destroy said group (Powell 2007, 543).

This paper uses the Political Instability Task Force (PITF) Dataset to identify genocides. PITF expands on the basic definition provided by Simon and Powell, where the following indicators are used to determine presence of a genocide:

1. Authorities are involved and complicit in the mass killings. Specifically, "any persistent, coherent pattern of action by the state and its agents, or by a dominant social group, that brings about the destruction of a people's existence, in whole or in part, within the effective territorial control of a ruling authority is prima facie evidence of that state, or other, authority's responsibility. In situations of civil war (i.e., contested territorial control) either of the contending authorities may be deemed responsible for carrying out, or allowing, such actions" (Marshall, Gurr, & Harff 2019, 15).

2. Given that a pattern of purposeful destruction must be established and that mass killings given their nature take time to carry out, only sustained episodes over six months are included.
3. The victims counted are unarmed civilians. While difficult to distinguish, the dataset focuses on tactics known to target noncombatants such as “massacres, unrestrained bombing and shelling of civilian-inhabited areas, declaration of free-fire zones, starvation by prolonged interdiction of food supplies, forced expulsion (“ethnic cleansing”) accompanied by extreme privation and killings, etc” (Marshall, Gurr, & Harff 2019, 15).
4. The number dead in these cases are not taken into account when determining if an episode is a genocide given that the targeted group could be small, so only a few hundred killed could constitute a large percentage of the victim-group’s population (Marshall, Gurr, & Harff 2019, 15).

Given these definitions, the perpetrator of the mass killing, or genocide does not necessarily have to be a state, it can be a non-state actor like ISIS. Additionally, the range of the number of deaths in my dataset of genocides varies widely.

Genocides Without Interventions

A review of past mass killings and genocides suggests that when no military intervention occurs, there are devastating consequences. In 1915, Young Turk leaders began a campaign of violence against the Christian minorities in the Ottoman Empire, primarily targeting the Armenians (Power 2002, 2). Despite numerous reports, no interventions or actions were taken by the international community to even condemn the perpetrator, the Turkish government. As a

result, over 1 million Armenians were killed (Power 2002, 2). In the case of the Holocaust, while there was a military intervention, it came too late. Ultimately, over 6 million Jews and another 5 million minorities were murdered (Power 2002, 2). The mass killings in Cambodia, Bosnia, Iraq, and Rwanda followed a similar pattern (Power 2002, 4). Evidently, allowing mass killings and genocides to continue without intervention has disastrous repercussions.

Yet some evidence exists that interventions can successfully decrease the severity of mass killings and genocides. Just 503 UN peacekeepers in Rwanda helped protect around 25,000 Rwandans, saving lives (Power 2002, 7). When NATO led bombings in Bosnia, it quickly brought the war to an end, and with it, ended the mass killings (Power 2002, 7). Given the evidence that interventions, particularly military interventions, during mass killings and genocides can help reduce the severity of the killings, research in the field is justified.

Directionality of Military Interventions

Most of the current literature regarding international military interventions during a genocide or mass killing is focused on the effects of the directionality of the intervention. However, there is a large amount of disagreement among scholars on what effect directionality has. Some believe that when an intervention is specifically against the perpetrator of the mass killing or genocide it decreases the severity of the killings. Take, for example, research conducted by Krain in 2005 where he concluded that the most effective way to decrease the severity of a genocide or politicide through intervention is to directly challenge the perpetrator or aid the target of the perpetrator (383). Both of these efforts would be categorized as interventions against the perpetrator. He furthers that impartial interveners, like the UN, do not decrease the

severity of a genocide/politicide, in fact, they have no effect, but that they are crucial for state-building after the genocide/politicide is over (Krain 2005, 383). The timeframe Krain used was from 1955 to 1997 and he used the PITF State Failure Problem Set (2005, 374). In that timeframe, Krain analyzed 36 cases of genocides and politicides (2005, 374).

In a separate study conducted by Peksen, the object of study was the effect international military interventions have on human rights abuses rather than mass killings or genocides. While not exactly mass killings or genocides, human rights abuses are so similar in nature that conclusions made on human rights abuses are relevant to mass killing and genocide research. Like Krain, Peksen concluded that hostile interventions (a.k.a. interventions against the perpetrator) only decrease the probability of political imprisonment, just one of their measures for human rights abuses (2012, 567). Peksen goes a step further than Krain and further finds that supportive and neutral military interventions increase the level of human rights abuses committed, rather than decreasing them (2012, 567). The timeframe Peksen observed was from 1981 to 2001 (2012, 561). Thus, both Krain and Peksen agree that anti-perpetrator military interventions decrease the severity of mass killings or some related human rights abuses.

Conversely, other authors have concluded that impartial interventions decrease the severity of mass killings and genocides while anti-perpetrator interventions have the adverse effect of increasing the severity of killings. Take, for example, the study conducted by Kathman & Wood (2011) in which they concluded that, overall, interventions of any direction have the short-term effect of increasing the severity of killings (753). However, in the long-term, the authors conclude that impartial interventions are the most effective at decreasing the severity of mass killings and that pro-government and pro-target interventions (i.e., anti-perpetrator interventions) worsen hostilities in the long-term (Kathman & Wood 2011, 753). They use the

PITF State Failure Problem Set (Kathman & Wood 2011, 745) and they have a longer timeframe, of 1955-2005 (735).

In a similar nature, Wood et al. (2012) hypothesized about the effects of an intervention on mass killings and genocides in the scenario that both warring sides are engaged in such actions. The authors concluded that an international military intervention on “behalf of the actor’s adversary leads the opposed group to escalate anti-civilian violence,” while the group that received military support will decrease its violence against civilians (Wood et al. 2012, 657). Wood et al. looked at a narrow timeframe, 1989 to 2005 (2012, 647), and used the Uppsala Conflict Data Project’s one-sided violence dataset as opposed to the more commonly used PITF State Failure Problem Set (654). In the timeframe, the authors identified 388 cases of civilian victimization (Wood et al. 2012, 654).

Finally, on the topic of the effects of directionality on military interventions, is the work done by DeMeritt, that ultimately found that directionality has no statistically significant impact on the outcome of the intervention. Instead, he finds that any military intervention, whether in support or against the perpetrator, will decrease the severity of killings (DeMeritt 2014, 448). It is important to note, however, that DeMeritt looks at a very small timeframe, from 1995 to 1999, only four years, which could be affecting his analysis (2014, 437).

There could be multiple reasons as to why the authors have conflicting results. It could be associated with which dataset is being used, PITF or UCDP one-sided violence, the timeframe, or the statistical analysis. Given that the UCDP one-sided violence does not take into account the various determinations of intent associated with confirming a genocide episode, for the purposes of this paper the PITF dataset is used. Multiple scholars have used the PITF dataset, and

depending on their analyses, have found conflicting conclusions on the impact of directionality, making it a highly valuable resource. This paper seeks to add to the discussion by using the updated version of PITF which has a wider timeframe and includes new episodes of genocides. Given this expansion, the paper hopes to add clarity to the directionality debate by investigating a larger number of cases, determining if the directionality of a military intervention indeed even has an impact. If results indicate there is a significance, the paper hopes to shed light on which directionality leads to a statistically significant decrease in the severity of killings.

Troop Numbers

In contrast to the literature on the directionality of a military intervention, the literature on the independent variable of troop numbers is in strong agreement. However, there is a high emphasis placed on the quality of the troops (i.e., well trained and well equipped) as well (Seybolt 2007, 26). Scholars agree that when an actor decides to intervene in another country it must have the ability to swiftly take control of the conflict so as to avoid a high death toll (Seybolt 2007, 22). When too few troops are deployed, the troops in the nation that has been invaded feels that they may have a chance to successfully challenge the intervening force (Seybolt 2007, 26). Such a conclusion would not be reached if a nation were to send a sufficient number of troops to successfully deter attacks.

In a study conducted by Sullivan and Koch in 2009, it was concluded that states typically provide few troops in interventions that are thought to be, in part, humanitarian, like a mass killing or genocide (713). However, the authors also concluded that deploying fewer troops for “peacekeeping” purposes meant there was a higher death toll when compared to the number of

troops deployed to impose a regime change, for example (Sullivan & Koch 2009, 713). This study provided further evidence that the number of troops deployed can affect the outcome of a military intervention.

The most common case-study that is done to look at the effect of troop numbers on international military interventions during a genocide would be the case of Rwanda. One report looked at claims made by the Canadian General, Dallaire, who was stationed in Rwanda on behalf of the United Nations (Seybolt 2007, 21). The general at the time of the genocide was provided approximately 400 United Nations troops, yet he claimed that if he had been “immediately provided with a single well-equipped battalion of 5000 trained soldiers, he could have stopped the genocide and saved hundreds of thousands of lives” (Seybolt 2007, 21). Seybolt affirms this claim in his report.

Another report by Goodpaster (1996) looked at multiple instances in which a military intervention with a large number of troops would have increased the success of a cease-fire or halt a mass killing. Goodpaster found that in the case of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the 1990s over Nagorno-Karabakh, had a large number of international troops been deployed to oversee the cease-fire, it would have been respected by both sides (1996, 22). Had the cease-fire been respected, more deaths could have been prevented. Instead, the cease-fire was violated, and both the Armenians and the Azerbaijanis saw many lives lost and people displaced. Moreover, because it was not well resolved in the 1990s, the conflict was rekindled in late 2020, and thousands of lives were lost and tens of thousands were displaced (Armenia-Azerbaijan 2020). Goodpaster also looked at the case of Burundi, where he concludes that the “large-scale killings and mass migrations could probably have been prevented if some countries had sent additional forces to the region” (1996, 22). Ultimately, the existing literature on the number of

troops deployed finds that when more troops are deployed, the likelihood of the military intervention succeeding in its goal increases.

Timing of Intervention

The literature on the timing of military interventions broadly agrees that the earlier an intervention, the more likely it will succeed. Existing literature on the timing of interventions has largely been focused on the case of the Rwandan genocide, likely because it is considered to be one of the largest international failures. Within this context, the literature is entirely in agreement, the earlier an intervention the more successful it will be at decreasing the severity of a mass killing or genocide.

The report that studied this most extensively was the one conducted by Feil in 1998, shortly after the genocide. He concluded that in Rwanda, had an international military intervention occurred between April 7 to April 21, 1994, hundreds of thousands of lives could have been saved (Feil 1998, 20). Feil made this conclusion because he believed that there was a window of time in which the political leaders of the genocide were more susceptible to a military intervention. In a report conducted by Des Forges in 1999 on behalf of the Human Rights Watch, she similarly concluded that there was a window of time early in the genocide in which had an international military intervention occurred it would have been effective (21).

Goodpaster summarizes the theory behind why intervening earlier is better, claiming that when an intervention is late, then the problem, in this case mass killings or genocides, is so widespread that the number of troops required to be able to enact change would have to be much

higher than if an intervention had occurred earlier (1996, 21). Moreover, the longer a mass killing or genocide occurs, the more efficient and effective the killings become as the perpetrators learn (Krain 2005, 372). As more people are killed, fewer possible victims remain, meaning a military intervention at that time would be “too little, too late” (Krain 2005, 372). However, it is important to emphasize that the current literature is almost entirely focused on the case of Rwanda. Substantial further research is needed in the field. This paper seeks to begin that connection, looking at all cases of military interventions during mass killings and genocides, expanding from the one case study.

Chapter 3: Theory and Hypotheses

The hypotheses in the paper stem from the Challenging Intervention Model, coined by Krain in his study on the importance of directionality of a military intervention (2005, 367). The Challenging Intervention Model looks to how genocides start to demonstrate that the form of intervention matters. It argues that perpetrators of genocides are opportunistic, they begin state-sponsored killings once they have determined that the international community will not respond severely. Even if the international community has threatened intervention, the perpetrator may disregard the threat if they do not believe it to be credible. For this reason, threat signaling is not an effective form of intervention. Directly challenging the perpetrator through military intervention signals resolve, forcing the perpetrator to recalculate their cost-benefit analysis of mass killings. With an intervening force physically in their territory, the perpetrator must reallocate resources and time to fighting the intervener, making it more difficult to carry out a genocide.

Hypotheses

As is suggested by the general overarching theory of the paper, the first hypothesis argues that in cases of mass killings and genocides where an international military intervention occurs, there will be a decrease in the severity of killings (Krain 2005).

H₁: Genocides with international military intervention will experience less severe genocides.

A potentially confounding factor when comparing genocides with and without interventions is that international powers may intervene at a higher rate in already severe genocides as opposed

to less severe genocides, otherwise known as treatment selection bias. This could make international military interventions appear less effective than they truly are.

I hypothesize that the earlier the international military intervention occurs in the mass killing or genocide, the higher the likelihood of successfully decreasing the severity of the mass killing or genocide (Des Forges 1999, 21-22; Feil 1998, 21).

H₂: Earlier interventions will be more likely to decrease the severity of killings.

When a military intervention occurs at a later time, then it will suffer from a higher burden as the conflict has become a widespread issue. Therefore, the number of troops needed to successfully intervene is higher than had an intervention occurred earlier. Even with a higher troop count, the conflict is so widespread that it becomes extremely difficult to reduce the severity of killings.

Further, I believe that if a mass killing or genocide has gone on for a long period of time without an intervention, then the perpetrator will feel emboldened by their success and will be less likely to stop once an intervention does occur. Likewise, as time passes and more have been killed, fewer potential victims remain for the perpetrator to kill. At that point, a military intervention could occur, and simultaneously there could be a drop in the severity of the mass killing or genocide. However, it would not be associated with the military intervention, but rather be due to a lack of people left to kill. This could have a potentially confounding effect, making interventions that occur later appear more effective than they truly are. Therefore, the test for the hypothesis becomes more difficult, but if nonetheless support is found in favor of the hypothesis, we can have a higher level of confidence in the support. For the reasons outlined, I plan to

test how the timing of an international military intervention effects the outcome of a mass killing or genocide.

I also hypothesize that the more troops are deployed, the more likely the international military intervention will be able to successfully decrease the severity of a mass killing or genocide. The lower the number of troops deployed, the less likely the military intervention will be successful at decreasing the severity of the killings.

H₃: A higher number of deployed troops will be more likely to decrease the severity of killings.

I theorize this because if a small number of troops are deployed to intervene, then the actor that is perpetrating the mass killing or genocide will feel it is possible to challenge the intervener (Seybolt 2007, 26). This could possibly increase the duration of a mass killing or genocide and increase the severity of killings. Along the same lines, when a large number of troops are deployed, they are more able to handle a conflict that could be potentially widespread as they would be able to intervene in multiple locations in a country. Additionally, with more troops comes more resources, which would increase the likelihood of the military intervention's success at decreasing the severity of the mass killing or genocide.

Finally, I hypothesize that if an international military intervention is directly targeting the perpetrator of the mass killing or genocide, then it is more likely the intervention will be successful (Krain 2005, 363).

H₄: Anti-perpetrator interventions will decrease the severity of killings.

I believe this because when an intervening force directly confronts a perpetrator, then the perpetrator must respond and is forced to turn its resources towards fighting the intervening force

rather than killing civilians. While it is possible that the perpetrator increases the severity of killings, as has been suggested by other authors, it is unlikely because the perpetrator, if it is a national government, would value its sovereignty over killing more people. Thus, it will shift its focus to defending itself from the intervener as opposed to killing civilians. If an intervening force is impartial, then the perpetrator may feel that it is not being challenged and will continue its killing of civilians.

H₅: Pro-perpetrator interventions will increase the severity of killings.

There is no incentive to stop engaging in mass killings when the intervening force is intervening on the perpetrator's behalf. For these reasons, I believe that a military intervention that is anti-perpetrator is more likely to decrease the severity of killings. Therefore, I plan to test how the directionality of an intervening force affects the severity of a mass killing or genocide.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Unit of Analysis

First, an analysis was conducted to investigate the differences between genocides with interventions and those without interventions. This was done to understand the pattern in severity of killings in genocides without interventions and compare them to those with interventions to understand if in general, interventions have a positive, negative, or neutral influence on the severity of genocides. To accomplish this analysis, the unit of analysis is genocide episode, revealing what happened throughout the entire episode of a genocide as opposed to different pockets of time within a genocide, as the primary analysis does. There were 45 genocides from 1955-2018. Of those 45, 26 experienced at least one international military intervention and 19 experienced no international military intervention.

I then study the effect of various intervention attributes on the level of killings during a mass killing or genocide in a dataset with country-years as the unit of observation. Specifically, my dataset consists of country-years in which a genocide was ongoing. The focus is on ongoing cases of genocide because the research is centered around the effect of an international military intervention after a genocide has already begun. The use of country-year allows us to see the effect of the intervention characteristics over time. With this unit-of-analysis, there were 289 genocide country-years in the dataset from 1955-2018. For the purposes of investigating the independent variables, a subset was created with 62 country-years that experienced an international military intervention while genocide was ongoing. Future research will be needed to examine the potential viability and effects of preemptive interventions.

Dependent Variable: Severity of Genocide

The main dependent variable in both analyses is the *Severity of the Genocide*. The severity of a genocide is determined using the PITF Dataset's scale of severity which is an ordinal variable with the levels determined by the estimated number killed in a given year, as can be seen below in Table 1. A scale is utilized because given the nature of genocides, perpetrators frequently suppress data on the number of civilians killed, meaning that the data is based on expert analysis and not official statistics.

Table 1. Severity of a Genocide: Magnitude and Corresponding Equivalent Range of Estimated Number of Deaths per Country-Year

1: Less than 300
2: 300 – 1,000
3: 1,000 – 2,000
4: 2,000 – 4,000
5: 4,000 – 8,000
6: 8,000 – 16,000
7: 16,000 – 32,000
8: 32,000 – 64,000
9: 64,000 – 128,000
10: 128,000 – 256,000
11: 256,000 +

Source: Marshall et al. (2019). Rescaled from 0-5 to 1-11.

For the purposes of the ordered logit regression that will be run, the scale was re-scaled into 4 levels as demonstrated in Table 2.

Table 2. Re-Scaled Severity of a Genocide

1: Less than 300 – 2,000
2: 2,000 – 16,000
3: 16,000 – 128,000
4: 128,000 – 256,000 +

Source: Marshall et al. (2019).

Dependent Variable: Total Duration of the Genocide Episode in Days

For the analysis focused on comparing genocides with interventions with those that do not experience interventions, the *Total Duration* of the genocide is used as a dependent variable as well. This is because the duration of a genocide offers another way of understanding the impact of an international military intervention. The longer a genocide continues, the more people are killed, which is why it is imperative to understand how it reacts to interventions.

Independent Variable: Directionality of the International Military Intervention

All of the independent variables are sourced from International Military Intervention (IMI) Dataset (Pearson and Braumann 1993; Pickering and Kisangani 2009). The dataset runs from 1945-2005. Given that this paper examines cases from 1955-2018, I undertook research to extend the coding through 2018 for country-years with a genocide using the coding rules established by Pearson and Braumann (1993). Since 2005, there have been 5 new genocidal episodes as coded by PITF: Central African Republic (2013-Present), Iraq (2014-2017), Sri Lanka (2008-2009), Sudan (2003-2011), and Venezuela (2017-2018). Of those, two had an international military intervention as defined by Pearson and Braumann, the Central Africa Republic and Sudan.

When the IMI and PITF datasets were merged, there were some country-years where multiple military interventions had occurred in the same year and place. Running an analysis with repeated country-years would overcount the severity of the killings that year. Therefore, I only used the intervention data for whichever intervener sent the largest number of troops regardless of directionality. This was based on the informed assumption that the more troops that

were sent meant they had a larger effect on the genocide, as was explained in the theories presented in Chapter 2. In cases where the interventions sent the same number of troops, one was randomly selected to ensure that the selection would remain unbiased.

The independent variable of *Directionality* is modified from the directionality measure created by Pearson and Braumann (1993). The ordinal variable was consolidated for the purposes of this analysis, which did not need such a large variety in definitions of directionality. Neutral interventions were coded as 0, pro-perpetrator interventions were coded as 1, and anti-perpetrator interventions were coded as 2. These were further separated into two binary dummy variables, anti-perpetrator and pro-perpetrator interventions. Years before an intervention starts were coded as missing. As it is from the IMI dataset, the coding has been used many times by scholars in the past and has passed multiple rigor screenings. The simplicity of the modified categories captures the intent of an intervener to the best of publicly available data. However, given the reliance on publicly available information, directionality is coded based in part on claims by the intervening government, which may not be forthcoming in its true intentions and actions during an intervention. Additionally, it does not capture if there was a change in directionality over the years of intervention, e.g., if a country entered a conflict neutrally but later changed to actively being anti-perpetrator. In the dataset there are 18 cases of neutral interventions, 23 cases of pro-perpetrator interventions, and 23 cases of anti-perpetrator interventions.

Independent Variable: Number of Troops Deployed in the International Military Intervention

The *Number of Troops* variable is an ordinal variable based on a range of troops deployed, similar to the scale of severity of a genocide. Therefore, it does not provide exact

numbers of troops deployed. This is due to limitations in availability of data, especially surrounding military operations, which are often classified and kept secret for security reasons. The variable is one of the easiest and only ways to measure the extent of a military intervention quantitatively which makes it a highly valuable variable. This measure cannot capture the skills of the troops deployed, which as discussed in Chapter 2, many theories posit as a factor to consider in military intervention scholarship. However, it is incredibly difficult to near impossible to measure the quality of troops, especially of foreign troops. Table 3 shows how the number of troops are coded categorically. It is not a time-varying variable and is coded as missing in cases without interventions and in the years before an intervention starts.

Table 3. Number of Troops Deployed, Magnitude and Corresponding Equivalent Range of Estimates of Troops Deployed

0: None
1: 1 – 1,000
2: 1,001 – 5,000
3: 5,001 – 10,000
4: 10,000 + *

*Source: Pearson and Braumann (1993). * For cases where troop number was not ascertained, coded as NA.*

Independent Variable: Timing of the International Military Intervention

Timing of the intervention was coded using the dates for the duration of the genocide in the PITF Dataset and the dates in the IMI Dataset for the start of a military intervention. For the PITF Dataset, due to lack of data on exact start dates, it was assumed that the intervention began the first day of the month. The variable was coded by using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Start Date of the International Military Intervention} - \text{Start Date of the Genocide}}{\text{The Total Duration of the Genocide in Days}}$$

Then, a variable of *Early* was coded using the variable of timing, with all cases where an international military intervention occurred in the first half of a genocide episode coded as 1 for early and all cases where an international military intervention occurred in the second half of a genocide coded as 0 for late. This allows for a comparison between cases of intervention that were early and cases of an intervention that were late. In the dataset, 31 interventions were coded as early and 30 were coded as late. The variable was coded as missing for genocides that had not yet ended in 2018, which was only the case for an intervention in the Central African Republic.

Control Variables

As the severity of genocides could be influenced by many different factors, four variables were introduced as controls. The first variable is the *Duration of the Genocide*, which is time-varied. As a genocide continues through multiple years, there is the chance that the severity of killings goes down naturally because there are less people of the targeted group left to be killed. Alternatively, the longer a genocide occurs, the more efficient the perpetrator becomes at carrying out the genocide as the perpetrator gains more knowledge. This may cause the severity of a genocide to increase (Krain 2005). Given these two possible effects on the dependent variable, duration of the conflict is controlled for. Along a similar vein, *Lagged Severity of Genocide* is also controlled for as levels of killings the year before may predict similar levels of killings the following year (Krain 2005; Kathman and Wood 2011; Wood et al. 2012).

Regime type is also controlled for. Many scholars have posited that authoritarian regimes have more leeway to carry out genocides compared to democracies. Within the framework of democracies, there are measures built in place for accountability as elected officials are voted

into office, for example. Therefore, democracies are not as likely to carry out a genocide and if they do, they in theory are not able to kill a large number of people. Authoritarian regimes, on the other hand, have no such constraints and may be able to kill more people in a shorter timeframe. For these reasons, it is necessary to control for regime type (Rummel 1994; Krain 2005; Kathman and Wood 2011). The regime type variable comes from the “polity2” variable calculated in the Polity V Dataset, which subtracts the autocracy score from the democracy score. In cases where there was no polity score due to foreign interference, the closest year’s polity score following that of the foreign interference was used.

As many genocides are driven by conflicts between various ethnic groups in a state, ethnic fractionalization is controlled for. If a country has high levels of ethnic fractionalization, it may experience more severe genocides and vice versa. The Ethnic Fractionalization (HIEF) Index created by Dražanová is used in this case which measures ethnic fractionalization based on a mathematical model that determines how likely two random people in a country are to be the same ethnicity (2019). In cases where a year of data was missing, the following year’s ethnic fractionalization index was used. For the Central African Republic, Iraq, and Venezuela, which all occurred in dates after 2013, the most recently available Ethnic Fractionalization Index was used. Due to lack of data from Equatorial New Guinea, no Ethnic Fractionalization data is given for the country.

Finally, I control for civil war. If a civil war was occurring during a country-year, the civil war dummy was coded as 1. If there was no civil war it was coded as 0. This was done using the Correlates of War, War Dataset (Sarkees, Reid, and Wayman 2010). Civil wars can have a significant effect on the number of people killed and how the severity fluctuates across time (Krain 2005; Kathman and Wood 2011).

Chapter 5: Results

For the comparison of episodes of genocides that did experience interventions against those that did not (H_1), I used a difference of means and difference of median tests. For the analysis of the independent variables, directionality, troop amount, and timing, in country-years that have experienced a genocide and international military intervention simultaneously, I ran an ordered logit regression (H_{2-5}). This is because the dependent variable of severity of killings is an ordinal variable.

Interventions vs. No Interventions

Using a unit of analysis of genocide-episode, analyses were run to compare genocides where an intervention has occurred and genocides where one has not occurred. Table 4 shows each case of genocide-episode, of which there are 45, divided between those with an intervention and those without. Data about the severity of killings throughout each individual genocide are also presented. Included in the table are the years in which the genocide occurred, the duration in days of the genocide, the range of the severity of killings throughout the episode, the median severity of killings, and the mode severity of killings. While all are useful, the median severity of killings provides the best measure of the central tendency, as in certain cases of genocide that only spanned a few years there was a different level of severity every year meaning there is no conclusive mode. As can be seen in Table 4, the severity of killings appears to be similarly distributed in both cases of genocide with and without interventions.

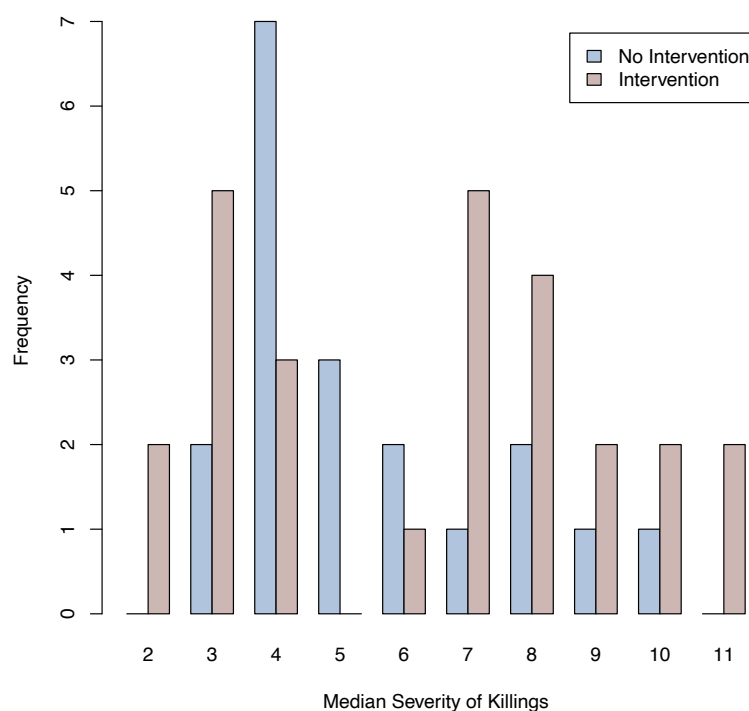
Table 4. Genocide Episodes from 1955-2018

Intervention	Country	Period	Duration in Days	Range of the Severity of Killings	Median Severity of Killings	Modal Severity of Killings
Yes	Afghanistan	1978-1992	5114	7-10	8	8
Yes	Angola	1975-1994	6940	5-8	7	6, 8
Yes	Angola	1998-2002	1186	7	7	7
Yes	Bosnia	1992-1995	1279	6-9	8	9
Yes	Burundi	1965-1973	2983	1-9	2	2
Yes	Cambodia	1975-1979	1371	6-11	10	11
Yes	Central African Republic	2013-X	Ongoing	2-5	3	3
Yes	China	1966-1975	3226	8	8	8
Yes	Congo-Kinshasa	1964-1965	335	1-5	3	1, 5
Yes	Congo-Kinshasa	1977-1979	1005	2-6	3	2, 3, 6
Yes	El Salvador	1980-1989	3622	1-6	3.5	6
Yes	Equatorial Guinea	1969-1979	3805	2-5	3	3
Yes	Ethiopia	1976-1979	1248	3-5	4	4
Yes	Guatemala	1978-1990	4536	2-8	3	2
Yes	Iran	1981-1992	4201	1-4	2	2
Yes	Iraq	1963-1975	4291	1-6	4	4
Yes	Iraq	1988-1991	1187	8-9	9	9
Yes	Nigeria	1967-1970	945	6-11	10	11
Yes	Pakistan	1971	275	11	11	11
Yes	Philippines	1972-1976	1369	5-6	6	6
Yes	Rwanda	1994	91	11	11	11
Yes	Sudan	1956-1972	5630	3-8	7	7
Yes	Sudan	1983-2002	6970	6-11	9	9
Yes	Sudan	2003-2011	2953	3-10	7	3
Yes	Uganda	1971-1979	2981	7	7	7
Yes	Vietnam South	1965-1975	3742	8	8	8
No	Algeria	1962	153	8	8	8
No	Argentina	1976-1980	1736	3-4	4	4
No	Burundi	1988	0	6	6	6
No	Burundi	1993	61	8	8	8
No	Chile	1973-1976	1187	4-5	4.5	4, 5
No	China	1959	275	9	9	9
No	Indonesia	1965-1966	273	10-11	10.5	10, 11
No	Indonesia	1975-1992	6057	1-8	4.5	2, 4, 5
No	Iraq	2014-2017	1218	2-4	3	3
No	Myanmar (Burma)	1978	334	5	5	5
No	Pakistan	1973-1977	1611	2-4	3	2, 3
No	Rwanda	1963-1964	183	1-6	3.5	1, 6
No	Somalia	1988-1991	975	2-7	3.5	2, 3, 4, 7
No	Sri Lanka	1989-1990	184	3-7	5	3, 7
No	Sri Lanka	2008-2009	242	2-8	5	2, 8
No	Syria	1981-1982	306	6-7	6.5	6, 7
No	Uganda	1980-1986	1857	7-8	7	7
No	Venezuela	2017-X	Ongoing	4	4	4
No	Yugoslavia	1998-1999	485	3-6	4.5	3, 6

Severity of Killings measured with Marshall et al. (2019) magnitude scale.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of genocides' median severity of killing throughout the whole episode, color coded by whether there was an intervention or not. There appear to be more cases of genocides that experienced interventions with higher median severity of killings. There are only 2 cases of genocides that did not have an intervention that experienced a median severity of killing over 9, while triple that number of genocides with an intervention did.

Figure 1. Distribution of Median Severity of Killings in Genocide Episodes



Genocides without interventions appear to be more concentrated to the left of the x-axis, implying that they seemingly experienced lower median severity of killings.

Utilizing the data in Table 4, comparisons between genocides with interventions and those without were able to be made, specifically looking at the difference in duration, median severity of the genocide, maximum severity of the genocide, and the minimum severity of the genocide. The test results are illustrated in Table 5. Such a comparison is critical because it has not yet been investigated in genocide and intervention scholarship. Preliminary results suggest that military interventions during genocides may have an adverse effect on the severity of the genocide.

Table 5. Genocide Severity: Intervention vs. No Intervention

Measures	Intervention	No Intervention
Mean Duration in Days	2851 ***	952 ***
Median of Median of the Severity of Killings	7 *	5 *
Median of Maximum of the Severity of Killings	8	7
Median of Minimum of the Severity of Killings	5	4
Number of Observations	26	19

Student's t-test and Mood's Median Test.

*** *p-value* < 0.01

* *p-value* < 0.1

Initial results may imply that genocides with interventions experience more severe genocides than their counterparts. Mood Median Tests revealed that the median severity of killings between cases of genocides with interventions and those without was somewhat statistically significant, although only to a $p < 0.1$. Critically, this does not support my first hypothesis that genocides with interventions experience lower severity of killings. The results are not conclusive, moreover the one significant difference in the median of median of the severity of killings has the opposite effect of what I predicted in H_1 . Another important factor to keep in mind in interpreting the results from Table 5 is the potentially confounding effect that minimizes the apparent effectiveness of military interventions, as was discussed above. The median range of killings in cases of genocides with and without interventions are quite similar, 5-8 and 4-7 respectively. These similar ranges do not necessarily mean that interventions are totally ineffective. It may be that effective military interventions are beneficially decreasing the severity of killings, but interventions are more likely to occur in more severe genocides, which makes the interventions appear to have a null effect. However, any positive effect of

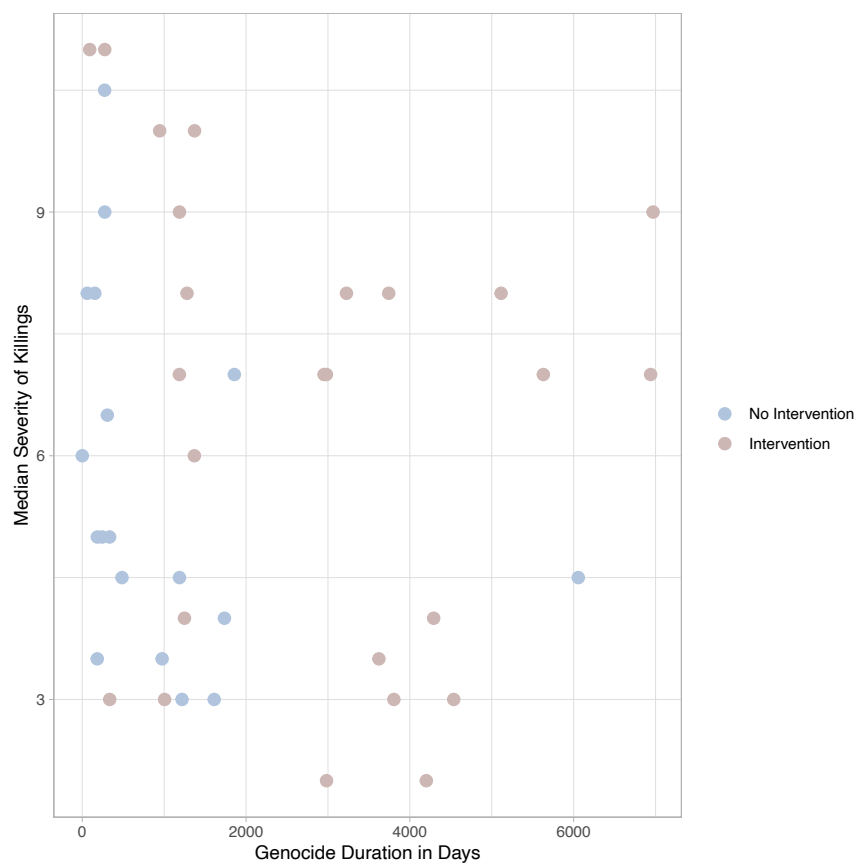
interventions is seemingly not enough to overcome the likely treatment selection effect, so it does not appear that interventions are highly effective.

Separately, a t-test revealed that there is a statistically significant difference in the duration of the genocide, with those that have an intervention occur at some point experiencing longer conflict duration. This is consistent and appears to further support intervention theories which postulate that interventions lengthen conflict durations (Regan 2002). It offers additional support for rejection of H_1 , that interventions decrease the severity of a genocide. Furthermore, the explanation for this does not appear to be that longer genocides attract more interventions. The mean of genocide duration before the earliest intervention that occurred during a genocide-episode is 752 days, which is below the mean duration of days of genocide-episodes that do not experience an intervention. This may offer some evidence that the potentially confounding effect that interventions occur in genocides that are already severe, both in length and in terms of killings, cannot fully explain that the finding. That is, there is some evidence that interventions might genuinely make genocides worse.

Figure 2 illustrates the findings regarding the potential negative effect of military interventions on the total duration of a genocide in days. As can be seen, cases that experienced interventions (colored in light blue), had a wide range of median severity of killings (y-axis) but are almost entirely concentrated in between 0-2,000 days. Only 1 genocide that did not experience an intervention had a duration of more than 2,000 days. Conversely, genocidal episodes that did experience an intervention (colored in light pink) are distributed across the x-axis, having both short and incredibly long durations in comparison to genocidal episodes without interventions. The illustration makes clear how strong of an effect interventions have on

increasing the duration, with total durations often double and triple the length of genocides without interventions.

Figure 2. Duration of Genocide and the Median Severity of Killings in a Genocide Episode



Genocides with Interventions

An ordered logit regression was run to test the effects of the three independent variables, directionality, troop amount, and timing in genocides that did experience an intervention. The unit-of-analysis was country-year in which there was both a genocide and an international

military intervention. This differs from the first analysis run earlier which used a unit-of-analysis of genocide-episode.

Table 6. The Effects of International Military Interventions on the Severity of Killings During a Genocide, 1955-2018

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Anti-Perpetrator Directionality	0.86 (0.81)			0.61 (0.63)
Pro-Perpetrator Directionality	0.64 (0.71)			0.95 (0.40) **
Early Intervention		-1.28 (0.25) ***		-1.04 (0.21) ***
Troop Amount			0.24 (0.26)	0.10 (0.30)
Regime Type	-0.06 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.08)	-0.12 (0.09)	-0.14 (0.10)
Ethnic Fractionalization	1.16 (0.17) ***	0.32 (0.11) **	-0.21 (0.12) *	-0.04 (0.10)
Civil War	0.10 (0.68)	0.75 (0.43) *	0.25 (0.59)	0.57 (0.51)
Duration of Conflict (Time-Varied)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)
Lagged _(t-1) Severity of Killings	1.03 (0.18) ***	1.09 (0.18) ***	0.95 (0.18) ***	1.05 (0.19) ***
Observations	49	48	44	44

* $p < 0.1$

** $p < 0.05$

*** $p < 0.01$

Four models were run, each with different sets of independent variables but the control variables remained the same across the board. Model 1 focuses on testing the effects of the directionality of an intervention, specifically anti-perpetrator and pro-perpetrator interventions as compared to neutral interventions. Model 2 compares the effect of an early intervention compared to a late one. Model 3 tests the effects as the number of troops increases in an intervention. Finally, Model 4 tests all the independent variables together.

Across all models, the lagged severity of killings was consistently a significant predictor. This was expected and found in previous studies (Krain 2005; Kathman and Wood 2011). Ethnic Fractionalization was also consistently significant in three of the four models, indicating the importance of its inclusion as a control.

The hypotheses on the effects of directionality on the severity of killings are illustrated in Models 1 and 4. H₄ hypothesized that anti-perpetrator military interventions decrease the severity of killings, as has been previously found (Krain 2005). However, in models 1 and 4, anti-perpetrator interventions had no significantly different effect on the severity of killings than neutral interventions. Thus, there is no support for the hypothesis. The positive coefficient indicated does seem to follow later studies' findings that perhaps anti-perpetrator interventions increase the severity of killings (Kathman and Wood 2011; Wood et al. 2012), but the effect is not significant.

H₅ hypothesized that pro-perpetrator interventions would increase the severity of killings. While Model 1 does not reveal any significant effect, Model 4 does, offering support for that hypothesis. The coefficient indicates a positive relationship between pro-perpetrator interventions and the severity of killings. The odds ratio reveals that for genocides that

experienced a pro-perpetrator intervention, the odds of a more deadly, rather than less deadly (i.e., the odds of increasing a level in severity of killings), genocide are 2.59 times higher than for genocides that did not experience a pro-perpetrator intervention (i.e., neutral interventions). These findings seem to support previous findings by Krain (2005) and findings by Kathman and Wood, who found in the short-term pro-perpetrator interventions increase the severity of killings (2011). However, it does run contrary to findings by Wood et al. (2012) that interventions in support of perpetrators increase violence against noncombatants.

Models 2 and 4 test my hypothesis that earlier military interventions decrease the severity of killings (H_2). Both models support the hypothesis, with negative coefficients that are highly significant. As was stated earlier, as a genocide progresses, there may be a natural drop-off in the severity of killings, as the numbers of the targeted population shrink due to the killings in the previous years and refugees fleeing. This may act as a confounding factor, exaggerating the effects of late interventions. Despite this, early interventions are still associated with lowering the severity of killings as opposed to their late intervention counterparts. Another way to understand the effect of early interventions is using the odds ratio. In Model 2, for genocides that experienced early interventions, the odds of having a more deadly genocide as opposed to a less deadly genocide (i.e., the odds of increasing a level in the severity of killings) is 72% lower than for genocides that experienced late interventions, holding constant all other variables. In other words, for genocides that experienced late interventions, the odds of having a more deadly genocide is 3.57 times that of genocides that experienced early interventions, holding constant all other variables. In Model 4, the odds of late interventions having a more deadly genocide as opposed to a less deadly genocide are 2.78 times that of genocides with early interventions.

Models 3 and 4 test my hypothesis that the higher the number of troops deployed, the less severe the killings (H_3). Interestingly, the effect seems to be the opposite, that the higher number of troops is associated with a more severe genocide in terms of killings as opposed to a less severe genocide. This could be related to the fact that “larger” interventions (i.e., those that deploy more troops) tend to occur when a genocidal episode is already very deadly to begin with. As a result, this potential phenomenon may be making interventions with more troops deployed appear less effective than they actually are. However, no significance was found, indicating that the models do not support the hypothesis regarding troops numbers.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This thesis sought to investigate the effects of international military interventions on mass killings and genocides, focusing in particular on three measures of the military intervention: directionality, number of troops, and timing. An analysis comparing episodes of genocide that experienced an intervention with those that did not found statistically significant differences in the total duration of the conflict. This potentially indicates that interventions lengthen the duration of a genocide. In addition, some significance was found in the severity of killing which may point to genocides with interventions experiencing more severe levels of killings. However, the results are not conclusive as there is a potentially confounding effect in that interventions may occur because a genocide has become too severe. Although some indicators from the existing cases may point to this effect not confounding the analyses, future research will need to account for and examine this link more closely.

Within genocides that did experience an international military intervention, timing and directionally were found to be significant factors in determining the severity of killings. Specifically, early interventions were found to be less likely to experience more deadly genocides as compared to late interventions. This supports and provides some empirical backing for previous theories that earlier interventions are more successful that arose following the failure to appropriately intervene in the Rwandan Genocide. Pro-perpetrator interventions were found to be more likely to experience more deadly genocides as compared to their counterparts, neutral and anti-perpetrator interventions. The number of troops deployed during the intervention were not found to be significant.

There were some drawbacks to the data used. The data had few observations given the rarity of genocides. Moreover, fewer still experience some sort of military intervention as they were ongoing. Additionally, due to the lack of information on deaths during a genocide, the dependent variable was measured roughly. Similarly, lack of data on international military interventions impacted the way that those factors could be measured. Future research should focus on finding other forms of measurement, such as precise troop numbers or deaths.

Much focus has been placed on understanding the effects of different factors of international military interventions on genocides. Underlying these analyses is the assumption that military interventions have some sort of positive effect on reducing the severity of killings. However, this paper found that assumption may not be true. More research is needed to understand what the potential negative consequences are of a military intervention during a genocide. Other forms of intervention outside of a military response should be investigated. Future research could look towards understanding prevention measures over military interventions.

More scholarship on this topic is absolutely critical. Mass killings and genocides are not a phenomenon of the past. In the past few years, more episodes of mass killings and genocides have occurred around the world. In the Tigray region of Ethiopia, reports of genocidal tactics in the recent civil war were widespread and current estimates place civilian casualties between 300,000-400,000 (Pilling and Schipani 2023). In the Caucasus region, the Azerbaijani government has seemingly been blockading the Lachin Corridor, preventing food and medicine from reaching civilians in Nagorno-Karabakh, potentially endangering 120,000 lives (Meijer and Ljunggren 2023). The Yazidis of Iraq were targeted in a genocidal campaign by Daesh in 2014 (Iraq 2014). In 2017, the Myanmar military led a genocidal campaign against the Rohingya,

killing thousands and forcing hundreds of thousands to flee (*Myanmar Rohingya* 2020).

Communities have heard the phrase “never again” one too many times. It is far past time for real change in policies surrounding interventions during mass killings and genocides.

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LUISINA KEMANIAN LEITES – ACADEMIC VITA

EDUCATION

B.A. with Honors International Politics, B.A. Latin American Studies

The Pennsylvania State University (2019-2023)

Minor Middle East Studies, Minor Arabic, Minor Spanish

Social Justice, Politics, and Language Study Abroad in Santiago de Chile

Institute for the International Educational of Students (2022)

Middle East Studies Study Abroad in Amman, Jordan

The Council on International Educational Exchange (2002)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Head Research Assistant, Children, Media, and Conflict Zones Lab Aug. – Dec. 2021

Research Assistant, Dr. Matthew Golder, Penn State May – Aug. 2021

Rock Ethics Institute Fellow, Children, Media, and Conflict Zones Lab Jan. – May 2021

Research Assistant, Children, Media, and Conflict Zones Lab Jan. – Dec. 2020

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Teaching Intern, Escuela Amor de Dios, Santiago de Chile Sep. – Nov. 2022

*Project Development and Research Intern, American Friends Service
Committee Amman, Jordan* Jan. – May 2022

Teaching Assistant, Bellisario College of Communications Aug. – Dec. 2021

Nevins Fellow, Baltimore City Council June – Aug. 2021

Fellow, D.C. Social Justice Fellowship, Penn State and DC Street Law Jan. – May 2021

LEADERSHIP AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Minorities in the College of Liberal Arts Penn State July 2021. – Present

Phi Beta Kappa Honors Society	Jan. 2022 – Present
Peace Corps Preparatory Program Penn State	Feb. 2021 – Present
Latino Caucus Penn State	Sept. 2021 – Jan. 2022
Liberal Arts Undergraduate Council Penn State	Aug. 2019 – Dec. 2021
Latinx Leadership Institute Penn State	Oct. 2020 – Sept. 2021

COMMUNITY SERVICE

<i>Program Coordinator and English Tutor</i> , RAISE	July 2021. – Feb. 2022
<i>English Tutor</i> , Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy Penn State	Jan. – Dec. 2021
<i>English Tutor</i> , Collateral Repair Project, Amman, Jordan	Aug. – Oct. 2021
<i>Election Official</i>	Nov. 3, 2020

AWARDS AND HONORS

Marshal (i.e., Valedictorian) Department of International Politics	Spring 2023
Harry J. and Joanne M. D’Andrea Scholarship Political Science	2022-2023
Truman Scholarship Nominee Penn State	2021-2022
Undergraduate Research Award Funding College of the Liberal Arts	Fall 2021
John H. Ferguson Award Political Science	2021-2022
Future Leaders Scholarship Schreyer Honors College	2021-2022
Donald and Diane DiFrancesco Scholarship Political Science	Summer 2021
Shibley Memorial Scholarship in Middle Eastern Studies	2020-2021
Rock Ethics Institute Fellowship	2020-2021
Thomas R. and Joan G. Dye Scholarship Political Science	2020-2021
Undergraduate Research Award Funding College of the Liberal Arts	Fall 2021

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English Native
Spanish Native
Arabic Advanced
Portuguese Intermediate