Introduction

Bridget Conley-Zilkic

How do mass atrocities end? *Badly*, the research, policy, and popular consensus asserts. Illustrating this point are the cruel remains of genocides past: a trail of Armenian death across Anatolia, the ashes that to this day cover the ground at Auschwitz, the bones still visible in Cambodia's killing fields, the image of a frozen embrace as a mother grasps her child against the chemical weapon onslaught in Kurdish Iraq, the annual re-burials of identified remains from Srebrenica, and the churches and schools transformed into massacre memorials across Rwanda. Atrocities end, these scenes inform us, with the annihilation of the victim population.

Given the depths of human brutality on display in the perpetration of mass atrocities, it is no wonder that one question dominates the entire body of work on genocide and mass atrocities: *what can we, who are not at risk, do to prevent such violence and hasten endings*? Drawing on selective memory, the imagination of how *we* might help end mass atrocities overemphasizes military defeats – timely or tardy. They represent the last hope and most powerful tool in the toolbox to staunch what otherwise appears as unstoppable escalation of violence directed against entire civilian groups. While such interventions are not always possible, they are imagined as the most robust and efficacious response in the anti-atrocities toolbox. Thus, the question that sparked development of tools for responding to atrocities was: *how and when can the international community justify armed intervention to save populations?* Even when armed intervention does not occur, as it most often does not, this question orients the imagination of atrocities prevention and response (Conley-Zilkic 2015), and is the logical outcome of the obsession with the question of what "we" can do.

Thus are endings conceived as part of a salvation narrative: the international community rescues the innocent, halts violence, and punishes the guilty. The story and all its characters are fixed within an ideal ending. In this version, not only does the killing stop, but the innocent are vindicated, the guilty punished

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and a new political dispensation is installed that protects the future. There is nothing wrong with this story as an expression of hope, but it does not describe actual endings.

Understanding actual endings requires a different story. Mass atrocities end in ways that are always compromised and incomplete. There is no redemption in the wake of such extensive and brutal violence. Our definition of endings focuses on a limited factor: *significant declines* in violence organized to target civilians on a widespread and systematic scale. We recognize that this is not the same as ending the suffering and vulnerability of victims, achieving justice, or, in many cases, a conclusion of all violence. Further, as will be addressed more below, several of our cases do not sustain even this very limited definition of an ending; in those cases, we explore the dynamics of why violence rises and falls. But part of the story we can tell about the endings defined as declines in mass civilian targeted violence is that they are, in fact, often not synonymous or coterminous with broader human rights or state-building agenda. Actual atrocity endings require separate analysis.

Our question is simple: how and why do mass atrocities *actually* end? This is the central question that must precede the one of what 'we' can do. The answer reveals a tale of the processes, decisions, and factors that influence how and when atrocities decline. Actual endings demand our attention, because regardless of whether perpetrators "succeed," atrocities do always end, and understanding the processes by which they do so offers insights into the initiation and escalation of violence against civilians.These processes cannot be taken for granted, idealized into a better future ending or simply mourned; they must be queried in all their complexity. While there is no cause to celebrate the atrocity endings addressed in this volume, there is much to be learned.

In this book, we define mass atrocities as widespread and systematic violence against civilians, largely characterized by killing, but we address a wider range of harms. Endings are marked by significant reductions in killing and are studied in detailed analysis of six country cases: Guatemala, Burundi, Sudan (including southern/South Sudan[1]), Indonesia (including Papua and East Timor/Timor-Leste[2]), Yugoslavia (focusing on Bosnia-Herzegovina[3]), and Iraq. The cases suggest many cross-cutting themes, some of which are discussed in this Introduction. The order of their presentation draws out some of these themes: the volume begins with Guatemala and Burundi, both of which have experienced endings that are thus far firm and aligned with the articulation of a liberal state. However, Burundi appears

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[1]   South Sudan became independent from Sudan in 2011; previously, it was the southern region, states, or provinces of Sudan.

[2]   East Timor claimed its independence from Indonesia under the name Timor-Leste in 2002. In this Introduction, we refer to the area as East Timor while addressing the period during which it was part of Indonesia.

[3]   Bosnia-Herzegovina became an independent state in April 1992.

to have moved beyond the ethnic logic that animated atrocities, while in Guatemala, it is largely confirmed by the severe inequality the victim group continues to experience. Nonetheless, in neither country is violence a thing of the past: political violence continues in Burundi in 2015 and Guatemala has an exceptionally high homicide rate. In both countries, continuing violence provides testimony to the underlying political dysfunction that serves as the backdrop for historic episodes of mass killing. The Sudans and Indonesia both offer a multitude of atrocity events with several distinct victim groups within states that have recently transitioned out of military dictatorship. Endings demonstrate important differences in the capacities of a more institutionalized and internationally integrated state like Indonesia in comparison with either Sudan or South Sudan.

Our third pairing, Bosnia and Iraq, offer two extremes within the anti-atrocity agenda: Bosnia occupies a misplaced seat of honor as an example of what the international community can accomplish when it decides to halt atrocities. Iraq, despite exceptionally high levels of civilian killing, was completely absent from the anti-atrocity agenda through its worst violence, finding resonance only after the reduction in U.S. forces in Summer 2014, when the call to action was to increase U.S. military engagement. Each chapter provides a broad historical and political context of mass atrocities, focuses on a limited number of episodes, and asks: how and why did mass atrocities end?

To the question of *why study endings*, we emphatically reply that this woefully underexamined aspect of mass atrocities offers valuable insight into the patterns, politics, decision making, and potential for influencing endings of mass violence against civilians. Four key stories emerge. The first is the political rationality of perpetrators. Second, is a tale of the place of violence in historical political economy. Third, is the intersection of mass atrocity and armed conflict, a story that adds nuance the current consensus that conflict is frequently the context for atrocities. Finally, is the story of "us" – those who are not immediately at risk and whose actions might help those who are. Commitment to the principle that mass atrocities are not an inevitable part of human existence has borne fruit; but precisely *why* and *how* it has, in addition to what further might be done to hasten endings, requires revision.

THE WRONG STORY: THE LIMITS OF "GENOCIDE"

Most of our authors are not genocide scholars, but area experts whose vocabulary and analytical tools draw on a wide range of theoretical, disciplinary, and subdisciplinary frameworks. They have selected the vocabulary that they felt best fit the dynamics of violence in their cases, with the term "mass atrocities" providing a broad general framework across chapters.

We intentionally depart from the conceptual framework introduced by the legal definition of genocide which is poorly designed to inform a study of endings. At its

core, "genocide" attempts to qualitatively differentiate one form of violence from all other forms (Bogossian 2010); as such, the conceptual, legal, and practical implications of the term obscure the variations in the degree of violence that we feel are of utmost concern to studying endings. Further limitations arise from the definition of the group and the requirement of a criminal "intent to destroy."

The legal definition of genocide limits the victims to ethnic, national, racial or religious groups. While such "groupness" often describes victim selection, it rarely can account for endings. Thus, several authors use vocabulary related to groupness: Bridget Conley-Zilkic refers to "ethnic cleansing" in her chapter on Bosnia, Noel Twgiramungu addresses "ethnic violence" in Burundi, Alex de Waal engages with the literature on Sudan's "identity politics," and Fanar Haddad discusses "sectarian violence" in Iraq. In each case these terms describe the major social schism across which violence occurs, but are less relevant when it comes time for analyzing why violence declines. These terms, regardless if viewed within essentialist or construct-ivist framework, are not equipped to analyze the evolution of political dynamics and calculations that inform endings.

Genocidal intent requires a goal of destroying a group, regardless of motive or context for violence. This implies evil in the very mindset of the perpetrator. Given the brutality of violence involved in the cases of genocide, there is little reason to object to such a classification. But it is a short and misguided step from the assumption of evil to the assumption that perpetrators by nature will not alter their actions absent outside force. The idea of 'evil' obscures study of endings. Neither the evil of the violence perpetrated nor the parallel assumption that outside actors are comparatively "good" is of much value when it comes to analyzing how and why violence ends.

At the height of violence in each of our cases, there can be little doubt that they fit even more limited definitions of mass killing or genocide. But our cases move beyond these dismal peaks, and explore the relationship between spikes and valleys of violence, as well as the potential for recurrence. Some of our insights may be the product of analyzing a wider range of violent episodes than generally are considered genocide. This decision echoes contemporary application, whether consciously or not, of the anti-atrocity agenda to lower levels and a wider range of violence than historical cases of genocide. In short, we follow a more agnostic approach to differentiating specific types of violence against civilians in favor of examining the politics of escalation and decline. Thus, we learn from other theorists of political violence who question how far we can currently disaggregate different forms of violence and the political mechanisms that set them into motion, or, as we note, cause them to end. For example, Cunningham and Lemke have recently argued that many of the factors considered by quantitative analysts to be relevant to civil war studies are also relevant to understanding a much broader range of forms of violence (2014).

While we eschew the language of "genocide" as an organizing principle, we frame our analysis in conversation with what Scott Straus (2012a) describes as the new consensus in genocide studies. Scholarly research increasingly recognizes that this form of violence against civilians most often occurs during armed conflict, and follows a strategic logic whereby civilians are targeted because of their relationship to what perpetrators view as a real and present threat. Ideology remains an important theme within genocide studies, but scholars have shifted from viewing group hatred as *causing* mass violence, to understanding it as a filter through which political elites' ideals and strategies are articulated and targets for violence selected. Further, research shows that genocidal violence tends to radicalize over time, rather than beginning as a fully planned program to physically eliminate the targeted group.

ACTUAL MASS ATROCITIES ENDINGS: SIX CLUSTERS OF INCIDENTS

Given our broad definitional parameters, there are many cases we could have selected for inclusion in this volume. The cases presented offer important geographical, temporal, and regime type diversity. Additionally, they include widely recognized examples (Bosnia, Darfur, Sudan) and understudied mass atrocities (eg., East Timor and Papua in Indonesia, Sudan's Nuba Mountains, Burundi, Guatemala, and Iraq).

Within each country case are multiple episodes. The chapter on Burundi describes five episodes of mass violence: in 1965, 1972, 1998, 1993, and 1994–2005. The Guatemala chapter focuses on one, in the context of the long civil war, when violence increased from 1982 to 1983, but it also analyzes the conditions for indigenous populations thereafter. The instances of mass atrocities discussed in Sudan include only the highest spikes of violence, with discussion of four instances chosen from more than seven candidates. As noted in our Indonesia chapter, the country witnessed at least five periods of heightened civilian killing, but the chapter focuses on a comparison of two in East Timor and Papua. The former Yugoslavia witnessed three periods of mass atrocities in the twentieth century: during the Balkan Wars through the end of World War I, World War II through 1948, and the 1990s. The chapter discusses each and offers an in-depth study of Bosnia-Herzegovina during 1992–1995. Finally, the chapter on Iraq itemizes the periods of violence under Saddam Hussein, but concentrates on the post-2003 violence, which continues into drafting this volume. The dynamics captured in these cases are not merely descriptions of the decline of a particular episode of mass violence, but also the relationship between spikes, declines, the purpose and control of violence, and the potential for renewed or continued mass atrocities.

Our approach to examining endings requires reliable data, and we recognize that the quality of the available data varies enormously. In some instances, we have

high confidence that the best-researched numbers do a good job capturing the
scale and pattern of violence, but in other cases, even the best estimates are subject
to considerable question. For instance, Guatemala, Bosnia-Herzegovina between
1992 and 1995, East Timor 1999, and Iraq from 2003– present are, among instances
of mass atrocities, well documented by either a range of governmental or non-
governmental organizations or, in the cases of East Timor and Guatemala, truth
commissions which carried out credible studies that produced death tolls. On the
other hand, periods of violence in Sudan before the 2000s, Papua and Burundi
throughout the periods of violence are quite poorly documented. Counting civilian
deaths is a somewhat recent endeavor, and while it is improving, considerable
challenges remain. As Keith Kraus cautions, "critical occlusions and limitations
associated with *what is counted* and *how it is counted* pose serious challenges to
the goal of developing adequate conflict resolution and violence reduction policies
and program" (Kraus 2013, pp. 265–266). Each author addresses this concern in
greater depth.

Dynamics of endings

In Burundi, the central question is: how did this country, beset by violence
throughout its post-colonial history arrive at what appears to be, as Noel Twagir-
amungu argues, a "transformative ending," such that the core dynamics feeding
ethnic mass killing seem to have concluded? The first three documented periods of
violence ended with a similar pattern: Hutu efforts to mount a coup or attack Tutsi
civilians were halted when the Tutsi-dominated military responded with over-
whelming force. This violence subsided as the government and military consoli-
dated control and "restored order." Endings post-1993 varied, in that Hutu armed
opposition increased its capacity and held territory. The combination of key
leaders' commitment to moderation, the "mutually hurting stalemate" (Zartman
1989) in the armed conflict, the influence of events in neighboring Rwanda, and
international pressure created a context whereby the gains of political moderation
outpaced those of ethnic extremism. These dynamics fueled a transformational
ending — whereby disputes between groups shifted to the political plane, and
importantly, no longer occurred solely along the ethnic divide. However, this does
not translate into an end to political violence, but a change in its scale, dynamics
and logic.

Armed conflict in Guatemala began in 1965 and did not end until 1995, but as
Roddy Brett illustrates, the phase of mass atrocities, characterized by an articulated
plan to kill significant portions of the indigenous Maya population and reorganize
the survivors in securitized population centers, is concentrated between 1981
and 1983. This phase ended when the army achieved its goals: not to physically
eliminate the Maya, but to create a modern, institutionalized state with a

consolidated, Ladino identity. The army further managed, as Brett argues, to secure a seat for itself at the nation's economic table, previously dominated by a social and business elite. An internationally mediated peace process provided the final touch on the emergence of the modern Guatemalan state: the peace agreement, despite its credentials and rights-oriented mechanisms, protected the army's gains and did nothing to alter the structural marginalization of the Maya. The result, as Brett argues, is ongoing genocidal effects for this targeted population, where overt, large-scale violence is no longer necessary.

Across the many instances of mass atrocities in Sudan's contemporary history, Alex de Waal chronicles two kinds of endings: one, the government achieves its immediate goals; and two, perpetrator groups can no longer sustain high levels of violence because of internal dissent, resistance by the targeted groups, and organizational and resource constraints. All kinds of endings are incomplete, with unresolved conflicts risking recurrent mass violence. De Waal argues that the greatest risk for mass atrocities arises when the central government and provincial military elites both have interests in mass violence, creating an escalatory spiral. Sudan's "endings" are better understood as shifts from high-level mass atrocities to lower-level violence when there is a breakdown in coordination between these two sets of actors.

Indonesian atrocities, as Claire Smith demonstrates, ended in dramatically different fashion during the Suharto period of military dictatorship during the Cold War and under the semi-democratic state that followed. However, this historical line cannot explain additional differences between her two key cases, Papua and East Timor, both of which suffered violence before and after political transition. Her chapter asks why the post-Suharto governments pursued different policies, each involving violence against civilians, to very different ends. A number of arguably unique factors aligned to enable East Timor to exit a cycle of systematic violence through independence: an extremely capable Timorese leadership inspired a transnational activist network, thereby internationalizing their political agenda. The first Indonesian leader after Suharto's military dictatorship, B. J. Habibie, saw himself as a reformer and tried to liberalize the state. While he was unable to consolidate his agenda within either the military or the government, the internal dissent created an opening seized by the Timorese and backed by threat of international force. This opening swiftly closed, as Papua demonstrates. There, the government and military decided that there would be no further independence for Indonesian territories. Instead, they experimented with a range of policies to quiet separatist hopes: increased cultural and political expression, militarized crackdowns and attempts to co-opt the elite into the status quo.

The analysis of endings in Bosnia, Bridget Conley-Zilkic argues, raises two questions: first, why has NATO airpower been overemphasized in what was a

complex, compromised ending? And second, why has the simplified version been adopted as a model for anti-atrocities response? The initial phase of conflict in 1992 witnessed an enormous spike of killing and displacement, as the Bosnian Serbs made quick use of their military superiority to claim and then consolidate control of over seventy percent of Bosnian territory. This initial phase of mass atrocities halted due to the "success" of the campaign, the government's armed resistance, and the Bosnian Serbs' internal limitations. Violence continued throughout the conflict but not at the same intensity of killing except following the fall of Srebrenica in 1995. The conflict was halted as regional alliances shifted, consensus emerged on the political framework for the Yugoslav successor states, an offensive by the Bosnian government and Croat army reduced the area held by the Bosnian Serbs, and bold U.S. diplomacy seized the moment. NATO airpower played a role in this mix, particularly in relation to breaking the siege of Sarajevo, but cannot be accurately assessed without the broader context.

Iraq since 2003 is the major blind spot of the anti-atrocities movement. Despite some human rights-based arguments backing the initial intervention, the U.S.-led intervention followed a political–military, not humanitarian or anti-atrocities logic; a framing that anti-atrocity activists never challenged. Nonetheless, modern Iraq has suffered almost every "remedy" for mass atrocities that the anti-atrocity toolbox has to offer: condemnation, sanctions, no-fly zones, trials, regime change, the full policy attention of the United States, and a seemingly endless flow of development funds – and it has experienced more than a decade's worth of fluctuating violence consistently characterized by targeting of civilians with no end in sight. Fanar Haddad examines the ongoing cycle of violence to answer the question: why have atrocities not ended?

Before 2003, large-scale violence against civilians in Iraq ended when the Iraqi state deployed overwhelming force to accomplish its goals. After 2003, despite (or because of) the U.S. occupation, there is no force capable of asserting sufficient state control to subdue violence. Haddad demonstrates the core incompatibility of Shi'ite and Sunni views of both history and the State. Violence escalates when various incentives converge: anti-state, anti-Shi'ite, and anti-occupation violence on the one hand, concentrated against pro-State, anti-Sunni, and anti-terrorist violence on the other hand. An "ending" of sorts was possible in 2007–2008, as Sunni leaders realized they were losing the armed conflict and reached out to the United States to bolster their position within the new Iraq. Simultaneously, the U.S. counterinsurgency policy shifted to a more population-centric approach that not only increased numbers of American boots on the ground, but helped drive a wedge between mainstream Sunni leaders and al-Qaeda elements. And, the Iraqi state began behaving like a state rather than a coalition of Shi'ite interests. But the moment of contingency when these factors aligned was short-lived: sectarian interests reasserted dominance over state politics, and re-confirmed

violence as the preferred means through which politicians would pursue their incompatible goals.

FOUR STORIES OF HOW MASS ATROCITIES END

By shifting the perspective from *what we can do*, to *what happened*, these studies of mass atrocity endings introduce a new set of stories. First is a story of perpetrator logic: the studies demonstrate that endings follow a strategic logic. Second, is a geo-historical narrative whereby perpetrator regimes often met their goals during Cold War-era mass atrocity episodes by applying overwhelming armed force against the victim group and any organized resistance associated with it. The scale of violence is lower in post–Cold War instances (with the exception of Iraq) and endings are influenced by a wider array of factors. Salient among these factors is the increased international attention to and willingness to impose penalties for regimes that commit atrocities. However, as we will discuss below, this influence does not function as a one-to-one application of tools with subsequent outcomes, nor does it achieve more ideal endings. Rather, what we see is a complex set of factors that contribute to greater variation and contingency in endings.

Third, while the cases largely confirm the widely noted correlation between mass atrocities and conflict, we find widely disparate patterns across cases in the timing and dynamics of these two phenomena. Finally, endings force us to revise the story we tell about ourselves, as those who might hasten endings and help protect vulnerable populations. The point is not to dismiss this question of international policies that might decrease violence, but to arrive at it from an understanding of how mass atrocities actually end, rather than the imagination of how they ought to end.

Perpetrator logic governing atrocity endings

The first story captured by our study of endings is that of perpetrator logic. The crucial actor in endings is the perpetrator, whose actions must change for violence to halt or decline. The logic that animates violence in all of our cases aligns with one of the key insights of recent work on genocide: campaigns of mass killing are launched in relation to a strategic goal.[4] A parallel insight is that endings occur when actors realize that their interests are better served by decreasing violence than by continuing it.

In our cases, those implementing policies that assault civilians are mostly states and the armed forces associated with them. Nonetheless, non-state actors played significant roles in atrocity campaigns in Sudan, South Sudan, Iraq, Bosnia-

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[4] This point resonates with cross-case studies of mass atrocities and genocide. See Benjamin Valentino (2004) especially on this point.

Herzegovina, and Burundi. Further, dissent within a coalition of perpetrators can quicken endings, but dissent is not synonymous with reform. A significant location for dissent is the nexus of national and provincial elites. Mass violence often escalates as these interests converge and declines as they diverge. De Waal argues that this is the pattern in Sudan and provides multiple examples of it. Bosnia also offers an illustration in the rift that grew between Serbia's Slobodan Milošević and the Bosnian Serb leadership – while separated by an international line after 1992, the Bosnian Serbs relationship to Milošević functioned as that of provincial and national elite. This pattern cautions us that elite decision making cannot explain all violence (Kalyvas 2006). However, the limits of such a focus cannot be improved by parallel isolation of intracommunal or microlevel factors. Rather, the overall path of mass atrocity violence, including endings – possibly distinct from other forms of violence – is determined by the convergence and divergence of incentives across these levels (Shaw 2013, pp. 154–155) in the context of the international environment.

Dissent is not necessarily a call to change a national political logic, and it may be more significant than reform in terms of ending discrete episodes of violence. Nonetheless, we have several examples of leaders with liberalizing agendas who played important roles in changing the longer-term dynamics – even if at times they also led governments that perpetrated such violence. From our cases, we note Indonesia and Burundi. In Indonesia, President Habibie led the government that committed mass atrocities in 1999, but his reformist agenda contributed to the accommodation that led to Timorese independence. Burundi, likewise, benefited from the actions of President Pierre Buyoya, who twice played a critical role in the peaceful transfer of power, despite also leading a government that deployed violence against civilians.

Perpetrators of mass atrocity are not cut from one cloth or destined to play only one role. It is important to understand the politics that animates their decisions to use mass violence. What causes perpetrators to re-evaluate the balance of their interests? We suggest three scenarios (Conley-Zilkic and de Waal 2014, pp. 60 – 61): first, perpetrators "succeed"; they meet their strategic goal, shift to policies intended to normalize the situation. Second, perpetrators are forced to abandon their goals by being defeated, in which case their long-term interests become irrelevant. However, while armed resistance and military pressure are important in several cases, none of our episodes ends with military defeat of the perpetrators. Third and most common, perpetrators modify their goal. This modification occurs in relation to a realignment of incentives, or, on a longer timeline, reformers champion a different approach. Across our cases, direct application of international pressure is never the sole factor for changing perception of long-term interests. However, as addressed in greater detail below, the geo-historical climate is significant and discrete policy measures can and do make an impact. Invariably, long-term interest is tied to a political dispensation; hence, national or regional level factors often are the most influential. Among the salient factors are internal dissent, resistance