

1 Ethics and foreign policy

New perspectives on an old problem

Volker Heins and David Chandler

This book is concerned with ways in which political leaders and policy-makers in the post-cold war era have claimed to infuse their actions with moral considerations that go beyond, and help to re-define, the national interest of their respective countries. These claims have materialized in armed humanitarian interventions, human rights conditionalities in foreign aid allocation, changes in military ethics or voluntary attempts to repair the harm caused by predecessor governments. What exactly is controversial about such claims and ambitions? After all, few thinkers today would doubt the very possibility of sustained – and politically relevant – collective moral action in modern society. Almost everybody believes in morally inspired social movements that achieve some good at least sometimes. What remains controversial is the extent to which *governments* can transmogrify into moral actors in international society. Perhaps there is something inherent in states as representatives of particular, territorially delimited political communities which makes it inevitable that they will continue to play their part as *monstres froids* in a dangerous world.

For most writers the moral coldness of the state varies depending on the extent to which the state perceives its moral duties as restricted to the territorial political community or as extending *beyond* these arbitrary, socially constructed, territorial bounds to encompass humanity more broadly. The relationship between ethics and politics is less conflictual as long as it plays out within a given political community bound together by mutual obligations. In a tradition that reaches from Hobbes to Hegel to Gramsci and Charles Taylor, the ‘ethical’ has actually been *identified* with the ‘political community’ and even with ‘hegemony’ (Taylor, 1979: 84–95; Durst, 2005). The politics of introducing a strong moral dimension into *international* affairs suggests that the nature of global community has either been

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transformed with recent geo-political changes including processes of globalization, or it suggests that our territorially bounded communities of fate can be reimagined or imagined differently once we rethink the meanings and dichotomies between ‘man’ and ‘citizen’ (see, for example, Falk, 1995; Linklater, 1981; Booth, 1991). Rather than a ‘realist’ sphere of anarchy, where the conflicting interests of separate political communities bounded by the sovereign state is seen as the fundamental fact, it is argued that in our modern globalized world, political communities are no longer restricted by the territorial boundaries of the sovereign state.

The dispute over the values and meaning of ethical foreign policy is thereby not essentially a normative one of what it means to be ‘ethical’. The point at issue is, rather, the boundary-drawing of the sphere in which moral action is held to be possible. The political question is to what degree political/moral community extends beyond the borders of the territorial state. Communitarians or realists argue that community is co-determinous with the boundaries of the state and therefore the government’s ethical or moral duties are restricted to the needs of the citizens of the state. At the other end of the spectrum, ‘Kantian’ international or cosmopolitan liberals would argue that we live in a global political community where ethical policy-making should put the interests of humanity in general in centre place. Between these two extremes of communitarian and cosmopolitan variants of ethical foreign policy lie a wide range of ‘sliding scale’ hierarchies of solidarity, denoting the sense of gradations of strength of political community which are reflected in views of the state’s differentiated international duties, shaped by a balance of self-interest and the needs of others.

The realist critique and its limits

From a strictly ‘realist’ point of view, the ambition to devise an ethical foreign policy, a policy declared to be based on the interests of others rather than on self-interest, is based on a false understanding of the ‘realities’ of international politics. Therefore, it can only be a self-deception – a chimera – to imagine self-interest in terms of ethical universals, or designed for the deception of others. This can either be a genuine error, expressed by those with universalist aspirations, or an act of manipulation and duplicity, an attempt to pursue national interests through ideological disguise. Far from being monolithic, the realist critique of ethical foreign policies can be set out succinctly in four different propositions:

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- 1 Ethical foreign policies are bound to be ineffective and *quixotic*. They ignore the reality of politics without being harmful or beneficial to anybody.
- 2 Ethical foreign policies *weaken* the state and are harmful to the national interest. They ignore both the reality of politics and the consequences of this ignorance.
- 3 Ethical foreign policies are part of a smart *ideological* manoeuvre. They benefit the national interest by pretending to transcend it and by making everybody believe in this transcendence.
- 4 Ethical foreign policies are part of the problem they pretend to solve because they produce *immoral* behaviours and consequences.

These propositions about ethical foreign policies as quixotic, weakening, ideological or immoral recur across a wide range of realist texts. Max Weber, for example, regarded First World War pacifism as a quixotic attitude. In line with *proposition 1*, he characterized anti-war activists such as Rosa Luxemburg less as public enemies than as political dreamers to be confined to a ‘zoo’ (Weber, 1988: 441). Similarly, when in 1997 Britain’s former Foreign Secretary Robin Cook made the announcement to introduce a new ‘ethical dimension’ into foreign policy, some commentators called him not a threat to his country’s interest, but a ‘buffoon’ with no sense of reality (Harris, 2001). In academia today, it is first of all John Mearsheimer (2001: 22–7) who disdains the moralistic rhetoric of American foreign policy-makers without claiming that this rhetoric has been particularly harmful to the national interest.

Of course, many more realists are convinced that moral considerations actually weaken and damage the pursuit of vital state interests (*proposition 2*). In Chapter 53 of the first book of his *Discourses*, Machiavelli already warned against the disaster that looms when people are deceived by ‘a false appearance of good’ – ‘*una falsa immagine di bene*’ (Machiavelli, 1960: 249). Hans Morgenthau and others thought of President Wilson’s legalistic internationalism as both causally effective and disastrous in its consequences for post-First World War stability in Europe (see Kuklick, 2006: 75). The distinguished US diplomat and historian George Kennan believed that liberal democracies were ill-equipped to follow a rational foreign policy because of the moralizing and debilitating effects of public opinion on decision-makers. Democracy, he concluded, is in danger of edging toward extinction like prehistoric

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dinosaurs which were equally unable to anticipate threats from their changing environment (Kennan, 1977: 6).

Other realists have seen the moral sensibilities of the public as a tool for power politics. For them, deceiving people into believing that politics serves a moral good can be a successful power-enhancing strategy. During the cold war, official humanitarian aid was highly politicized by the governments providing it, as US President Nixon openly stated in 1968: ‘the main purpose of American aid is not to help other nations but to help ourselves’ (cited in de Waal, 1997: 65). Along these lines, writers such as Carl Schmitt and E.H. Carr would have subscribed to *proposition 3*. Schmitt (1974: 72) did not see the American ‘humanitarian ideology’ as a virus slowly weakening the real power of the US, but – from his ultra-conservative point of view – as a sadly effective weapon. Carr (2001: 136) concurred when he called the invocation of utopia and ‘international morality’ a ‘convenient weapon’ of the powerful.

Both authors also shared the perspective summarized in *proposition 4* according to which the injection of morality into foreign policy is detrimental to morality itself. ‘Whoever invokes humanity wants to cheat’, Schmitt famously declared, implying, of course, that cheating is unethical (Schmitt, 1976: 54; see also Carr, 2001: 152). Schmitt’s argument illustrates the apparent irony that many realists pretend to safeguard basic standards of moral conduct by taking morality out of politics. The flipside of this attitude consists in taking politics out of morality. Thus, during the cold war untainted ethical action was clearly associated with the non-governmental sphere. Humanitarian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) gained a radical edge as they seemed to put the interests of people above the strategic concerns of the East/West divide by providing aid against the wishes of Western governments. Agencies such as Oxfam or Save the Children became popularly identified by their youthful pro-Third World appeal. The high-point of this type of NGO humanitarianism came with the Live Aid campaign to raise funds for the Ethiopian famine of 1984. Relief NGOs – including prominent US groups such as CARE or World Vision (see Heins, 2005a: 376–81) – did not (or, in the US case, no longer) seek to link Western aid to any kind of political conditions but wanted to assist the global poor exclusively on the basis of need.

We believe that none of these ‘realist’ criticisms that aim at keeping the worlds of morality and politics apart is completely off the mark. In various respects, however, the contributors to this volume differ from the realist research programme. First, in contrast to

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proposition 1, they contend that the development and implementation of ethical foreign policies have real consequences, very much unlike the attempt of Don Quixote to fight against the turning sails of windmills. The following chapters demonstrate the reality of 'ethical dimensions' in foreign policy which have either led to new *mandates* of state agencies including the armed forces or to certain *restraints* on institutional policies and practices affecting non-nationals. Neither the effects nor the overall context in which these new mandates and restraints are set, have been much researched so far.

Second, we doubt that morally inspired foreign policies are necessarily harmful to the national interest. The main reason is that the 'national interest' has ceased to be a constant and self-evident guidepost for sovereign decision-making (Chandler, 2004: ch. 3; Finnemore, 1996). It is far from being as static and knowable as realist writers have always assumed (Kennan, 1954: 103). Rather, the 'national interest' has assumed characteristics of the 'public opinion' which was looked down at by realist scholars as an 'ever changing entity to be continuously created and recreated by informed and responsible leadership' (Morgenthau, 1985: 168). Realism, itself, is a 'vocabulary' or an 'outlook' on politics rather than an empirical thesis on real-world politics (Kuklick, 2006: 73, 88). In fact, many examples from recent history show that there is no way of insulating a robust national interest from various other legal, moral or reputational considerations which are, in turn, subject to multiple influences. This is true even in situations of emergency, in which we would expect the national interest to 'override' all other concerns (see, for example, McGreal, 2005; Ignatieff, 2004).

Third, we claim that ethical foreign policies are more than an ideological smokescreen used to divert attention from the true nature of state behaviour. Conversely, the false certainty of prevalent explanations about what drives foreign policy has diverted attention from the study of 'ethical' policy dimensions. We hasten to add that often ethical foreign policies do, indeed, benefit the states that are pursuing them, if only by raising what has been called their 'moral prestige' (Löwenheim, 2003) in international society. Yet, this does not imply that 'ideology' is a useful concept in this context. Ethical foreign policies are based, rather, on 'ideas' that can be categorized like other ideas influencing foreign policy decisions as principled beliefs, causal beliefs, and worldviews (Goldstein and Keohane, 1993).

Fourth, none of the authors of this volume would agree with Schmitt's hard-boiled cynicism which led him to suspect that the

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invocation of our common humanity is just a dirty trick played on us by liberal imperialists. From this, however, we cannot draw the opposite conclusion that a humanitarian *idealpolitik* does always have beneficial effects. Over the last decades, liberals as well as radicals found evidence to support the argument that there is an intimate affinity between grandiose idealism and violent ruthlessness in politics (see, for example, Schlesinger, 1972; Brittan, 1988; Adorno, 1978: 88). Other authors have pointed to the morally induced harm done by bona fide foreign policies that sometimes prolong wars, exacerbate power asymmetries, empower unaccountable intermediaries or demoralize supposed beneficiaries (see Lischer, 2005; Pupavac, 2005; Lu, 2006).

The rise of ethical foreign policy

What are the forces behind the rise of an 'ethical dimension' in the foreign policy of liberal democracies? Many accounts describe this trend as demand-driven in the sense that new policies are explained in terms of problems arising from the environment of 'failed states' and the increasing needs of populations in the developing world. We offer instead a 'supply-side' account that focuses, first, on shifting sensibilities among Western publics, and second, on the new search for a sense of global mission spurred by political elites who suffer from a 'crisis of meaning' (Läidi, 1998) after the end of the cold war and the disappearance of historical enemies.

Shifting public sensibilities, spawned by intergenerational value changes, have led to the demise of public philosophies which, for a long time, either justified or obscured the suffering of strangers who oftentimes were victims of traditional foreign policies. Following Weber, sociologists have used the term 'secular theodicies' to denote powerful systems of meaning that helped us to explain the apparently senseless suffering of ordinary people as having some kind of hidden meaning within the God-given order of things (Vidich and Lyman, 1985). With a proper secular theodicy in place, certain kinds of suffering are still deplored but may at the same time fit into some rational worldview, because they seem relevant in light of an intelligible cause or purpose. Western societies offered narratives such as Marxism, Malthusianism or Modernization theory – to name the most important ones – which helped people to make sense of the global scale of misery, injustice and inequality without giving up on the belief in an achievable common good. The rise of groups such as Doctors Without Borders in France, for example, who were able

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to sensitize the public to the harmful consequences of decisions and non-decisions taken by foreign policy elites, can be traced to the loosening grip of Marxism as an all-explaining narrative on the public mind (Heins, 2005a). Most citizens are clearly less inclined today than a hundred years ago to accept famines as necessary checks on population growth, or dictatorship and boundless exploitation as a necessary stage towards liberation. Rather, they tend to call for humanitarian interventions, if foreign governments fail to provide minimum protection for their own citizens.

However, the growing media and public attention to the plight of others is very different from the politics of solidarity in the past as well as from the extended commitment of the United States to Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War (Ripsman, 2005). The broader appeal of 'ethical' policy-making reflects a broader cynicism with politics and politicians. Whereas, during the cold war, the geo-political struggle gave a political meaning and significance to civil conflicts and to military action, in the post-cold war era, it is less easy to understand civil, regional or political conflict in political terms of right and wrong. The traditional framework for understanding, assessing and responding to conflict situations has disappeared. If it can be said that the cold war over-politicized the popular view of the international sphere, it can be suggested that in the current period it is difficult to see any 'political justification' beyond the individual tragedies of violence and social disruption. This shift in how we perceive conflict situations abroad, has been aptly described in the 'New Wars' thesis, which suggests that the 'new wars' of today are qualitatively different to those of the past precisely because they lack any legitimate political claims (Kaldor, 1999). Once political legitimacy is no longer seen to exist, conflict merely appears as a series of abuses or 'crimes' committed by the morally 'evil' against the morally 'good' and innocent. The immediate situation of the victims, the crimes of 'human rights abuse' are then held to be all that matters. This notion of 'universal victimhood' is projected onto distant world regions as well as sometimes back into history (Levy and Sznajder, 2005).

There would appear to be little doubt that the desire to bring more ethics into foreign policy stems from the broader inability of traditional political frameworks to make sense of the world. This shift is captured well by one of the most original thinkers in this area, Michael Ignatieff (here quoting the disillusion of Don McCullin, a British war photographer):

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But what are my politics? I certainly take the side of the underprivileged. I could never say I was politically neutral. But whether I'm of the Right or the Left – I can't say . . . I feel, in my guts, at one with the victims. And I find there's integrity in that stance.

(Ignatieff, 1998: 23)

Ignatieff astutely notes that this approach is a 'weary world away from the internationalism of the 1960s' when there was a political cause at stake and conflict and interventionism could be supported or opposed on the basis of Left and Right. Today, he states 'there are no good causes left – only victims of bad causes' (1998: 23). Once political change in non-Western states is seen to be a flawed and pointless exercise, the only sympathy is for victims: 'the twentieth-century inflection of moral universalism has taken the form of an anti-ideological and anti-political ethic of siding with the victim; the moral risk entailed by this ethic is misanthropy' (1998: 25). The paradox is that the 'ethical' activists risk 'misanthropy' because they see little that is positive in the societies in which they work – only passive victims, evil or dangerous abusers.

To some extent, and quite ironically, this dramatic change in moral consciousness in Western publics has been reinforced by the new opportunities opened up by the Soviet Union's implosion and the greater possibilities for external interference and intervention in the affairs of non-Western states. The continuous expansion of Western power and the build-up of increasingly asymmetric capabilities of intervention favoured the emergence of a perspective from which the failure to prevent massive human suffering anywhere in the world is blamed on Western authority's failure to 'do something'. Global rights are held not merely to impose negative restraints upon the state to avoid causing harm but positive obligations to provide protection on a transnational scale. Non-intervention is synonymous with 'allowing' nasty things to happen. The availability of precision weapons, stealth bombers and unmanned combat aircraft adds to this sense of global obligation.

While the turn against grand narratives which claim to 'make sense' of the misery of others in light of some desirable end-state has led to a flurry of institutional innovation, mostly in the field of non-governmental activism, it has certainly failed to rally majorities in Western countries behind 'ethical' agendas. The rejection of traditional political frameworks of perceiving the world has, so far, not

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nurtured any deeper concern with humanity's future or a desire for active engagement on the international stage. Opinion polls regularly show that a majority of Americans, similar to Europeans, consider improving the global environment, combating world hunger, democratizing other nations and protecting weaker nations against aggression 'somewhat important', while the protection of jobs, securing the energy supply or fighting terrorism regularly top the list of popular foreign policy goals (Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 2004). The data support the claim that there is indeed something of a 'community of moral feeling' (Dewey, 1983: 63) which connects segments of Western publics to people in other countries. Yet this moral feeling alone cannot explain the trend towards adding an 'ethical dimension' to foreign policy.

It is, therefore, our contention that in order to reconstruct the rise of ethical foreign policies, changing ideas of *leaders* are more important than shifts in the moral consciousness of society. Ethical foreign policy cannot be explained without understanding the moral void left by the end of the cold war which allowed Western nations to generate a strong sense of mission and a dramatic representation of their meaning in history. The cold war framework served to minimize the contemporary domestic crisis of meaning. Domestic policy decisions, whether in education, health, transport or policing, appear to be short-term or knee-jerk responses bereft of any long-term aims. Without an ideological context, policy is liable to be reversed or undermined at the first sign of funding difficulties or problems in implementation. Rather than 'modern' politics, where the state had a political programme or project which promised to transcend the present, to take society forward, today, governments are caught in a 'postmodern' malaise. There appears to be no vision or project that can give government a sense of mission or purpose. In this context, domestic policy-making is caught in the 'everlasting present' where legislation is passed to deal with crisis-management and policy-making is contingent on events rather than shaped by government (Chandler, 2004: 67).

The lack of confidence of Western establishments in any great project first became visible in the US after the end of the Vietnam War. The end of moral certainty in the justness of the projection of US power meant that American intervention abroad could no longer find legitimacy in a convincing 'vision of the future', instead it was 'reduced to managing the present' (Coker, 2001: 157). The same lack of confidence can be detected in Europe, in spite of public intellectuals

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dreaming of the European Union's global mission in the twenty-first century (Heins, 2005b). Governments without a political project that gives meaning to their action, lack coherence and credibility.

Ethical foreign policies, which seek to promote the needs of non-citizens, appear to be a reflection of the exhaustion of modern politics. They highlight that political elites have given up on the project of taking their own societies forward. The politics of progress has always been one of enlightened self-interest; it was understood that without self-interests collective interests cannot be formed, as evidenced by the collective struggle for trade unions, for the extension of suffrage, for representation, and for self-government. Today, the exhaustion of politics is reflected in the difficulties which political elites have of projecting any idea of collective purpose, of a common collective interest of their citizens, encapsulated in an 'idea of the state' (Buzan, 1991).

For the advocates of a post-national ethics the displacement of the 'Self' by the 'Other' is seen as a step forward to a new cosmopolitan order (see, for example, Falk, 1995; Archibugi and Held, 1995; Linklater, 1998; Dillon, 1996; Habermas, 1999, 2001; Ranciere, 2004). In a more sceptical vein, the essays published in this collection contextualize or seek to question this view that the discourses of 'ethical' foreign policy actually reflect the extension of political community beyond the boundaries of the territorial state. However, we do not suggest that aporias and contradictions in this liberal interpretation can be used to give credence to realist interpretations that the limitations of ethical policy-making are to be found in the study of the influence of economic interests or hidden agendas of power. Rather, our critique of, and understanding of, ethical foreign policy seeks to go beyond both liberal and realist approaches, based on an understanding that rather than demonstrating the extension of political and, by implication, moral community, ethical foreign policy reflects the disaggregation and implosion of political projects per se. This policy appears to us as largely neither ethical, nor, on its own terms, a genuine foreign policy. The linguistic terms of ethical foreign policy, or of interventions to 'uphold values', speaks immediately of a defensiveness and illegitimacy. A genuinely ethical or value-based foreign policy would not need to speak so artificially. It appears that 'ethics' are called on to cast political actors in a legitimate light. The power-prestige of the past, when no government believed its policies were 'un-ethical' just because it pursued national interests, is being replaced by a new kind of moral prestige that is still generated in the international arena in order to serve

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as a basis of legitimacy for domestic politics (Collins, 1986). The outcome can only be the undermining of the coherence of both ethical and political claims.

Because the impulse to place 'Others' at the centre of politics is driven by a weakening of political community, rather than an extension of our sense of common humanity, ethical foreign policy is, in fact, an anti-foreign policy. The anti-foreign policy of 'values' tends to sideline regional experts who have worked in foreign office departments for years and know the languages and the context – in the same way as military and intelligence expertise is disregarded (so clearly evidenced over Iraq). While the specialists often warn against moralistic, black and white or good against evil portrayals of social and political crises, it is central government coteries of advisors and policy-planners that tend to force the issue (see Kampfner, 2004). Many ethical interventions tend to unreflectingly marginalize traditional foreign policy concerns such as international or regional stability, and pay little regard to the post-conflict consequences of 'ethical' activism in world regions we might have moral feelings about without, however, really *knowing* them (see, with regard to Iraq, Stewart, 2005; Record, 2003).

We wish to suggest that, rather than being genuinely 'Other'-regarding, the discourse of ethical or value-based foreign policy refers to policy-making that, perhaps counter-intuitively, stems from an essentially narcissistic or self-regarding frame of reference. In a world of 'victims' the 'rescuer' shines all the brighter. Value-led foreign policy is the area of foreign policy-making where governments have the luxury to really focus upon lofty ideals. This is, in effect, the only area of government activity where it is hoped that a sense of shared values or the sense of purpose and mission, lacking domestically, can be inculcated. This narcissistic drive behind the ethical projection of power means that ethical practice can usually have a freer rein where there are fewer genuine interests and responsibilities at stake; where there is less concern about the consequences on the ground. Far from being a narrow self-interested projection of power it seems that value-led interventions are often driven by a lack of both clear interests *and* of a well-defined sense of moral duty. This makes the projection of power abroad an arbitrary and ad hoc one, driven by contingencies rather than ambitious plans. Instead of turning the 'vague universalism of liberal democracy' (Niebuhr, 1959: ch. 11) into a more robust and thought-out endeavour, ethical foreign policy seems to make universalism even vaguer.

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This book is divided into three sections. Part I, 'Geographies of ethical intervention', considers the development and consequences of ethical foreign policy regimes for leading states and international institutions. It seeks to explore how the shift to ethical framings in the projection of regime and institutional identity takes different forms and considers, in particular detail, the US, Britain, Germany and the United Nations (UN). The three chapters alert us to the dangers of understanding the implications of ethical foreign policy-making in abstraction from the specific historical and geographical contexts of today. Part II, 'Theoretical issues', seeks to engage with discussions on how to measure and account for claims that states and international institutions act in ethical ways. The three chapters engage with different interpretations of what it might mean to be a 'force for good in the world', drawing on Bentham and Kant's differing approaches to ethical foreign policy activism, analysing various approaches within political theory which frame the European Union as a normative actor, and displacing the 'community of judgement' to consider the perceptions of various ethical interventions from the point of view of Bosnian recipients. Part III, on the 'Techniques and tactics of ethical intervention', contains four chapters that discuss different ethical foreign policy practices and, in the course of which, draw out a number of frameworks, dynamics and networks involved in the social construction an elision of 'ethical practices'. Issues covered concern poverty-reduction and the UN Millennium Development Goals, the establishment of truth commissions as an aid to peace and reconciliation, the practice of targeted killing and precision bombing, and the moral concerns that arise with trusteeship and the international administration of post-conflict states.

In Chapter 2, Alex Gourevitch draws out the limits of American ethical foreign policy and counter-poses an analysis of inter-war Wilsonian idealism to the neo-Wilsonianism of the Clinton and Bush administrations. Wilsonian diplomacy sought to respond to the radical political challenges of the early twentieth century and, in so doing, projected a forward-looking universal vision of US purpose. Today, the US establishment is a fearful and inward-looking one, more orientated to managing the problems of the present than planning towards the future. Gourevitch argues that the loss of vision has resulted in neo-Wilsonian ethics which seek to use high-blown rhetoric to cover a lack of purpose. Paradoxically, it is this lack of

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an ethical project, the US's inability to articulate its political purpose in universal terms, that has led to ethical or idealist declarations, rarely backed by coherent policy-planning. It is the political weakness of the world's remaining military superpower that gives rise to today's policy idealism, in the form of declaratory, short-termist, and ad hoc policy-making which has increasingly destabilized international relations.

Volker Heins, in Chapter 3, draws out the similarities and distinctions between British and German 'ethical' foreign policies in the period covering the Kosovo and Iraq wars. Developing the themes raised in Gourevitch's chapter, Heins highlights the 'legitimation crisis' facing Western political elites today and focuses in particular on how two countries, similarly placed in the international order and both governed by centre-left parties, used ethical foreign policy to cope with issues of domestic legitimacy. In the UK, Blair used the wars over Kosovo and Iraq to stress the government's ethical responsibilities to 'freedom and human rights' and Britain's international 'moral leadership'. In Germany, the Kosovo war was used to renegotiate Germany's illegitimate past, recasting German power in a legitimate moral light. However, Schröder opposed the Iraq war on the ethical basis of resisting militarism and US power. While both states used the international arena to project an ethical vision of themselves, Heins argues that the forms of building 'moral prestige' vary with changing domestic contexts, as manifested in the opposing policies taken by Britain and Germany over the Iraq war.

In the final chapter of this section, Philip Cunliffe analyses the impact of the shift towards ethical foreign policy on the UN and specifically on UN peacekeeping missions. He analyses the apparent paradox of UN Security Council resolutions promising intervention for humanitarian and human rights purposes and the disappointing results of these interventions, often understood by commentators as a result of the 'lack of political will'. What is it about ethical policy-making frameworks, such as those that commit the UN to new and more complex peacekeeping tasks, that seems to prevent them being taken forward with adequate resources and international commitment? Focusing in particular on the use of Third World troop contributions, Cunliffe argues that the disjunction between Western words and commitments, lies in the nature of ethical interventions which are motivated more by the desire to appear ethical than any positive desire to resolve international problems in regions that lack geo-political importance. He suggests that interventions where no

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interests are at stake will inevitably be more subject to uncertainties and a lack of sustained commitment and clear goals.

The three chapters in Part II start with Peter Niesen's insights into the debate over the policy divisions between US unilateral and European multilateral approaches. He suggests that to understand this policy division in terms of which side is the most ethical would be a mistake. Using the work of Enlightenment theorists Bentham and Kant on foreign policy he suggests that the 'divided West' can be understood to be a product of disagreement over political means rather than ethical ends. In agreement with the authors in Part I, Niesen suggests that both the US and Europe have sought to project their power internationally in the form of ethics rather than of political interests. He explores the interrelationships between ethics and power which allow both the powerful and the less powerful to project similar aspirations through widely differing means. In this way the chapter highlights that while the ethical ends of disarmament, democracy and human rights can serve the interests of power and the status quo as well as the interests of the less powerful, the means chosen can be more divisive, with Kantian cosmopolitanism placing restrictions on power, while Bentham's imperial ethics gives might the stamp of righteousness.

In Chapter 6, Ian Manners discusses what exactly it might mean to say that the European Union is a normative power in world politics. Following an overview of the contemporary discussion within European studies, he outlines differing political theory-based approaches, linking classical and critical theories to contemporary frameworks of debate. Manners links classical approaches to contemporary theories of EU integration by drawing out the current relevance of the overlapping approaches of communitarian political theory, cosmopolitan normative international relations theory and supranational EU studies approaches. The chapter concludes with a substantial treatment of postmodern theorizing, particularly focusing on the work of Elbe, Baudrillard, Derrida and Kristeva, and highlights the normative implications of these postmodern political ethics in capturing the lack of essence or fixity of the EU project.

Concluding this section, Isabelle Delpla's chapter focuses on the moral judgements of the recipients of international interventions through a case study of Bosnia. Based on extensive fieldwork across Bosnia, she argues that while there does exist a discrepancy between the judgements of Bosnians and those of the Western advocates of ethical intervention in the region, this should not be seen as a crude donor/recipient divide. Her field research leads to the conclusion that

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recipient views differed depending on their experience of international aid; those who had more engagement with internationals during the war, for example, in Sarajevo, were frequently more cynical and perceived the intervention more negatively. While the war-time experience, particularly of humanitarian aid was a generally negative one, she argues that experience of post-war international interventions is more mixed. Programmes deemed to be patronizing or to be promoting donor interests, such as those around civil society development, democratization and reconciliation, provoked negative responses. However, international programmes such as the inter-governmental International Commission on Missing Persons and The Hague War Crimes Tribunal were seen in a much more positive light and as restoring, rather than detracting from, the moral agency of recipients.

Part III of the book focuses on concrete foreign policies with a clear ethical dimension. In the first chapter in this section, David Chandler considers the transformation of Western government and international financial institutions' approaches to Africa, away from the interest-based impositions of structural adjustment and towards ethical approaches of 'empowering' Africa, through 'African leadership', 'country ownership', poverty reduction and building the capacity of the African state. He suggests that the shift away from the focus on the capacity and power of the Western Self to the needs and demands of the African Other reflects the lack of confidence and legitimacy of Western power, disorientated in the post-cold war world where the frameworks of geo-political interests and traditional projects of development no longer constitute or frame policy goals. The inability of Western states and institutions to assert power in a meaningful way has led to a denial of Western capacity and influence over the continent, making the assertion of power take the ethical forms of empowerment, capacity-building and the pretence of country-ownership. Chandler argues that these ethical forms, in fact, hide more invasive assertions of power and the internationalization of the African state, as new mechanisms seek to informalize international regulation and avoid the open assertion of coercive conditionality.

In Chapter 9, Michal Ben-Josef Hirsch charts the rise of the role of truth commissions through a study of the transitional justice epistemic community. Most treatments of truth commissions focus on the interest-based needs of newly democratic states and the use of these commissions to establish the new regime's legitimacy and accountability and make a clear break with the past, as well as curb domestic opposition and accommodate previous elites. Hirsch,

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instead, looks at the 'supply' side of the equation, charting the work of a specific network of academic scholars and legal experts who have advanced the ideas and institutional forms that have facilitated the new field of transitional justice. She highlights the centrality of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the mid-1990s, in both establishing this epistemic community and as a testing ground for their ideas which challenged purely legal and judicial approaches by claiming that the telling and acknowledgement of truth could be valuable in its own right as a therapeutic tool vital for reconciliation. In the process, truth commissions have been transformed from pragmatic mechanisms, which compromised the law for reasons of political expedience, to ethical policy tools which empower the powerless and give moral and ethical legitimacy to participating regimes.

The subject of the following chapter, by Ariel Colonomos, is that of the ethics of precision bombing and targeted killing. In the cold war when international intervention was heavily circumscribed by international law, extra-judicial killings, such as those of the Israeli government's *Shin Bet*, were considered to be illegal under international law and lacked the stamp of ethical approval. Colonomos highlights that in today's new international context, when there is little clarity over the authorization or justification of the international use of force, targeted killing or the use of precision bombing is increasingly seen in an ethical light. Our ethical gaze appears to have shifted away from the arguments of *jus ad bellum* (just cause of war) and towards debate on *jus in bello* (just ways of fighting war). In this context, especially that of ethical wars, fought not in the interests of national survival but for ethical reasons of preventing human rights abuse, killing the enemy has become increasingly difficult to justify to domestic audiences (as have losses of one's own troops). As war increasingly becomes more about declarations than actions (as Cunliffe argues in Chapter 4) targeted killing and precision bombing take on an ethical dimension lacking in previous contexts.

Trusteeship and international transitional administrations, increasingly held to be necessary in response to state failure and civil conflict, are the subjects of the concluding chapter of the book by William Bain. He argues that the genuine ethical dilemmas of external rule have been evaded by those who take the moral high ground, arguing either for Western intervention to prevent human rights abuses, or against it on the grounds of moral opposition to imperialism. For Bain, arguments that trusteeship or external oversight is

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necessary on functional or utilitarian grounds of human rights expediency overlook the ethical need to address the question of 'is it right?' He suggests that this is not a question of the motive or intentions of the states or international institutions that seek to administer post-conflict or 'failed' states but, rather, of their moral justification for so doing. The denial of sovereign rights to self-government, for Bain, brings into question the ethical claim to be promoting or safeguarding the human rights of those concerned as the rights to political autonomy and political equality are an essential part of the human rights canon. He suggests that the inability to resolve this ethical dilemma has led Western states to seek to deny the implications of trusteeship through attempts to redefine sovereignty in terms of responsibilities rather than rights. He argues that the ethical contradictions that spring from international attempts to 'do good in the world' should be squarely faced rather than elided.

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