Just and Unjust Military Intervention

Classical arguments about the legitimate use of force have profoundly shaped the norms and institutions of contemporary international society. But what specific lessons can we learn from the classical European philosophers and jurists when thinking about humanitarian intervention, preventive self-defense, or international trusteeship today? The contributors to this volume take seriously the admonition of contextualist scholars not to uproot classical thinkers’ arguments from their social, political and intellectual environment. Nevertheless, this collection demonstrates that contemporary students, scholars, and policymakers can still learn a great deal from the questions raised by classical European thinkers, the problems they highlighted, and even the problematic character of some of the solutions they offered. The aim of this volume is to open up current assumptions about military intervention to critical reflection and to explore the possibility of reconceptualizing and reappraising contemporary approaches.

Stefano Recchia is University Lecturer (assistant professor) in International Relations at the University of Cambridge.

Jennifer M. Welsh is Professor of International Relations at the European University Institute, Florence, Italy, and Co-director of the Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict.
Just and Unjust Military Intervention

European Thinkers from Vitoria to Mill

Edited by

Stefano Recchia and Jennifer M. Welsh
# Contents

*Notes on contributors*  
*Acknowledgements*  

**Introduction: the enduring relevance of classical thinkers**  
**Stefano Recchia and Jennifer M. Welsh**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Intervention in European history, *c.*1520–1850</td>
<td>David Trim</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>War in the face of doubt: early modern classics and the preventive use of force</td>
<td>Ariel Colonos</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vitoria: the law of war, saving the innocent, and the image of God</td>
<td>William Bain</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Grotius, Hobbes, and Pufendorf on humanitarian intervention</td>
<td>Richard Tuck</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>John Locke on intervention, uncertainty, and insurgency</td>
<td>Samuel Moyn</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Intervention and sovereign equality: legacies of Vattel</td>
<td>Jennifer Pitts</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>David Hume and Adam Smith on international ethics and humanitarian intervention</td>
<td>Edwin van De Haar</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sovereignty, morality, and history: the problematic legitimization of force in Rousseau, Kant, and Hegel</td>
<td>Pierre Hassner</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Revisiting Kant and intervention
Andrew Hurrell

Edmund Burke and intervention: empire and neighborhood
Jennifer M. Welsh

The origins of liberal Wilsonianism: Giuseppe Mazzini on regime change and humanitarian intervention
Stefano Recchia

J. S. Mill on nonintervention and intervention
Michael Doyle

Select bibliography
Index
Notes on contributors

WILLIAM BAIN is Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science, National University of Singapore. He is currently working on a project entitled The Political Theology of International Society: God, Man, and the Ways of Order, which explores the theological foundations of the modern states-system. He is the author of Between Anarchy and Society: Trusteeship and the Obligations of Power (2003), as well as several articles and book chapters that take up issues of international political theory, the English School, and the history of ideas.

ARIEL COLONOMOS is Senior Research Fellow at the National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) in Paris. He is also a Research Professor at Sciences Po, where he teaches courses on international relations theory and the ethics of war. He is the author of The Gamble of War: Is it Possible to Justify Preventive War? (2013), Moralizing International Relations: Called to Account (2008), and Eglises en réseaux: trajectoires politiques entre Europe et Amérique (2000). He has published widely in the areas of international relations, the ethics of war, and political sociology.

MICHAEL W. DOYLE is the Harold Brown Professor of International Affairs, Law and Political Science at Columbia University. His major publications include Ways of War and Peace (1997), Empires (1986), Making War and Building Peace (2006), and Striking First: Pre-emption and Prevention in International Conflict (2008). From 2001 to 2003 he served as Assistant Secretary-General at the United Nations, where his responsibilities included strategic planning (the “Millennium Development Goals”), outreach to the international corporate sector (the “Global Compact”) and relations with Washington. He currently chairs the UN Democracy Fund.

EDWIN VAN DE HAAR is an international relations scholar who has taught at Leiden University and Ateneo de Manila. He specializes in
Notes on contributors

PIERRE HASSNER has been a fellow at CERI-Sciences Po in Paris since 1959. Between 1964 and 2003 he taught International Relations at Sciences Po and the Johns Hopkins University, Bologna. A member of the editorial board of the journal *Survival* and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, he was awarded the Alexis de Tocqueville Prize in 2003 and was made Doctor Honoris Causa of Université du Québec à Montréal in 2008. His many publications include *Change and Security in Europe* (1968), *Violence and Peace: From the Atomic Bomb to Ethnic Cleansing* (1997), and, with Gilles Andréani, *Justifying War? From Humanitarian Intervention to Counterterrorism* (2008).

ANDREW HURRELL is Montague Burton Professor of International Relations at Oxford University and a fellow of Balliol College. His research interests cover theories of international relations, theories of global governance, the history of thought on international relations, comparative regionalism, and the international relations of the Americas, with particular reference to Brazil. His book, *On Global Order: Power, Values and the Constitution of International Society* won the International Studies Association Prize for Best Book in the field of International Relations in 2009. Other publications include (with Ngaire Woods), *Inequality, Globalization and World Politics* (1999), and (with Louise Fawcett), *Regionalism in World Politics* (1995).

SAMUEL MOYN is Professor of History at Columbia University, where he has taught since 2001. He is the author of three books, most recently *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (2010). He has also edited, with Andrew Sartori, *Global Intellectual History* (2013).

JENNIFER PITTS is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago. She is author of *A Turn to Empire: the Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (2005) and editor and translator of *Alexis de Tocqueville: Writings on Empire and Slavery* (2001).
Notes on contributors ix

Her research interests lie in the fields of modern political and international thought (particularly British and French thought of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), empire, the history of international law, and global justice. She is a co-editor of the Cambridge University Press series Ideas in Context.

Stefano Recchia is a lecturer (assistant professor) in International Relations at Cambridge University. His research interests are in contemporary international security studies, international ethics, and classical international political thought. He obtained a PhD from Columbia University in 2011 (with distinction) and has held fellowships at Harvard, the Brookings Institution, and the European University Institute. He has published a number of journal articles on questions of international intervention and trusteeship and has edited (with Nadia Urbinati) A Cosmopolitanism of Nations: Giuseppe Mazzini’s Writings on Democracy, Nation Building, and International Relations (2009).


Richard Tuck is the Frank G. Thomson Professor of Government at Harvard University. His work addresses a variety of topics in political theory, including political authority, human rights, natural law, and toleration, and focuses on a number of thinkers, including Hobbes, Grotius, Selden, and Descartes. His publications include Natural Rights Theories (Cambridge University Press, 1979), Hobbes (1989), and The Rights of War and Peace (1999).

Jennifer M. Welsh is Professor of International Relations at the European University Institute, Florence, Italy, and Co-director of the Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict. She is the author of Edmund Burke and International Relations (1995), and the editor/co-editor and author of several works on the ethics
In the course of this project we have acquired a number of debts to individuals and institutions. We would like to thank, first and foremost, the authors who have contributed chapters to this volume. Our contributors make up a truly international and inter-disciplinary group, including scholars from European, North American, and Asian institutions; and spanning the academic disciplines of international relations, history, and political theory. All of them have displayed remarkable patience, accepting several rounds of revisions and tolerating our sometimes intrusive editing aimed at ensuring an intellectually coherent final product. We have immensely enjoyed working with these extraordinary individuals and have learned a great deal from each of them in the process.

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