Martin Wight

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Edited by
DAVID S. YOST

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International Relations
and Political Philosophy

Martin Wight was one of the most important twentieth century British scholars of International Relations. He taught at the London School of Economics (1949–1961) and the University of Sussex (1961–1972), where he served as the founding Dean of the School of European Studies. Wight is often associated with the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics and the so-called English School of International Relations.

David S. Yost is a Distinguished Professor Emeritus, US Naval Postgraduate School. His books have been published by Harvard University Press, the United States Institute of Peace, and the International Institute for Strategic Studies. He has held fellowships from Fulbright, NATO, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and the United States Institute of Peace.

International Relations and Political Philosophy

MARTIN WIGHT

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Foreword by

IAN HALL

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This book is dedicated to the memory of Gabriele Wight, with immense gratitude for her extraordinary patience and generous support.

Foreword

Ian Hall
Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia

Martin Wight was born in 1913, as conflict loomed in Europe, and died in 1972, as war raged in Indochina. He lived to see the formation and collapse of the League of Nations and then the devastation wrought by the struggle to defeat Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. He was a first-hand witness to the advent of the United Nations, attending its inaugural sessions in 1946 as a correspondent for David Astor's newspaper, *The Observer*. Like so many of his contemporaries, he was shocked by the use of the atomic bomb and dismayed by both the onset of the Cold War and the threat of nuclear Armageddon. And from a distance—albeit armed with intimate knowledge of colonial administration gleaned from several years working with the great Africanist, Margery Perham—he watched the post-war dissolution of the British Empire, the narrowing of his country's horizons and influence, and the emergence of an alternative European future for the British nation.

In his scholarship, his teaching, and in other, more personal writings, Wight tried—and sometimes struggled—to make sense of all this destruction and disruption, which shaped the emergence of a very different world to the one into which he had been born. Some of this work was contemporary history, focused on explaining how and why recent events had unfolded as they had, with political leaders, their perceptions, and the ideas they espoused, in the foreground of those explanations.[1] But most of his work delved much deeper, trying to get at the roots of the malaise afflicting politics and international relations in the twentieth century. Throughout, Wight insisted that the crisis enfolding around him could not be understood with the limited tools and materials available to the contemporary historian, the journalist, or even the modern social scientist. Their access to key protagonists and official records was too limited and they were too often prone to get caught up in the passions and prejudices of the moment. But just as importantly, they were not really equipped, even if they were inclined, to analyse what Wight believed were the underlying causes.

Doing that meant putting things in their proper historical and philosophical places. It meant stepping back from immediate controversies and passions and setting aside commitments and prejudices, insofar as it is ever possible to do so. It

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[1] See, for example, Wight's contributions to Arnold J. Toynbee and F. T. Ashton-Gwatkin (eds), *Survey of International Affairs, 1939–1946: The World in March 1939* (London: Oxford University Press and Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1952).

did not mean complete disengagement or passivity, as some have suggested, however much Wight was tempted to 'retire within the sphere of private life and personal relationships and cultivate one's garden'.[2] Scholars could and should make their voices heard in the world, he argued. And here, as elsewhere, he practised what he preached, conversing with politicians and civil servants at Chatham House or meetings of the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics and writing letters to *The Times*.

Nevertheless, Wight was convinced that if they wanted properly to comprehend the world, scholars needed to 'escape', as he put it in a famous passage, 'from the *Zeitgeist,* from the mean, narrow, provincial spirit…assuring us that we are at the peak of human achievement, that we stand on the edge of unprecedented prosperity or an unparalleled catastrophe; that the next summit conference is going to be the most fateful in history'. To attain a deeper understanding of what was going on around them, they needed to 'acquire perspective, to recognize that every generation is confronted by problems of the utmost subjective urgency,…to learn that the same moral predicaments and the same ideas have been explored before'.[3] For Wight, this involved more than just mastering the insular preoccupations of a modern academic discipline. He was convinced—at some professional cost, in terms of what he was able to write—that nothing less than complete immersion in the political, philosophical, historical, literary, and archival inheritance of a civilization would do.[4] Only then could we begin to see how the ideas that had shaped the modern world emerged and how the West, in particular, had come to embrace the worldviews that motivated and legitimized the extraordinary brutality it had inflicted on itself and others in the twentieth century. And only then, too, could we develop responses that might strengthen international order and allow the pursuit of justice.

The work in this rich volume reflects all of these concerns. Wight read and took seriously what we might call disciplinary scholarship on international relations, as reviews included in this book demonstrate. He found the political realists—among them Raymond Aron, E. H. Carr, Friedrich Meinecke, Hans J. Morgenthau, and Kenneth W. Thompson—by far the most congenial allies. Like Wight, they were historically minded and well-read in ancient and modern philosophy, as well as the great texts of political theory. Like Wight too, they were sceptical of the sweeping claims made by contemporary social

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[2] Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions*, ed. Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1991), p. 257. Michael Nicolson argued that Wight advocated passivity in 'The Enigma of Martin Wight', *Review of International Studies*, 7(1) (1981), pp. 15–22.

[3] Wight, *International Theory*, p. 6, quoted in Hedley Bull, 'Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations: The Second Martin Wight Memorial Lecture', *British Journal of International Studies*, 2(2) (1976), p. 113.

[4] This view is clearest in Martin Wight, 'European Studies', in David Daiches (ed.) *The Idea of a New University: An Experiment in Sussex* (London: André Deutsch, 1964), pp. 100–119.

scientists, especially the behaviouralists, represented in the field and in this collection by Morton Kaplan.[5]

It would not be fair, however, to label Wight a 'realist'. He held that we ought to be realistic about human weakness and the problems that it frequently generates. But that belief was personal—a matter of faith, indeed, integral to his strongly held religious convictions.[6] At the same time, he believed that just and reasonable political and international orders could be constructed and sustained. Despite what some might see as an unflattering assessment of human nature, Wight was no cynical Machiavellian. He recognized the allure of power politics for leaders and the short-term gains that could be had through realism.[7] But he was also convinced that power politics were in the end self-defeating, producing cycle after cycle of violence without end. Lasting and tolerable orders required a different kind of politics and diplomacy, which aimed higher, at nurturing an element of trust and ensuring a measure of justice, even in international relations.

The majority of the essays in this book concentrate on how such orders were constructed in the past and indeed on how such orders have been undermined. They are underpinned by the assumption—one that many social scientists may question—that social, political, and international orders are products of ideas and institutions. Wight was convinced that orders rose and fell as different ideas about how they ought to be arranged emerged and died away. They informed the ways in which human agents constructed social institutions to manage social challenges—institutions that were also particular to their time and place. Understanding these orders and the ideas that shaped them was, to Wight's mind, the proper task of the scholar of international relations. It was that conviction that led him to dissect different concepts of the balance of power, competing theories of international order, and various concepts of legitimacy, in particular.

Wight never completed a major work laying out either his approach to the study of international relations or his intellectual history of what he called international society. *Power Politics*, the slim pamphlet produced for Chatham House in 1946, provides a taut preliminary sketch of what that might have looked like.[8] *Systems of States*, published posthumously in 1977, is a collection of essays, while *International Theory: The Three Traditions*, is a reconstitution of lectures delivered at the London School of Economics in the 1950s.[9] Together with Wight's contributions to *Diplomatic Investigations*, a product of the British Committee, they

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[5] See Wight's review of Kaplan's *Systems and Process in International Politics* (1957) in this volume.

[6] Ian Hall, *The International Thought of Martin Wight* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 21–42.

[7] See, for example, Wight's extended discussion of Adolf Hitler's realism in 'Germany', in Toynbee and Ashton-Gwatkin (eds) *Survey of International Affairs, 1939–1946*, pp. 293–365.

[8] Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, Looking Forward Pamphlet no. 8 (London: Chatham House, 1946). A revised version, using updated material Wight wrote during the 1960s and early 1970s, was published in 1978.

[9] Martin Wight, *Systems of States*, ed. Hedley Bull (London and Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977) and Wight, *International Theory*.

have long constituted the bulk of his work on international relations theory readily accessible to readers.

In this volume, David Yost has performed the great service of gathering some of Wight's well-known work on what he aptly terms the political philosophy of international relations with both significant unpublished essays and less readily available writings and reviews. They include papers delivered to the British Committee that have languished in the archives for more than half a century, but which address perennial themes like 'statesmanship' and immediate challenges like the communist theory of international relations. They include too studies of legitimacy that make clear Wight's lasting concern with that problem and its relationship to issues of authority, order, and justice in past international society and its strained and fraying modern counterpart. And they encompass reviews of works by a series of important contemporaries, like Meinecke and Morgenthau, in which Wight evaluated their arguments and provided insights into his own. Together, they allow the reader to explore the full range of this extraordinary scholar's work as he wrestled not just with the legacy of Western political thought and practice, but also with the great upheavals of the twentieth century that elements of that inheritance had helped to bring about.

Preface: Martin Wight's Scholarly Stature

Martin Wight (1913–1972) was, as Sir Adam Roberts remarked, 'perhaps the most profound thinker on international relations of his generation of British academics'.[*][1]

Wight's professional career may be summed up as a series of distinguished affiliations: graduation from Hertford College, Oxford, with first class honours in modern history in 1935; research staff at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1937–1938; senior history master at Haileybury College, 1938–1941; research staff at Nuffield College, Oxford, 1941–1946; diplomatic and United Nations correspondent for *The Observer*, London, 1946–1947; research staff at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1947–1949; reader in international relations, London School of Economics, 1949–1961; visiting professor, University of Chicago, 1956–1957; and professor of history and founding dean of the School of European Studies, University of Sussex (1961–1972).[2]

A man of wide-ranging interests and great learning, with a command of Greek and Latin as well as modern European languages, Wight wrote about British colonial history, European studies, international institutions, the history and sociology of states-systems, the philosophy of history, religious faith and history, and the theory and philosophy of international politics (notably with regard to ethics, ideology, the balance of power, and the causes of war), among other subjects. Much of his influence has stemmed from his lectures on the theory and philosophy of international politics at the London School of Economics in the 1950s.

[*] This preface borrows from David S. Yost, 'Introduction: Martin Wight and Philosophers of War and Peace', in Martin Wight, *Four Seminal Thinkers in International Theory: Machiavelli, Grotius, Kant and Mazzini*, edited by Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (London: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[1] Adam Roberts, 'Foreword', in Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions*, edited by Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (Leicester and London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991), p. xxiv.

[2] The most valuable sources on Martin Wight's life and professional career include the two studies by Hedley Bull: 'Introduction: Martin Wight and the Study of International Relations', in Martin Wight, *Systems of States* (London: Leicester University Press, 1977), pp. 1–20; and 'Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations', *British Journal of International Studies*, 2(2) (1976), pp. 101–116; the chapter entitled 'Martin Wight (1913–1972): The Values of Western Civilization', in Kenneth W. Thompson, *Masters of International Thought: Major Twentieth-Century Theorists and the World Crisis* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), pp. 44–61; the chapter entitled 'Martin Wight' in Tim Dunne, *Inventing International Society: A History of the English School* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press, 1998), pp. 47–70; the entry by Harry G. Pitt in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38935; the book by Ian Hall, *The International Thought of Martin Wight* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); and the survey by Ian Hall, 'Martin Wight: A Biographical Overview of his Life and Work', available at the website of the Martin Wight Memorial Trust, http://www.mwmt.co.uk.

Wight's continuing prominence has also derived from the attention accorded to the 'English School' since the 1980s. He is widely regarded as an intellectual ancestor and path-breaker of the 'English School' of international relations, even though he did not employ this term.[3] The term 'English School' did not arise until nine years after Wight's death, when it was given currency by Roy Jones in a polemical article in 1981.[4] There seems to be no generally accepted definition of the English School, however. The term is usually construed as signifying an approach to the study of international politics more rooted in historical and humanistic learning than in the social sciences. Wight's achievements are consistent with this broad definition.

Some observers trace the English School's origins to the work in the mid-1950s and beyond of the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics, to which Wight made major contributions, along with Herbert Butterfield, Adam Watson, Hedley Bull, and others. In this regard, the subtitle of Brunello Vigezzi's comprehensive study is telling: *The British Committee on the Theory of International Politics (1954–1985): The Rediscovery of History*.[5] However, Tim Dunne's informative study of the English School devotes a chapter to E. H. Carr, who was not a member of this committee. As Dunne points out, Carr played a role in fostering the emergence of the English School by 'broadening the discipline away from its legal institutionalist origins', confirming 'recognition that International Relations could not be assimilated to the methods of the physical sciences', bringing 'together history, philosophy and legal thinking (albeit in a critical way)', and provoking 'writers like Martin Wight into seeking a *via media* between realism and utopianism'.[6] Carr's most prominent contribution to international relations theory has remained his landmark work, *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919–1939*.[7] Wight's critical review of Carr's book is widely cited, and it is included in this collection.[8]

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[3] See, among other sources, Andrew Linklater and Hidemi Suganami, *The English School of International Relations: A Contemporary Reassessment* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006); William Bain, 'Are There Any Lessons of History? The English School and the Activity of Being an Historian', *International Politics*, 44 (2007), pp. 513–530; Cornelia Navari, *Theorising International Society: English School Methods* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); and Barry Buzan, *An Introduction to the English School of International Relations: The Societal Approach* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2014).

[4] See Roy E. Jones, 'The English School of International Relations: A Case for Closure', *Review of International Studies*, 7 (1) (January 1981), pp. 1–13.

[5] Brunello Vigezzi, *The British Committee on the Theory of International Politics (1954–1985): The Rediscovery of History* (Milan: Edizioni Unicopli, 2005).

[6] See Tim Dunne, *Inventing International Society: A History of the English School* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press in association with St Antony's College, Oxford, 1998), p. 38.

[7] E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1939).

[8] Martin Wight, 'The Realist's Utopia', *The Observer*, 21 July 1946, pp. 315–316 in this volume.

Hedley Bull listed Wight among scholars pursuing a 'classical approach' to theorizing about international politics,[9] but Wight himself appears to have refrained from categorizing his methodology. The closest he came to doing so, it seems, was in the preface that he and Herbert Butterfield composed for their co-edited volume, *Diplomatic Investigations*. In that preface Butterfield and Wight described the outlook of the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics, compared with that of their American counterparts, as 'probably…more concerned with the historical than the contemporary, with the normative than the scientific, with the philosophical than the methodological, with principles than policy'. The participants in the British Committee, Butterfield and Wight added, 'have tended to suppose that the continuities in international relations are more important than the innovations; that statecraft is an historical deposit of practical wisdom growing very slowly; that the political, diplomatic, legal and military writers who might loosely be termed "classical" have not been superseded as a result of recent developments in sociology and psychology, and that it is a useful enterprise to explore the corpus of diplomatic and military experience in order to reformulate its lessons in relation to contemporary needs'.[10]

This fell short of a rousing manifesto, but it made clear a preference for empirical history and normative philosophy over social science and immediate policy relevance. The collection of papers in *Diplomatic Investigations* remains a touchstone for admirers of traditional approaches to the study of international politics, regardless of whether they claim allegiance to the 'English School'.[11]

Wight was more interested in analysing moral and philosophical questions raised by international politics than in debating immediate policy decisions or assessing current academic schools of thought. He had a talent for bringing insights from history, philosophy, biography, and literature to bear upon political thinking and behaviour.

During his lifetime Wight's most extensive publications concerned the history of British colonialism,[12] and his other publications were limited to a pamphlet and some articles and book chapters.[13] Only one book chapter—his classic essay,

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[9] See Hedley Bull, 'International Theory: The Case for a Classical Approach', in Klaus Knorr and James N. Rosenau (eds), *Contending Approaches to International Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 20–21. Bull's famous article was first published in *World Politics*, 18(3) (April 1966).

[10] Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1966), preface by Butterfield and Wight, pp. 12–13.

[11] For a systematic and illuminating study, see Ian Hall and Tim Dunne, 'Introduction to the New Edition', in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[12] Martin Wight, *The Development of the Legislative Council, 1606–1945* (London: Faber and Faber, 1946); *The Gold Coast Legislative Council* (London: Faber and Faber, 1947); and *British Colonial Constitutions 1947* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952).

[13] See especially: Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1946); 'Germany', 'Eastern Europe', and 'The Balance of Power', in Arnold Toynbee and Frank T. Ashton-Gwatkin (eds), *The World in March 1939* (London: Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1952); 'Western Values in International Relations', 'The Balance

'Western Values in International Relations'—outlined Wight's path-breaking organization of the history of Western thinking about international politics into three categories, or traditions (the Realist, or Machiavellian; the Revolutionist, or Kantian; and the Rationalist, or Grotian); and this essay focused on what Wight called the Rationalist, or Grotian, tradition.

Wight published relatively little in his lifetime, Hedley Bull observed, because he was 'a perfectionist…one of those scholars—today, alas, so rare—who (to use a phrase of Albert Wohlstetter's) believe in a high ratio of thought to publication'.[14]

Owing to Wight's perfectionism, he left many works unfinished when he died at the age of 58. His widow, Gabriele Wight, and his former colleagues and students have prepared four books for posthumous publication: *Systems of States* in 1977,[15] *Power Politics* in 1978,[16] *International Theory: The Three Traditions* in 1991,[17] and *Four Seminal Thinkers in International Theory: Machiavelli, Grotius, Kant and Mazzini* in 2005.[18]

Wight's lectures won the enduring admiration of his listeners. As Bull testified in 1976, 'These lectures made a profound impression on me, as they did on all who heard them. Ever since that time I have felt in the shadow of Martin Wight's thought — humbled by it, a constant borrower from it, always hoping to transcend it but never able to escape from it.'[19]

Similarly, recalling her studies at the London School of Economics in 1950–1954, Coral Bell, a distinguished Australian scholar, wrote in 1989 that Martin Wight 'still seems to me the finest mind and spirit I ever knew well, looking back over what is now almost a full lifetime of knowing many people of the highest intellectual caliber'. In Bell's view, Wight's most valuable teaching concerned the history of ideas about international politics.

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of Power', and 'Why Is There No International Theory?' in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966, and London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966); and 'The Balance of Power and International Order', in Alan James (ed.), *The Bases of International Order: Essays in Honour of C.A.W. Manning* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).

[14] Hedley Bull, 'Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations', *British Journal of International Studies*, 2 (July 1976), p. 101. This essay is reproduced at the beginning of *International Theory: The Three Traditions* in a slightly abridged form. The citations here refer to the complete original version.

[15] Martin Wight, *Systems of States*, ed. Hedley Bull (London: Leicester University Press in association with the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1977). For background, see David S. Yost, 'New Perspectives on Historical States-Systems', *World Politics*, 32(1) October 1979), pp. 151–168.

[16] Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, ed. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978). This is a revised and expanded version of the 1946 pamphlet with the same title, which was unfinished at the time of Wight's death.

[17] Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions*, ed. Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (Leicester and London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991). This book is based on Wight's notes for the widely discussed lectures given in the 1950s.

[18] Martin Wight, *Four Seminal Thinkers in International Theory: Machiavelli, Grotius, Kant and Mazzini*, ed. Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (London: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[19] Hedley Bull, 'Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations', p. 101.

He made his students see the history of thought in the subject from Thucydides to Henry Kissinger as a sort of great shimmering tapestry of many figures, a tapestry mostly woven from just three contrasting threads, which he called real-ist, rationalist, and revolutionist. What made him such a charismatic teacher, and those lectures so fascinating, was the elegance of his analysis, and the breadth and depth of his learning, literary as well as historical.[20]

Wight's work remains relevant today because he incisively analysed perennial questions such as the causes and functions of war, international and regime legitimacy, and fortune and irony in politics. He identified an order in interrelated ideas that clarifies the assumptions, arguments, and dilemmas associated with each of the main traditions of thinking about international politics in the West since Machiavelli. As Wight pointed out, such knowledge of the past provides an

escape from the *Zeitgeist*, from the mean, narrow, provincial spirit which is con-stantly assuring us that we are at the peak of human achievement, that we stand on the edge of unprecedented prosperity or an unparalleled catastrophe…It is a liberation of the spirit to acquire perspective, to recognize that every generation is confronted by problems of the utmost subjective urgency, but that an object-ive grading is probably impossible; to learn that the same moral predicaments and the same ideas have been explored before.[21]

An illustration of the continuing relevance of Wight's contribution is the steady and even increasing abundance of scholarship inspired by his works. This includes two recent books: Ian Hall's *The International Thought of Martin Wight* (2006) and Michele Chiaruzzi's *Martin Wight on Fortune and Irony in Politics* (2016).[22] Hall and Chiaruzzi have each published significant follow-on studies, including Hall's 'Martin Wight, Western Values, and the Whig Tradition of International Thought', and Chiaruzzi's work on Wight's essay 'Interests of States'.[23] Noteworthy recent studies by prominent scholars include Robert Jackson, 'From Colonialism to Theology: Encounters with Martin Wight's International Thought' (2008); Nicholas J. Wheeler, 'Investigating Diplomatic Transformations' (2013); William Bain, 'Rival Traditions of Natural Law: Martin Wight and the Theory of

[20] Coral Bell, 'Journey with Alternative Maps', in Joseph Kruzel and James N. Rosenau (eds), *Journeys through World Politics: Autobiographical Reflections of Thirty-four Academic Travelers* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books/D.C. Heath and Company, 1989), p. 342.

[21] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* p. 6.

[22] Ian Hall, *The International Thought of Martin Wight* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), and Michele Chiaruzzi, *Martin Wight on Fortune and Irony in Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). See also Brian Porter's review-essay, 'The International Political Thought of Martin Wight', *International Affairs,* 83(4) (July 2007), pp. 783–789.

[23] See, for example, Ian Hall, 'Martin Wight, Western Values, and the Whig Tradition of International Thought', *The International History Review*, 36(5) (2014), 961–981; and Michele Chiaruzzi, 'Interests of States: Un inedito di Martin Wight', *Il Pensiero Politico*, 51(3) (2018): 423–427.

International Society' (2014); Bruno Mendelski, 'The Historiography of International Relations: Martin Wight in Fresh Conversation with Duroselle and Morgenthau' (2018); and Nicholas Rengger, 'Between Transcendence and Necessity: Eric Voegelin, Martin Wight and the Crisis of Modern International Relations' (2019).[24]

The original purpose of this Oxford University Press project was to present to the public additional unpublished (or obscurely or anonymously published) works by Martin Wight that deserve a wide audience. For example, Wight's essay 'East and West over Five Centuries' was published anonymously in *The Economist*.[25] Wight's paper 'Has Scientific Advance Changed the Nature of International Politics in Kind, Not Merely in Degree?'—presented in 1960 to the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics—has never been published. Wight's review-essay 'Does Peace Take Care of Itself?'—was published in 1963, but in a little-known periodical named *Views*. These three essays will appear in future volumes of this Oxford University Press collection of works by Martin Wight.

At the suggestion of external reviewers, the editor and publisher extended the project's scope beyond previously unavailable works by Martin Wight to include some of his 'greatest hits' as book chapters that complement the formerly unknown or little-known works. These include his remarkable and path-breaking essays in *The World in March 1939*—'Germany', 'Eastern Europe', and 'The Balance of Power'—and his canonical essays in *Diplomatic Investigations*: 'The Balance of Power', 'Western Values in International Relations', and 'Why Is There No International Theory?'

As Coral Bell observed, 'He was a great perfectionist when it came to his own writing, and so refused to publish (because he was not entirely satisfied with it) writing that every other academic I know (including myself) would have proudly sent off to the publishers.'[26]

Diffidence and perfectionism discouraged Wight from publishing works even after he had brought them to what other scholars would have considered a high level of quality. He sometimes borrowed from drafts that he apparently regarded as works in progress, and not quite ready for final publication. He sometimes prepared multiple versions of the same paper, not always indicating the dates of

[24] Robert Jackson, 'From Colonialism to Theology: Encounters with Martin Wight's International Thought', *International Affairs*, 84(2) (2008): 351–364; Nicholas J. Wheeler, 'Investigating Diplomatic Transformations', *International Affairs,* 89(2) (March 2013), pp. 477–496; William Bain, 'Rival Traditions of Natural Law: Martin Wight and the Theory of International Society', *The International History Review*, 36(5) (2014), 943–960; Bruno Mendelski, 'The Historiography of International Relations: Martin Wight in Fresh Conversation with Duroselle and Morgenthau', *Contexto Internacional*, 40(2) (2018), 249–267; and Nicholas Rengger, 'Between Transcendence and Necessity: Eric Voegelin, Martin Wight and the Crisis of Modern International Relations', *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 22(2) (2019), 327–345.
[25] 'East and West over Five Centuries', *The Economist*, 30 May 1953, pp. 580–1.
[26] Bell, 'Journey with Alternative Maps', p. 342.

specific drafts. Preparing these drafts for publication has required making comparisons and exercising judgement as to which versions (or sections) of specific papers are more fully developed than others and presumably reflect his most considered judgements. Inconsistencies suggesting the tentative or unfinished character of some drafts were similarly apparent in *International Theory: The Three Traditions*.[27]

The origin of each document in this collection—whether it was previously published and, if so, when and where, or whether it was simply a research note or a lecture or radio broadcast—is indicated in a note with each item. Some of Wight's notes in draft papers were minimal or telegraphic, and every effort has been made to clarify references while respecting the not-too-much-and-not-too-little principle as an aid to comprehension and scholarship.

The objective has been to collect the most valuable and enduring works concerning what Wight sometimes termed 'international theory', the political philosophy of international relations; history and works by specific historians; foreign policy and security strategy, notably including his works on the United Nations and the impact of scientific change on world politics; and faith and the philosophy of history.

In his preface to his widely acclaimed book *The Anarchical Society*, Bull wrote, 'I owe a profound debt to Martin Wight, who first demonstrated to me that International Relations could be made a subject…His writings, still inadequately published and recognised, are a constant inspiration.'[28] In his Martin Wight Memorial Lecture, Bull said, 'It has seemed to me a task of great importance to bring more of his work to the light of day…For myself, what has weighed most is not the desire to add lustre to Martin Wight's name, but my belief in the importance of the material itself and in the need to make it available to others, so that the lines of inquiry he opened up can be taken further. Especially, perhaps, there is a need to make Martin Wight's ideas more widely available in their original form, rather than through the second hand accounts of others, such as myself, who have been influenced by him.'[29]

This project has been inspired by a similar judgement as to the profound value of Wight's contributions and the imperative merit of bringing them to a wider audience.

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[27] See David S. Yost, 'Political Philosophy and the Theory of International Relations', *International Affairs*, 70(2) (April 1994), pp. 272–273.

[28] Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 3rd edn (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), p. xxx.

[29] Hedley Bull, 'Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations', p. 102.

Acknowledgements

Contents

Introduction: Martin Wight and the Political Philosophy of International Relations

Martin Wight wrote path-breaking works on international history, foreign policy, the balance of power, and international organizations, among other topics. He has nonetheless become best known for his works on what he called 'international thought' or 'international theory', sometimes described more precisely as 'the political philosophy of international relations'.[1] His collected writings in this volume might be most accurately termed works of political philosophy.

These works can be divided into four categories: (a) traditions of thinking about international politics since the sixteenth century, (b) the causes and functions of war, (c) international and regime legitimacy, and (d) fortune and irony in international politics.

Traditions of Thinking about International Politics

Wight analysed traditions of thinking about international politics in Europe and the rest of the world since the sixteenth century. He considered the thinking of leaders and policy-makers as well as that of scholars, philosophers, and international lawyers, as revealed in the complicated and patchy historical record.

Wight saw links between the traditions of thinking about international relations and the three conditions that have characterized international politics since the sixteenth century: (1) international anarchy, with states acknowledging no political superior, (2) regulated commercial and diplomatic interactions, and (3) recognition of a shared cultural or moral order comprising a society or family of states. In his handwritten notes for an unpublished lecture in 1951, somewhat telegraphic and staccato owing to the omission of superfluous words, Wight wrote that 'these conditions roughly came into existence about 1500, with the break-up

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[1] Martin Wight, 'An Anatomy of International Thought', an appendix to Martin Wight, *Four Seminal Thinkers in International Theory: Machiavelli, Grotius, Kant and Mazzini*, ed. Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (London: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 143. This lecture is included in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, pp. 39–48.

of medieval Christendom, the rise of the sovran state, etc.'[2] He pointed out that international anarchy (1) could be present without the organized intercourse of commerce and diplomacy (2), or the sense of a society of states (3). This was 'the normal condition of the world' when, for example, ancient empires such as Rome, Parthia, and China coexisted with few interactions. International anarchy and organized interactions coexisted without an agreed cultural and moral order in the relations between the Western countries and the Ottoman Empire from the fall of Constantinople in 1453 to the 1856 Treaty of Paris. Furthermore, Wight asked, what about

> the condition of things in which the relative importance of (3) and (1) is reversed, and the common cultural and moral obligations outweigh and have the ascendancy over political independence? This hypothesis is immediately recognisable in fact: it is a description of medieval Christendom, out of which our system of international relations, with its emphasis on sovran political independence—its international anarchy—developed. Qualifications: the political units of medieval Christendom were not sovran states, in that they recognised limitations to themselves in theory: they were not politically omnicompetent. What was the political superior they acknowledged? The Emperor? No. The Pope? Yes, but partially. The Law. Bracton [expounded] Natural Law, of which international law is a ghost.[3] The modern desire of international relations is to get back to the lost paradise of medieval Christendom. Perhaps this gives us a clue as to the nature and conditions of international relations. It is essentially a 'post-medieval' political phenomenon.[4]

In other words, since the end of the Middle Ages, the ancient theory of Natural Law has grown faint, and it has been largely displaced by other conceptual frameworks. As Wight put it, despite its intrinsic attractions and transient expressions of support for it, 'the tradition of an international community with a common standard of obligation and justice has faded'.[5] Wight took note of its promise as well as its shortcomings:

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[2] In some of his unpublished draft papers, Wight chose to use the word 'sovran' as a synonym for 'sovereign'. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, this usage dates to Milton in 1649, and has become 'chiefly poetic'.

[3] Sir Edward Coke and others attributed the maxim '*non sub homine, sed sub Deo et lege*'—'not under man but under God and law'—to the English jurist Henry de Bracton (circa 1210–circa 1268).

[4] Martin Wight, 'Elements of International Relations', Lent Term 1951, an unpublished lecture manuscript in the Archives of the British Library of Political and Economic Science at the London School of Economics and Political Science, pp. 3–11. As Wight noted in his paper 'Dynastic Legitimacy', the theory that the ruler was chosen by God extended beyond medieval times.

[5] Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, ed. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978), p. 291. This passage is found in the book's concluding chapter, 'Beyond Power Politics', which was reproduced, unchanged, from the final chapter in Wight's pamphlet *Power Politics* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1946).

It is true that there was equally anarchy in the period when men talked in terms of the Law of Nature, so that its influence upon politics was tenuous and remote. Yet in the long run the idea of a common moral obligation is probably a more fruitful social doctrine than the idea of a common material interest. As the French philosopher Julien Benda has said, mankind has always betrayed its obligations, but so long as it continues to acknowledge and believe in them, the crack is kept open through which civilization can creep.[6] Powers will continue to seek security without reference to justice, and to pursue their vital interests irrespective of common interests, but in the fraction that they may be deflected lies the difference between the jungle and the traditions of Europe.[7]

Wight's most extensive work on the political philosophy of international relations since the sixteenth century is his posthumously published book *International Theory: The Three Traditions*.[8] As the book's title suggests, Wight concluded that the thinkers and ideas could be identified for the most part as representative of three traditions: Realists, Rationalists, and Revolutionists, labels that 'do not sacrifice accuracy in any degree to the charms of alliteration'.[9]

Realists, or Machiavellians, emphasize the anarchical elements of international politics: 'sovereign states acknowledging no political superior, whose relationships are ultimately regulated by warfare'. Rationalists, or Grotians, concentrate on 'diplomacy and commerce' and other institutions for 'continuous and organized intercourse between these sovereign states'. Revolutionists, or Kantians, underscore the 'concept of a society of states, or family of nations' and pursue the realization of an imperative vision of the moral unity of mankind.[10]

Realist views have been advanced by philosophers such as Bacon and Hobbes and by policy-makers such as Frederick the Great and Napoleon. Realists have tended to deny the existence of international moral and legal obligations based on natural law, and have appealed—implicitly, if not explicitly—to principles of expediency such as justification by success.

Rationalists have been closely associated with Western traditions of constitutional government. Philosophers such as Aristotle and Locke and politicians such as Burke, Gladstone, Lincoln, and Churchill have usually taken Rationalist positions, holding that moral obligations rooted in natural law (and discernible by reason) should be respected. Rationalists have also emphasized the moral

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[6] [Ed.] Julien Benda, *La Trahison des Clercs* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1927), p. 55.

[7] Wight, *Power Politics*, p. 293.

[8] Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* ed. Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991). This overview borrows from David S. Yost, 'Political Philosophy and the Theory of International Relations', *International Affairs*, 70(2) (April 1994), pp. 263–290.

[9] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* p. 7.

[10] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* pp. 7–8.

tensions and difficulties involved in limiting power and in identifying the lesser evil in specific situations.

The most prominent examples of Revolutionist thinking include the Protestant and Catholic factions in the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, each asserting rights and duties to intervene in other states to promote the success of their own doctrines; the intellectual forefathers of the French Revolution, such as Rousseau, and its leaders, particularly the Jacobins; the champions of 'ideological uniformity' as a path to international order and security, such as Kant, Mazzini, and Woodrow Wilson; the proponents of a gradual convergence of interests through commerce and a consensus of world public opinion, such as Cobden and Bright; and totalitarian ideologues, both communists and fascists, who have tried to impose their conceptions through conquest and coercion. Revolutionists have tended to argue that the end justifies the means, or that political ethics must be identical to those of private life.

Wight held that Realists and Rationalists have drawn on coherent intellectual traditions. The Rationalists have travelled 'the road with the most conscious acknowledgment of continuity', beginning with 'the Greeks and especially the Stoics' and proceeding down a broad path with many representatives, including Aquinas, Grotius, Madison, Tocqueville, and Lincoln.[11] The Realist tradition is 'virtually as self-conscious and as continuous as the Rationalist', with Machiavelli's approach an example for Bacon, Hobbes, Frederick the Great, Bismarck, E. H. Carr, and others.[12] In contrast, 'the Revolutionist ancestry of ideas and continuity of thought is ambiguous or uncertain. The Revolutionist tradition is less a stream than a series of waves…[or] disconnected illustrations of the same politico-philosophical truths…It is characteristic of Revolutionism…to deny its past, to try to start from scratch, to jump out of history and begin again.'[13]

Wight cited examples of 'how far Machiavelli was from cheap Machiavellianism, and how his recommendations are more penetrating, and one jump ahead, of his self-appointed disciples'.[14] Similarly, Wight noted that Kant himself rejected 'the Revolutionary Kantian principle…that the end justifies the means'.[15]

After an incisive summary of the essential differences between the three traditions, Wight declared that

> all this is merely classification and schematizing. In all political and historical studies the purpose of building pigeon-holes is to reassure oneself that the raw material does *not* fit into them. Classification becomes valuable, in humane studies, only at the point where it breaks down. The greatest

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[11] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* pp. 14–15.
[12] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* pp. 16–17.
[13] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* p. 12.
[14] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* p. 151.
[15] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* p. 162.

political writers in international theory almost all straddle the frontiers dividing two of the traditions, and most of these writers transcend their own systems.[16]

Furthermore, to be faithful to the historical evidence, Wight identified subcategories and anomalies in the three main traditions. For instance, he distinguished 'soft' Revolutionists, such as Kant and Wilson, from 'hard' Revolutionists such as the Jacobins and Marxist-Leninists: in contrast with the gradual and legalistic approach of the former, the latter have endorsed the use of violence to bring about a transformation of world politics.[17] He also suggested that 'if Realism is defined by the classic Realists—Machiavelli, Richelieu, Hobbes, Hume, Frederick II, Hegel—then contemporary Realists appear as much Rationalist as Realist'; and he cited statements by George F. Kennan and Hans Morgenthau as examples.[18]

Wight also discussed a fourth tradition, historically of lesser prominence, which he called 'inverted Revolutionism'—a tradition 'of whom pacifists are the chief, although not the only, example'.[19] The goal of this approach, notably as expounded by the Quakers, is 'evoking the latent power of love in all people, and transforming the world by the transformation of souls'.[20] In Wight's view, 'It is "inverted" because it repudiates the use of power altogether; it is "Revolutionist" because it sees this repudiation as a principle of universal validity, and energetically promotes its acceptance'.[21] Wight maintained that inverted Revolutionism usually partakes of 'a Realist analysis of politics', giving examples such as Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and early Quaker statements comparing men to 'raging lions'.[22]

In short, by 'tradition' Wight did not mean that new adherents to a way of thinking have always been strongly influenced and even guided by the analyses formulated by their predecessors, with certain sets of ideas developed with great continuity and deliberation over centuries. The Revolutionist 'tradition' in particular has been marked by profound discontinuities. Even within the traditions with a greater degree of cohesion (the Realists and the Rationalists), individual analysts and policy-makers have rediscovered and rethought old principles for themselves and have devised approaches extending beyond the notional limits of the tradition. Thus, the traditions are not straitjackets, but organizing frameworks used to group together closely related and often interdependent ideas.

What was Wight's own position in relation to the three traditions? According to Hedley Bull, 'Wight used to delight in keeping students guessing on this issue and went out of his way to give them as little material as possible for speculating

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[16] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* p. 259, emphasis in original.
[17] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* pp. 46–47, 267.
[18] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* p. 267.
[19] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* p. 254.
[20] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* p. 257.
[21] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* p. 108.
[22] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* pp. 19–20, 109–110.

about it.'[23] In a lecture in 1951, however, Wight said, 'I must confess to what you will have noticed, that I regard the Rationalists as the great central stream of European thought; and that I would regard it as the ideal to be a Rationalist and to partake also of the realism of the Realists, without any cynicism, and the idealism of the Political Missionaries, without their fanaticism.'[24] In 1961, Wight said, 'I only feel capable of analysing political ideas—not psychologies—and when I scrutinize my own psyche I seem to find all these three ways of thought within me.'[25] At the end of *International Theory: The Three Traditions*, Wight said, 'I find my own position shifting round the circle.'[26]

Wight wrote that 'My own beliefs are of course implicit in the exposition and comparison but I shall try to restrain them and to give as little material as possible for speculating whether I would classify myself as Realist, Rationalist, or Revolutionist.'[27]

On at least one occasion, however, he called himself a realist: 'If we are all realists nowadays, it is because we have all been influenced by the political philosophy of Machiavelli and Hobbes, as it has been refurbished by Professor Carr in this country and Professor Morgenthau in America, pre-eminent among a host of lesser writers.'[28]

If one had to assign Wight to only one tradition, Hedley Bull observed, 'there is no doubt that we should have to consider him a Grotian', in view of his essay 'Western Values in International Relations' and other evidence. Bull concluded, however, that 'It is a truer view of him to regard him as standing outside the three traditions, feeling the attraction of each of them but unable to come to rest within any one of them, and embodying in his own life and thought the tension among them.'[29]

With regard to the surprising connections among the traditions, Wight remarked that 'you so often find the jump from a shrewd realistic appraisal of international politics to a sentimental idealism, even pacifism, in Tolstoy, Kennan, or Butterfield.'[30] Conversely, Wight observed, 'This bleak view of mankind may explain why pacifists, if they descend from being above the battle to entering the

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[23] Hedley Bull, 'Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations', *British Journal of International Studies*, 2(2) (1976), p. 106.

[24] Martin Wight, 'Elements of International Relations', Lent Term 1951, an unpublished lecture manuscript in the Archives of the British Library of Political and Economic Science at the London School of Economics and Political Science, p. 56.

[25] Martin Wight, 'An Anatomy of International Thought', an appendix to Martin Wight, *Four Seminal Thinkers in International Theory: Machiavelli, Grotius, Kant and Mazzini*, ed. Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (London: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 154.

[26] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* p. 268.

[27] 'Three Questions of Methodology'. Wight's note is included in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, with this passage on p. 89.

[28] Martin Wight, 'Is the Commonwealth a Non-Hobbesian Institution?' *The Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, XVI(2) (July 1978), p. 123.

[29] Hedley Bull, 'Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations', *British Journal of International Studies*, 2(2) (1976), p. 107.

[30] Wight, 'An Anatomy of International Thought'.

fray, tend to adopt a Realist stance.'[31] This last sentence might be construed as autobiographical. It might apply to Wight's own intellectual journey in that he was a pacifist in his youth and became more open to Realist (and Rationalist and Revolutionist) conclusions in his maturity.

This volume includes several complementary works on the 'international theory' theme. In addition to four previously published essays dealing with the political philosophy of international relations—'An Anatomy of International Thought', 'Why Is There No International Theory?', 'Western Values in International Relations', and 'The Balance of Power'[32]—it includes six never-before-published items in this domain. These six items consist of four brief notes—'Three Questions of Methodology', 'Machiavellian Temptations: Methodological Warning', 'Kaplan's *System and Process*', and 'The Idea of Just War'—and two papers: 'Is There a Philosophy of Statesmanship?' and 'The Communist Theory of International Relations'.

'Kaplan's *System and Process*'

Of the "new" works by Wight on political philosophy—that is, previously unpublished items—his note on Morton Kaplan's book *System and Process in International Politics* stands out because it illustrates what Harry Pitt meant in commenting that 'Wight's ideas ran directly against the rising transatlantic tide of behaviourism, systems analysis, and games theory which constructed value- and history-free models from the social sciences to provide techniques for crisis management and the avoidance of war.'[33]

Wight agreed fully with Aron's critique of such approaches. In Wight's words, 'The aims of States, as of individuals, are various and imponderable, not to be quantified. They desire not only life but honour, not only security but dignity or glory.'[34] Wight's critical observations qualify Bull's statement that Wight 'made no serious effort to study the behaviourists and in effect ignored them'.[35]

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[31] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* pp. 109–110.

[32] This refers to the chapter entitled 'The Balance of Power' in *The World in March 1939,* not the chapter with the same title in *Diplomatic Investigations*: that is, Martin Wight, "The Balance of Power," in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966, and London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), pp. 149–175.

[33] H. G. Pitt, 'Wight, (Robert James) Martin (1913–1972)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004) [accessed 18 November 2004: http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38935] Pitt referred to 'games theory' instead of the usual term 'game theory'.

[34] Martin Wight, review of Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967), published under the title 'Tract for the Nuclear Age' in *The Observer,* 23 April 1967. This review is included in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, pp. 327–329.

[35] Bull rightly added, 'The idea that an approach to Theory as unhistorical and unphilosophical as this might provide a serious basis for understanding world politics simply never entered his head.'

'Why Is There No International Theory?'

In this frequently cited essay Wight explained why there is no set of classic analytical and philosophical works regarding relations among states—what Wight termed 'international theory'—analogous to the rich political theory literature concerning the state. Wight attributed neglect of the states-system mainly to the focus since the sixteenth century on the modern sovereign state. Moreover, international relations have remained 'incompatible with progressivist theory'. People who recoil from analyses implying that progress in international affairs is doubtful sometimes prefer a Kantian 'argument from desperation' asserting the feasibility of improvements and 'perpetual peace'.

Wight first published 'Why Is There No International Theory?' in the journal *International Relations* in 1960, and he included it in the *Diplomatic Investigations* collection in 1966. One of Wight's themes in this essay was that the academic discipline of international relations lacks philosophical classics of the stature of Aristotle or Montesquieu. Raymond Aron's *Peace and War*, first published in English in 1966,[36] led Wight to revise his judgement:

> On his first page Aron notes how the political classics have been the fruit of meditation in times of political crisis, and that the age of the World Wars has not yet borne such fruit. I have sometimes been tempted to use this as an argument against the existence of international relations as a distinct discipline. So much has been written about it, but where are its Hobbes and Locke, its 'Wealth of Nations'? Aron's noble, temperate and magisterial book makes it impossible to use such an argument any more.[37]

'An Anatomy of International Thought'

Wight provided an astonishing and lucid summary of the three traditions in his lecture, 'An Anatomy of International Thought.' In this lecture Wight noted that thinkers who underscore international anarchy regard the idea of international society as fictional. Hobbes, for example, maintains that the only remedy for

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Hedley Bull, 'Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations', *British Journal of International Studies*, 2(2) (1976), p. 104.

[36] The original French version, *Paix et guerre entre les nations*, was published in Paris by Calmann-Lévy in 1962. The first publications in English of *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*, trans. Richard Howard and Annette Baker Fox, were issued by Doubleday and Company (Garden City, New York, 1966), Weidenfeld and Nicolson (London, 1967), and Praeger Publishers (New York, 1968).

[37] Martin Wight, 'Tract for the Nuclear Age', *The Observer*, 23 April 1967, a review of Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*.

anarchical competition is to make a contract for a ruler or an assembly to take power and act to ensure security. Grotius and others who emphasize the extensive informal, legal, and customary interactions in international affairs highlight humanity's sociability and its potential for constitutionalism and the rule of law. Kant and others anticipate the vindication of humanity's potential for peace through the deepening of the material and moral interdependence of people around the world. This might come about through the uniformity of independent states in standards of virtue and legitimacy or through the political and moral unification of humanity.

'Western Values in International Relations'

Wight devoted particular attention in this essay to the "middle ground" between extremes. These extremes are typified by thinkers such as Machiavelli and Hobbes at one pole, and Kant and Wilson at the other. The *via media* is associated with the development of constitutional government and the rule of law, as represented by thinkers such as Grotius and Gladstone. "Western values" are most effectively supported by thinkers and leaders who neither deny the existence of international society nor exaggerate its foreseeable prospects for gaining greater cohesion and strength. The middle course—the mainstream of the "Western values" tradition— respects moral standards and sees moral challenges as complex, instead of regarding them as simple or nonexistent.

'The Balance of Power' in *The World in March 1939*

This paper corresponds with Wight's several works about the three traditions because, despite the essay's title,[38] it is not an assessment of the military capabilities, economic potential, and social cohesion of the main power blocs in March 1939—the Soviet Union, the Axis Powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan), and the Western Powers (Britain and France above all). It elucidates a three-cornered dialogue among these power blocs, grounded in—and informed by—actual statements by national leaders and commentators, with "Anglo-Saxons" speaking for the Western Powers. While Wight did not employ the Realist, Rationalist, and Revolutionist categories explicitly in this essay, the Soviet Communist vision of salvation can be regarded as Revolutionist, the Nazis and Fascists express Realist

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[38] 'The Balance of Power', in Arnold Toynbee and Frank T. Ashton-Gwatkin (eds), *The World in March 1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), pp. 508–531. For a perceptive analysis, see Michele Chiaruzzi, "The Three Traditions in History: A Dialogic Text," *Global Change, Peace and Security*, vol. 22, no. 1 (February 2010), pp. 121–128.

ideas such as the state determining political and social values while making territorial acquisitions, and the British and the French may be seen as Rationalists to the extent that they oppose aggression and uphold constitutional government and the rule of law in international relations, as per their commitments to the Covenant of the League of Nations. In conjunction with this triangular clash of arguments, the essay examines factors in addition to ideas that influenced decision-making, including greed, coercion, resentments, power pressures, national egoisms, dependence on allies, and perceived security imperatives.

Three combinations were hypothetically possible, given the political fluidity and antagonism after Nazi Germany occupied Bohemia and Moravia in March 1939: a Nazi–Soviet alliance, a Soviet–Western alliance, or a Nazi–Western alliance. In August 1939, Nazi Germany offered the Soviet Union a non-aggression pact that enabled Moscow to seize territories in Eastern Europe and to limit its immediate involvement in combat. Nazi Germany's attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941 brought about a Soviet–Western alliance determined to defeat the Axis, despite the moral and ideological chasm between Soviet totalitarianism and Western democracy.

'Is There a Philosophy of Statesmanship?'

This previously unpublished lecture is noteworthy on multiple grounds, notably its emphasis on the extent to which some Grotians and moralists championed 'a different Utopia', an ideal distinct from the revolutionary uniformity sought by certain religions and ideologies. This different Utopia was the League of Nations, an institution designed to bring about a peaceful universal legal order.

'The Communist Theory of International Relations'

In this previously unpublished paper, Wight analysed the distinctive effects of Marxist-Leninist ideology and Communist practice on states ruled by Communist parties and states with non-Communist or 'bourgeois' regimes. Wight's analysis of Communist ideology and practice deepens understanding of relations among Communist parties and Communist party-led states, as well as interactions with non-Communist 'bourgeois' states and political movements. This enriches interpretations of historical and contemporary events involving Communist parties and regimes and furnishes a foundation for assessing interactions among movements and regimes rooted in ideologies, including religions offering meaning to radicalized groups and individuals.

The Causes and Functions of War

This volume includes three essays by Wight about the causes and functions of war in international politics: 'The Causes of War: An Historian's View', 'Gain, Fear and Glory: Reflections on the Nature of International Politics', and 'On the Abolition of War: Observations on a Memorandum by Walter Millis'.[39]

'The Causes of War: An Historian's View'

This paper concentrates on distinct combinations of motives to use force. These have included winning independence, imposing domination, promoting allegiance to an ideology, gaining economic advantages, and resisting the rise to supremacy of a political-military competitor. Fear of the loss of security and autonomy may lead to preventive war or intervention to maintain a favourable balance of power.

'Gain, Fear and Glory: Reflections on the Nature of International Politics'

This essay analyses the three causes of war identified by Thucydides and his most eminent translator, Thomas Hobbes. Looking beyond the circumstantial occasions through which wars begin, the chief motives of belligerents have been to pursue material gains, to respond to fears, and to obtain glory and prestige for a doctrine. Wight calls 'simple Thucydidean fear…the prime motive in international politics' because it involves 'a rational apprehension of contingent evil', not simply 'some unreasoning emotion'. Wight discusses how fear may be a cause of preventive war, and he labels the great difficulty of building trust between former adversaries 'the Hobbesian predicament'.

On the Abolition of War: Observations on a Memorandum by Walter Millis

In this essay Wight advanced four main criticisms of a proposal by Walter Millis to abolish what Millis called 'the war system'. First, the proposal disregards 'the positive or constructive functions of war in international society', such as bringing

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[39] The present volume also features 'The Idea of Just War', a previously unpublished note in which Wight discusses pendulum swings in opinion about the requirements of justice in war in Western civilization since the Middle Ages.

about 'desirable change', gaining independence, preserving independence, and maintaining the balance of power. Second, the proposal to abolish war understates 'the intractability of international conflicts' and exaggerates the role of armaments and military formations in causing war. The ultimate causes of war, Wight held, reside in 'human passions and conflicting interests', not weapons. Third, the proposal to eradicate war fails to recognize the price that must be paid to defeat aggression and establish order. Fourth, no effective alternative institution has been found to replace 'the war system' as a means to perform certain functions, including the prevention of detrimental change. The vision of an 'international government' ruling the world without war implies in the end 'a monopoly of power', including nuclear arms, perhaps under 'an American–Russian dyarchy', despite 'the intrinsic instability of dyarchy' and its 'disagreeableness' for the rival powers, such as China and France.

International and Regime Legitimacy

Wight prepared several papers on legitimacy in domestic and international politics, but most of them have not been previously published. The principal exceptions are his article 'International Legitimacy', published in 1972 in the journal *International Relations*,[40] and his book chapter with the same title, published posthumously in *Systems of States*.[41] This collection includes the journal article, which is considerably longer and more detailed than the book chapter, plus five never-before-published papers: 'Reflections on International Legitimacy', 'Dynastic Legitimacy', 'Popular Legitimacy', 'Note on Conquest and Cession', and 'What Confers Political Legitimacy in a Modern Society?'

'International Legitimacy'

Wight defined international legitimacy as 'the collective judgment of international society about rightful membership of the family of nations'.[42] International legitimacy derived mainly from prescription and dynasticism until the American and French Revolutions instituted the popular and democratic principle of the consent of the governed. The increasing reliance on popular politics led to the triumph of national self-determination in the 1919 peace settlement, with certain exceptions, notably the decision not to conduct a plebiscite in Alsace-Lorraine.

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[40] Martin Wight, 'International Legitimacy', *International Relations*, IV(1) (May 1972), pp. 1–28.
[41] Martin Wight, 'International Legitimacy', in *Systems of States*, ed. Hedley Bull (London: Leicester University Press, in association with the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1977).
[42] Martin Wight, 'International Legitimacy', *International Relations*, 4(1) (May 1972), p. 1.

New principles, such as territorial contiguity and integrity, influenced decisions about the legitimacy of the frontiers of the states formed from the breakup of European colonial empires after the Second World War.[43]

'Reflections on International Legitimacy'

Wight pointed out in this essay that governments on some occasions have set aside established principles of legitimacy in order to serve other purposes, such as maintaining a preferred balance of power, gaining territory, promoting commercial relations, or pursuing state-consolidation, sometimes with a 'lack of scruple'. Wight observed that rules regarding legitimacy have furnished grounds 'for argument, controversy, conflict, even war'. He nonetheless concluded that 'the influence of principles of legitimacy upon international politics has generally been overestimated' and 'has declined rather than grown, with the transition from the dynastic to the popular age'.

'Dynastic Legitimacy'

In this essay Wight clarified the importance of dynastic legitimacy—that is, hereditary monarchy—in European history. In the Middle Ages and subsequent centuries, rulers were mainly princes who inherited their crowns. The principal exceptions were leaders of republics, including Venice, Ragusa, Genoa, and Lucca in Italy; the Swiss confederation; and the United Provinces of the Low Countries.

'Popular Legitimacy'

The American and French Revolutions derived from—and promoted—a concept of legitimacy based on popular consent and the public will. This concept displaced the practice of relying on dynasticism, the prescriptive rights of hereditary monarchs. As a result, plebiscites have taken the place of dynastic marriages as mechanisms for the legitimization of transfers of sovereignty. Noteworthy examples include decisions in the unification of Italy and in the European settlement of 1919–1920.

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[43] In his "Note on Conquest and Cession" Wight provided a brief survey of institutions for the conquest and cession of territories, illustrated by examples in European history since the fifteenth century. Some legal and political forms concealed de facto conquest and cession to spare the *amour propre* of the losing party and thereby minimize its humiliation.

'What Confers Political Legitimacy in a Modern Society?'

In this essay Wight considered several sources of legitimacy for a modern Western society. For example, a well-functioning state bureaucracy is a necessity, and popular consultation involving the consent of the governed is also essential. Beyond such practical considerations, the 'rationalist illusion' supposes that citizens can be critical spectators in the proceedings of their own society and its politics. Such detachment is not attainable, and the aspiration for it derives from the fallacy that political life can be reduced to the conscious and purposeful management of material resources to satisfy public needs. Wight concluded that 'legitimation is not achieved by rational debate. It is achieved by the adoption, and usually the imposition, of myths, ideologies, fantasies even, which have a rational admixture, and the better of which are capable of being explored and developed by reason, but whose strength is in their going down to the sub-rational and instinctual roots of human behavior.'

Links Between Regime and International Legitimacy

As Wight observed, Burke's belief in the 'indefeasible principle of legitimacy in Christianity and prescription…made him construe the French Revolution as a wilful act of secession from international society followed by an assault upon it from the outside, instead of a debate within international society which would in the end produce a modified principle of legitimacy'.[44] Burke's approach, Wight incisively pointed out, raised questions that led ultimately to a compromise concerning acceptable forms of international legitimacy:

> Is it fair to say that Burke's writings against the French Revolution illustrate a central paradox of the view of international society he propounded, that its principles of legitimacy have been modified instead of being dissolved, only because men have been ready to fight that they should undergo no change at all? It is those who have died to prevent modification who have made possible a modification within limits that posterity can accept.[45]

Wars have made plain the linkage between domestic and international legitimacy, Wight noted. 'Since the American Declaration of Independence in 1776, every

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[44] Martin Wight, 'Western Values in International Relations', in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966, and London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 98.

[45] Martin Wight, 'Western Values in International Relations', in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966, and London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), pp. 100–101.

war between great powers, with three exceptions and those before 1860, has led to revolution on the losing side.'[46] (Wight did not specify the three exceptions, but he may have had in mind the War of 1812, the Crimean War in 1853–1856, and the Second War of Italian Independence in 1859.) In another formulation, Wight wrote:

> Since Bismarck's time, every war between great powers has ended with a revolution on the losing side, whether erupting from forces within the defeated state or imposed by the victors, and ranging in violence and intensity from the establishment of the dual monarchy in defeated Austria after 1866 and the controlled democratization of Japan after 1945 to the Bolshevik Revolution in defeated Russia in 1917 and the annihilation of the Nazi regime in Germany in 1945. We cannot now imagine a great war which would not aim at overthrowing the regime of our adversary.[47]

Calls for doctrinal uniformity for legitimacy in the pursuit of peace—from the Wars of Religion to Kant's *Perpetual Peace* and Communism and other doctrines and ideologies—offer further examples of the connections between domestic and international legitimacy. Wight highlighted the role of force and equilibriums of power in upholding revised assumptions about the legitimacy of states. In his words:

> The moral presumption that had turned against the old *status quo*, as Portugal found when robbed with impunity of Goa, has been transferred for the time being to the new *status quo*, as the Nagas, Katanga, and Biafra found in different ways when they appealed in vain against it. But the *status quo* rests on nothing but an equilibrium of force between India and Pakistan in Kashmir, between India and China, and between Israel and the Arab states. Nationalism and revolution have enfeebled the very conception of international order.[48]

Fortune and Irony in International Politics

Wight qualified his orderly analysis of traditions of international thought, the causes and functions of war, and competing principles of domestic and

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[46] Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, ed. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978), p. 141.

[47] Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, ed. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978), p. 92.

[48] 'The Balance of Power and International Order', in Alan James (ed.), *The Bases of International Order: Essays in Honour of C. A. W. Manning* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 112–113.

international legitimacy by drawing attention to unpredictable 'wild card' factors such as fortune and irony.

In his paper entitled 'Fortune's Banter', originally called 'Fortune and Irony in International Politics', Wight surveyed concepts and events from Graeco-Roman antiquity to modern times dealing with the impact on international politics of chance, destiny, fate, fortune, freedom, irony, luck, necessity, providence, tragedy, and will. In praising Raymond Aron's masterwork, Wight wrote, 'Diplomacy is the realm of the contingent and the unforeseen, and the statesman's supreme virtue is prudence, which means acting in accordance with the concrete data of the particular situation.'[49]

Unintended, unexpected, and ironical consequences nonetheless abound in international politics, despite efforts to master the dynamics of events. Wight quoted in this regard one of the best-known declarations of US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles:

> You have to take chances for peace, just as you must take chances in war. Some say that we were brought to the verge of war. Of course we were brought to the verge of war. The ability to get to the verge without getting into the war is the necessary art. If you cannot master it, you inevitably get into war. If you try to run away from it, if you are scared to go to the brink, you are lost. We've had to look it square in the face—on the question of enlarging the Korean war, on the question of getting into the Indochina war, on the question of Formosa. We walked to the brink and we looked it in the face. We took strong action.[50]

Referring in 'Fortune's Banter' to these remarks by Dulles, Wight highlighted the significance of daring to go to the 'brink' of war.

> It is a vivid restatement of the Machiavellian philosophy of politics, combining the traditional ideas of Fate, which leads along the verge of war; of chance, which must be mastered; of taking chances; of imposing the political will by strong action; of politics as the necessary art, as *virtù*. Consequently it caused a shock, being an eloquent statement of a view of the nature of international politics which American and British opinion are reluctant to admit. Yet it is a view which most of the great international statesmen of the past, not only Truman and Churchill, but Bismarck, Palmerston, and Metternich, would accept as a straightforward description of their own experience.

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[49] Review of Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967), published under the title 'Tract for the Nuclear Age' in *The Observer*, 23 April 1967.
[50] John Foster Dulles, as reported in James Shepley, 'How Dulles Averted War', *Life*, 16 January 1956.

The willingness to accept risks and undertake daring actions may be reinforced, Wight pointed out, by the individual leader's convictions as to destiny and 'the inevitability of his ideas triumphing'.[51]

Causation and the Role of Ideas in International Politics

The works collected in this volume underscore the complexity of causation. With regard to the antinomy of 'ideas' vs. 'material' or 'objective' factors in decision-making, it is not a question of 'either/or' but of 'both/and' being involved all the time in interactions within and among states.[52] Despite his wording in some works, Wight clearly saw that it would be reductive and misleading to concentrate solely on ideational or material causative factors. Sometimes, Wight observed, the champions of ideas such as natural law have had no meaningful alternative:

> it is worth noting that in the Melian Dialogue it is the great power, Athens, which talks of self-interest (Realism), and the small power, Melos, which talks of the general interest (Rationalism). In Thucydides the particular event is the vehicle of a general truth: small powers are normally the chief spokesmen of general principles, of moral law and natural law, because they have no other defence.[53]

Wight studied assiduously the role of ideas in international politics, but he sometimes wrote as if ideas and moral principles had a secondary (or trivial, or even non-existent) impact on state actions dictated by existential necessity. In 'From the League to the UN', for example, Wight wrote that:

> None of Hitler's opponents went to war with him for a moral or juridical principle; all of them acted in desperation and self-defence; Britain and France when they saw that their betrayal of Czechoslovakia had failed of its purpose, and all the other Powers when they were individually attacked. They all without

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[51] See, for example, Wight's discussions of Nasser and de Gaulle in 'Is There a Philosophy of Statesmanship?'. This essay is included in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, pp. 121–130.

[52] Much of the debate about this perennial topic concerns the circumstances in which ideas may interact with material factors to influence foreign policy and international politics—and to what degree and for what duration of time. Classic judgments have been articulated by thinkers as eminent as John Maynard Keynes and Max Weber. More contemporary studies include Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, "Ideas and Foreign Policy: An Analytical Framework," in Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, eds., *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993); and Pierre Hassner, "Le rôle des idées dans les relations internationales," *Politique Étrangère*, vol. 65, no. 3–4 (Autumn/Winter 2000), pp. 687–702.

[53] Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* p. 131.

exception acted not on the moral principle of collective security, but according
to the *sauve-qui-peut* of international anarchy.[54]

Wight took a similar position with reference to the motives that led to the forma-
tion of NATO. He argued that shared values and common political objectives do
not have a sufficiently centripetal effect to bring countries together in an alliance.
According to Wight, 'alignments are formed under external pressure rather than
from common sentiment, and their cohesion varies with the pressure'.[55] In his
view, 'the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1949 was
entirely due to the external pressure of Soviet Russia'.[56]

It should be recalled, however, that the founding Allies had political objectives
in addition to collective defence, deterrence, and containment. They made clear
in the North Atlantic Treaty that they intended to uphold and advance positive
political purposes. Many of the founding political leaders and diplomats, such as
Harry Truman and Ernest Bevin, had experienced both of the world wars, and
they intended to prevent a recurrence of the conditions that had produced those
wars. From their perspective, the Alliance had to be based on a common commit-
ment to positive and enduring goals.[57] In this case Wight's emphasis on Realist
imperatives seems to have overwhelmed other potent categories of motivation
such as defending and promoting democracy, constitutionalism, and the rule of
law, objectives associated with what Wight termed Rationalism and 'soft'
Revolutionism.[58]

Wight himself drew attention to the recurrent return to motives higher than
self-preservation. During the Second World War, 'the League idea, having been
expelled in its original form, kept on creeping back. National self-defence against
aggression was not enough. The idea persisted that the Allied powers were a col-
lective body with standards and aims that distinguished them from the Axis.'[59]

Regarding the long sweep of history, Wight recognized the limited practical
impact of Grotius and other thinkers, and cited Sir Hersch Lauterpacht in this
regard: 'Undoubtedly, the general picture of international relations in the two
centuries which followed the publication of *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* was not one

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[54] Martin Wight, 'From the League to the UN', an unpublished paper, apparently composed in
September 1946. The French expression *sauve-qui-peut* may be translated as 'every man for himself'
or (literally) 'save himself who can'.
[55] Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, p. 157.   [56] Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, p. 103.
[57] Compromises began at the outset, however, even regarding the commitment to democracy.
When the Alliance was established, the dictatorship in Portugal was comparable to that in Franco's
Spain, but the Allies saw access to the Azores as imperative for the security of the Alliance. For a fuller
discussion, see David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security*
(Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998), pp. 70–72. See also David S. Yost,
NATO's Balancing Act (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2014), pp. 363–366.
[58] Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* pp. 46–47.
[59] 'From the League to the UN'.

pointing to any direct influence, in the sphere of practice, of the essential features of the Grotian teaching.'[60]

As with the meagre impact of Grotius on state behaviour, Wight expressed cautious judgements about the concrete relevance of concepts of legitimacy. On the one hand, 'Rules of legitimacy…are intrinsically heady and exciting, because they spring from the deepest moral convictions.'[61] On the other hand, Wight concluded, 'The rules of legitimacy, whether dynastic or popular, have always been subordinate to the needs of state-building and state-consolidation. Here force plays a preponderant part, and consent is often evoked by modifying principles or even disregarding them. We need only remind ourselves of two examples: the violence and illegality with which the United States dispossessed the Indians, the violation of rights by which Prussia unified Germany.'[62]

Wight acknowledged that factors other than ideas have at times driven great events in international history and that separating ideational elements from other issues is not always readily accomplished. Sometimes Wight mentioned in passing huge subjects such as 'the social and economic origins of the French Revolution of 1848' and Mazzini's 'practical conspiratorial activities' and his role as a Roman triumvir in 1849.[63]

As noted previously, in his remarkable essay 'The Balance of Power' in *The World in March 1939*, Wight considered factors in addition to ideas that influenced decision-making, such as power pressures, dependence on allies, and perceived security imperatives. In another study, Wight observed that a society 'is not only a multiplicity of individuals but the product also of impersonal social forces, economic resources, and physical environment.'[64]

Despite various pressures and pulls from material factors and contending ideas, decision-makers do not lack agency; they can decide how to react to such factors and ideas and design a purposeful agenda—with the results subject to fortune and various other unpredictable and uncontrollable factors. It is for this reason that Wight's approach and analytical framework remain relevant. His approach clarifies the history and impact of ideas about international politics,

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[60]   Lauterpacht, 'The Grotian Tradition in International Law', *British Year Book of International Law*, 1946, p. 16, quoted in Wight, 'Why Is There No International Theory?' in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966, and London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 30. 'Why Is There No International Theory?' is included in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, pp. 22–38.

[61]   Martin Wight, 'Reflections on International Legitimacy'. p. 218.

[62]   Martin Wight, 'International Legitimacy', *International Relations*, IV(1) (May 1972), p. 28. This paper is included in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, with this passage on p. 209.

[63]   Martin Wight, review of J. L. Talmon, *Political Messianism: The Romantic Phase* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1960), published in *International Affairs*, 38(2) (April 1962), p. 224. This review is included in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, pp. 325–326.

[64]   Martin Wight, 'What Makes a Good Historian?' *The Listener*, 17 February 1955, pp. 283–284.

including the interdependence and implications of certain ideas. As has been the case recurrently since the sixteenth century, the international scene today features great-power competition, threats of opportunistic aggression, ideological struggles about domestic and international governance, fragmentation in international institutions, and crises of legitimacy, including in Western nations. Even within NATO, tension among the Allies about how to uphold and defend shared values within and beyond the Alliance has deepened since the Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, despite a fragile and potentially transient revival of cohesion in the immediate aftermath of the annexation.[65]

Wight pointed out that Hitler expressed resentment of what he perceived as a British attitude of superiority: 'It would be a good thing if in Great Britain people would gradually drop certain airs which they have inherited from the Versailles epoch. We cannot tolerate any longer the tutelage of governesses!'[66] Hitler also asserted, Wight noted, that 'The Western Democracies were dominated by the desire to rule the world and would not regard Germany and Italy as in their class. This psychological element of contempt was perhaps the worst thing about the whole business.'[67]

It is not always possible to distinguish a determination to avenge a perceived 'psychological element of contempt' from an idea about international politics. According to Hobbes, the third cause of war, after seeking material gains and responding to fear, is pursuing 'reputation' and 'glory'. That is, Hobbes wrote, people will fight 'for trifles, as a word, a smile, a different opinion, and any other signe of undervalue, either direct in their Persons, or by reflexion in their Kindred, their Friends, their Nation, their Profession, or their Name'.[68]

In sum, Wight recognized that international politics involve significant causative factors other than ideas, but he held that even actions taken to a significant extent on the basis of 'objective' developments (such as population pressures, environmental conditions, and economic struggles) are usually interpreted, mediated, and justified by reference to ideas. In his words, 'in historical retrospect, the philosophies of statesmen do seem observably to colour their policies'.[69]

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[65] For a more extensive discussion of the relevance of Wight's work on the theory and philosophy of international politics, see Yost, 'Political Philosophy and the Theory of International Relations', pp. 286–290.

[66] Hitler, speech at Saarbrücken, 9 October 1938, quoted in Martin Wight, 'The Balance of Power', *The World in March 1939*, p. 525n.

[67] Hitler statement to Ciano, 13 August 1939, quoted in Martin Wight, 'The Balance of Power', *The World in March 1939*, p. 525n. This quotation from Hitler and the one referenced in the previous note may be found in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, in note 50 on pp. 112–113.

[68] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991; first published in 1651), chapter XIII, p. 88.

[69] Martin Wight, 'Machiavellian Temptations: Methodological Warning'. Wight's note is included in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, with this passage on p. 92.

Indeed, Wight concluded, 'there are few greater errors in the study of international politics than to suppose that revolutionary doctrines have been discarded or are maintained only hypocritically for reasons of state. This is to show ignorance of human beliefs and motives'.[70] Wight judged that ideas are significant, not only because they are essential in order to accurately understand motives and decision-making but also because they are consistent with concepts of free will, choice, and moral responsibility.

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[70] Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, ed. by Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978), p. 94.

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Why Is There No International Theory?

'Political theory' is a phrase that in general requires no explanation.*,** It is used here to denote speculation about the state, which is its traditional meaning from Plato onwards. On the other hand, the phrase 'international theory' does require explanation. At first hearing, it is likely to be taken as meaning either the methodology of the study of international relations, or some conceptual system which offers a unified explanation of international phenomena—'the theory of international relations'. In this paper neither of these is intended. By 'international theory' is meant a tradition of speculation about relations between states, a tradition imagined as the twin of speculation about the state to which the name 'political theory' is appropriated. And international theory in this sense does not, at first sight, exist.

Some qualification, of course, is needed. There are many theoretical writings about international relations; some of them bear names as eminent as Machiavelli or Kant; and in the twentieth century they have become a flood.[1] Yet it is difficult to say that any of them has the status of a political classic. This is a problem that besets the teacher of International Relations if he conceives of International Relations as a twin subject, distinct from but parallel with, the subject commonly known as Political Science or Government. Political Science has its tensions and internecine conflicts, to be sure, but it is in some sense held together by Political Theory, or as it is sometimes called the History of Political Ideas. The student of Government, however else he may be misled, is given an introduction to the tradition of speculation and the body of writings about the state from Plato to Laski. But the student of International Relations cannot, it seems, be similarly directed to classics in his branch of politics, of the stature of Aristotle or Hobbes or Locke or Rousseau. Is it because they do not exist?

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* [Ed.] Wight first published this paper in *International Relations*, 2(1) (April 1960), pp. 35–48, 62. He published it in revised form as a chapter in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966, and London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), pp. 17–34.

** Wight, M., 'Why Is There No International Theory?', *International Relations*, 2(1), pp. 35–48. Copyright ©1960 by the Author. Reprinted by permission of SAGE Publications, Ltd. Reproduced from *Diplomatic Investigations*, by Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, published by Allen and Unwin. Copyright ©1966 by the Author.

[1] For recent writings there is a valuable critical study in Stanley H. Hoffman, *Contemporary Theory in International Relations* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, 1960).

The question may be put in a different way. The teacher of International Relations is often given the impression that his subject sprang fully-armed from the head of David Davies or of Sir Montague Burton. But if he seeks to trace it further back, behind the memorable Endowment whereby Andrew Carnegie left ten million dollars for 'the speedy abolition of war between the so-called civilized nations' (to be applied when this end was achieved to other social and educational purposes), he finds himself involved in obscurity. In the nineteenth century and earlier, there is no succession of first-rank books about the states-system and diplomacy like the succession of political classics from Bodin to Mill. What international theory, then, was there before 1914? And if there was any, is it worth rediscovering?

One answer to the question is plain. If political theory is the tradition of speculation about the state, then international theory may be supposed to be a tradition of speculation about the society of states, or the family of nations, or the international community. And speculation of this kind was formerly comprehended under International Law. The public law of Europe in the eighteenth century has been described as 'an amalgam of formulae, jurisprudence, political speculation and recorded practice'.[2] (Indeed, the very speculative breadth of international lawyers did something to create their reputation as futile metaphysicians among practical men, even after the influence of positivism disciplined them to neglect metalegal questions.) When Tocqueville gave his presidential address to the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques in 1852, he made one of the earliest attempts to place the study of international relations among the political and social sciences. He distinguished on the one side the study of the rights of society and of the individual, what laws are appropriate to particular societies, what forms of government to particular circumstances, citing as examples the names of Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Montesquieu, Rousseau. He continued:

'D'autres essayent le même travail à l'égard de cette société des nations où chaque peuple est un citoyen, société toujours un peu barbare, même dans les siècles les plus civilisés, quelque effort que l'on fasse pour adoucir et régler les rapports de ceux qui la composent. Ils ont découvert et indiqué quel était, en dehors des traités particuliers, le droit international. C'est l'oeuvre de Grotius et de Puffendorf.'[3]

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[2] Sir Geoffrey Butler and Simon Maccoby, *The Development of International Law* (Longmans, 1928), p. 7.

[3] [Ed.: "Others have attempted to do the same task with regard to this society of nations in which each people is a citizen, a society still a little barbarous, even in the most civilized centuries, whatever the effort made to soften and regulate the relations among those who compose it. They have discovered and indicated what was, outside specific treaties, international law. This is the work of Grotius and Puffendorf."] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Oeuvres*, vol. ix, pp. 120–121. Cf. Tocqueville in "Western Values in International Relations," in Wight, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, p. 55.

It is, he says, to the classical international lawyers that we must look in the first place for any body of international theory before the twentieth century.[4]

It is worth asking where else international theory is found. We might answer in four kinds of writing: (a) Those whom Nys called the irenists—Erasmus, Sully, Campanella, Crucé, Penn, the Abbé de St Pierre, and Pierre-André Gargaz. When Melian Stawell wrote a book on *The Growth of International Thought* for the Home University Library,[5] writers of this kind provided her central line of progress from the Truce of God to the Kellogg Pact. But it is hard to consider them as other than the curiosities of political literature. They are not rich in ideas; the best of them grope with the problem of how to secure common action between sovereign states, and thus gain a mention in the prehistory of the League of Nations.[6]

(b) Those whom it is convenient to call the Machiavellians: the succession of writers on *raison d'état* of whom Meinecke is the great interpreter. In a footnote about the followers of Botero, Meinecke says, 'There are real catacombs of forgotten literature here by mediocrities'.[7] He does not so mean it, but one suspects that the phrase will cover all the writers in his own book apart from those who are notable in another sphere, whether as statesmen, like Frederick, or as philosophers, like Hegel, or as historians, like Ranke and Treitschke. Botero and Boccalini, Henri de Rohan and Gabriel Naudé, Courtilz de Sandras and Rousset: can we see in them forgotten or potential classics? One difficulty in answering is that they are inaccessible except to the scholar, and this perhaps itself conveys the answer.

(c) The *parerga* of political philosophers, philosophers and historians. As examples of this kind might be named Hume's Essay on 'The Balance of Power', Rousseau's *Project of Perpetual Peace*, Bentham's *Plan for an Universal Peace*, Burke's *Thoughts on French Affairs* and *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, Ranke's essay on the Great Powers, and J. S. Mill's essay on the law of nations. Apart from the classical international lawyers, these are the most rewarding source in the quest for international theory. Is it more interesting that so many great minds have been drawn, at the margin of their activities, to consider basic problems of international politics, or that so few great minds have been drawn to make these

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[4] It may be worth adding that international law gained academic recognition in Britain well before political theory. The Chichele Chair of International Law and Diplomacy at Oxford and the Whewell Chair of International Law at Cambridge were founded in 1859 and 1866 respectively, and the Gladstone Chair of Political Theory and Institutions and the Cambridge Chair of Political Science only in 1912 and 1928.

[5] [Ed.] F. Melian Stawell, *The Growth of International Thought* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, and London: Thornton Butterworth Ltd, 1930).

[6] They have now been admirably surveyed by F. H. Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace* (Cambridge University Press, 1963), part i.

[7] Friedrich Meinecke, *Machiavellism* (English translation, Routledge, 1957), p. 67, n. 1. [Ed.: Wight's reviews of this book by Meinecke and of Richard Sterling's analysis of Meinecke's political thinking are included in this collection of Wight's works: *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, pp. 317–320.]

problems their central interest? The only political philosopher who has turned wholly from political theory to international theory is Burke. The only political philosopher of whom it is possible to argue whether his principal interest was not in the relations between states rather than—or even more than—the state itself, is Machiavelli. With him, the foreign and domestic conditions for the establishment and maintenance of state power are not distinguished systematically; and this alone—without other reasons—would have justified his being annexed, by detractors and admirers alike, as the tutelary hero of International Relations. In this class, again, it would be necessary to place such miscellaneous political writers as Bolingbroke, whose *Letters on the Study and Use of History* contain a primitive philosophy of international politics, or Mably, whose *Principes des Négociations* is one of the more enduring pieces of his large output, or the Gentz of *Fragments upon the Balance of Power*.

(d) The speeches, despatches, memoirs and essays of statesmen and diplomatists. To illustrate speeches and despatches as a source of international theory, one might cite the authority of Canning over a generation of British foreign policy— for instance, the classic despatch of 1823 containing his doctrine of guarantees. To illustrate memoirs, Bismarck's *Gedanken und Erinnerungen*, perhaps the supreme example. To illustrate essays, Lord Salisbury's early essays on foreign affairs in the *Quarterly Review*.

It is clear, therefore, that international theory, or what there is of it, is scattered, unsystematic, and mostly inaccessible to the layman. Moreover, it is largely repellent and intractable in form. Grotius has to be read at large to be understood; the only possible extract is the Prolegomena, which gives a pallid notion of whether or why he deserves his reputation. Students cannot be expected to tackle Pufendorf's *De jure naturae et gentium libri octo*, nor even his *De officio hominis et civis juxta legem naturalem libri duo*. There is little intellectual nourishment in the Abbé de St Pierre, or Hume on the balance of power; and Bismarck's international theory has to be distilled with care from the historical falsehoods in which it is seductively enclosed.

Yet these are external matters. I believe it can be argued that international theory is marked, not only by paucity but also by intellectual and moral poverty. For this we must look to internal reasons. The most obvious are, first, the intellectual prejudice imposed by the sovereign state, and secondly, the belief in progress.

Since the sixteenth century, international society has been so organized that no individuals except sovereign princes can be members of it, and these only in their representative capacity. All other individuals have had to be subjects or citizens of sovereign states. By a famous paradox of international law, the only persons emancipated from this necessity are pirates, by virtue of being *hostes humani generis*. Erasmus could still wander about Europe without bothering himself where his ultimate temporal allegiance was due. Scaliger and Casaubon already learned, two and three generations later, that the only safe way to be citizens of the

intellectual world was to exchange a disagreeable allegiance for one less disagreeable. The main difference in the age of Einstein and Thomas Mann has been that change of allegiance has become impossible for an increasingly large proportion of the human race. Even Mr Hammarskjöld, we must suppose, will retire to write his memoirs as a Swedish citizen under the shelter of the world's fourth air force.[8] Even the Pope, to take the supreme instance, believed his position in international society anomalous and insecure until he had re-established himself as sovereign of a territorial state.

The principle that every individual requires the protection of a state, which represents him in the international community, is a juristic expression of the belief in the sovereign state as the consummation of political experience and activity which has marked Western political thought since the Renaissance. That belief has absorbed almost all the intellectual energy devoted to political study. It has become natural to think of international politics as the untidy fringe of domestic politics (as Baldwin thought of them in Cabinet), and to see international theory in the manner of the political theory textbooks, as an additional chapter which can be omitted by all save the interested student. The masterpiece of international politics is the system of the balance of power, as it operated from the time of Elizabeth down to that of Bismarck; but if we ask why the balance of power has inspired no great political writer to analysis and reflection, the answer surely is that it has flourished with the flourishing of the modern state, and has been seen as a means to that end. Even today, when circumstances have made the study of international relations fashionable, they are often still thought of and even taught as 'foreign affairs' or 'problems of foreign policy' (meaning our foreign policy, not Nasser's or Khrushchev's), and the world's present predicament will be described in some such parochial phrase as 'the crisis of the modern state'. Professor Morgenthau, who has had a great influence among international relationists in the United States since 1945, has consistently maintained that 'a theory of international politics must be focused on the concept of the national interest'.[9] Practical problems of international politics are often described in terms of building a bigger and better state—a European Union or an Atlantic Community or an Arab Union, without seeing that such an achievement would leave the problems of inter-state politics precisely where they were. Few political thinkers have made it their business to study the states-system, the diplomatic community *itself*.

It might be a good argument for subordinating international theory to political theory, to maintain that the division of international society into separate states is

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[8] The sentence was written in 1958.

[9] H. J. Morgenthau, *Dilemmas of Politics* (University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 54. Cf. *In Defense of the National Interest* (Knopf, 1951). [Ed.: Wight's review of Morgenthau's *Dilemmas of Politics* is included in this collection of Wight's works: *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, pp. 321–323].

a temporary historical phase, emerging out of the medieval unity (however this be characterized) and destined to be replaced by a world state. In his inaugural lecture at Oxford, Zimmern remarked on the historical conditions that make International Relations a topical subject in place of International Government.[10] And it may seem one of the weaknesses of the concluding volumes of Toynbee's *Study of History*, that he resists the logic of his own analysis and supposes that Western civilization will defy all his precedents by achieving a stable international anarchy instead of a universal empire. But this is how international theorists have usually talked. They have seen the maintenance of the states-system as the condition for the continuance of the existing state—a small-scale field of political theory. They have not been attracted by the possibility of maximizing the field of political theory through establishing a world state. None of the successive attempts by a single Great Power to achieve international hegemony has produced any notable international (or political) theory. 'The monarchy of the World' was apparently a phrase used by Spanish diplomats under Philip II, but the idea was never embodied in a serious treatise.[11] Still less was any such thing inspired by Louis XIV or Napoleon.

Formal international theory has traditionally resisted the case for a world state. At the very outset, Vitoria unconsciously took over Dante's conception of *universalis civilitas humani generis*, and strengthened it into an affirmation that mankind constitutes a legal community, but he repudiated the Dantean corollary of a universal empire.[12] Grotius and Pufendorf did the same, with the argument that a world empire would be too large to be efficient.[13] For seventeenth-century writers this was a reasonable assumption: they saw the Spanish monarchy manifestly incapable of maintaining its intercontinental responsibilities, the Empire disintegrating, the French and English monarchies having to undergo fundamental reconstruction. In the eighteenth century, when the necessity of the balance of power has become a commonplace of pamphlet literature, a different and perhaps a contrary argument appears—that a world state might be so efficient as to be intolerable. For Kant as for Gibbon the division of mankind into many states is the guarantee of freedom; not only for states themselves, through the balance of power, but for individuals also, for whom it means the possibility of foreign asylum.[14] After the middle of the nineteenth century American experience provides a new argument against a super-state; that it would simply transform the admitted evil of international war into civil war, so that the advantage would be nil.

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[10] A. E. Zimmern, *The Study of International Relations* (Clarendon Press, 1931), pp. 13–14.

[11] Bohdan Chudoba, *Spain and the Empire 1519–1643* (University of Chicago Press, 1952), p. 190.

[12] Dante, *De Monarchia,* book i, ch. 2. Vitoria, *De Potestate Civili,* section xxi, para. 4; and *De Indis recenter inventis Relectio prior,* section III, first title. Vitoria nowhere mentions Dante.

[13] Grotius, *De jure belli ac pacis,* book II, ch. xxii, section 13; Pufendorf, *Elementa jurisprudentiae universalis,* book II, obs. v. 1.

[14] Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* ch. iii, last paragraph; Kant, *Eternal Peace,* first addendum, 2.

'Even if it were possible to leap over so many intermediate stages, and to set up a world government,' said Sir Llewellyn Woodward recently, 'the political result might be to substitute civil war for international war or, on the other hand, to surrender our existing safeguards of public and private liberty to a centralized executive authority of unparalleled and irresistible strength.'[15] Hence an almost uniform assumption among international theorists up to 1914 that the structure of international society is unalterable, and the division of the world into sovereign states is necessary and natural. Nor is it unfair to see the League and the United Nations as the expression of a belief that it may be possible to secure the benefits of a world state without the inconveniences of instituting and maintaining it. If in the twentieth century crude doctrines of world imperialism have become influential is it not partly because they have found a vacuum in international theory to fill? One of the very few reasoned arguments for a world state was put forward by Middleton Murry, when America had the atomic monopoly. He drew a different moral from the American Civil War.

> 'There is a manifest analogy between the situation which forced Lincoln's reluctant but unshakable decision to compel the Southern states to remain in the Union, and the situation today. A modern Lincoln would apply himself to making the issue crystal-clear to his fellow-countrymen, and if he could find means, to the Russian people also. The issue is world-union or world-anarchy; world-union or world-slavery. The rulers of Russia, he would say, cannot be permitted to refuse world-union, and thereby to condemn the world to anarchy and slavery. If they will not consent, they must be compelled to come in.'[16]

This is interesting, not only as an example of the union between pacifist convictions and what might be called a realist attitude to international politics; but also because the argument never had the slightest chance of being listened to by those to whom it was addressed.

The ascendancy of political theory over international theory can be illustrated in another way. Since the society of states came into recognizable existence in the sixteenth century, the three most powerful influences on its development have been the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, the French Revolution, and the totalitarian revolutions of the twentieth century. But none of these upheavals has produced any notable body of international theory; each has written only a chapter of political theory. To put it crudely, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation were concerned with Church and state, the French Revolution with the state simply, Communism and Fascism with the state and society. In the end, all these revolutionaries found themselves operating in international politics in a

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[15] *The Listener,* August 5, 1954, p. 207.
[16] J. M. Murry, *The Free Society* (Dakers, 1948), p. 63.

big way, but it requires wide reading and considerable discrimination to elicit the principles or theories of international politics by which they believed they were guided. The Jesuits are the exception: for they had the old equipment of the supreme temporal power to refashion. But what was Calvin's international theory? In some of his sermons it is possible to discern a conception of a *civitas maxima* whose absolute monarch is God, with the princes of the earth as His lieutenants; but it is a pale thing beside the vigorous intervention and subversion undertaken by his foreign policy in practice, whose principles get a kind of formulation in the last part of the *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos*. It is only when it begins to slide into the casuistry of *raison d'état* that Calvinist international theory acquires richness or subtlety, and then it ceases to be distinctively Calvinist. It is even more difficult to find any Jacobin international theory. The Rights of Man were transformed into universal conquest without, it seems, any theorizing more sophisticated or less negative than the statement by Genêt which Fox quoted in the House of Commons: 'I would throw Vattel and Grotius into the sea whenever their principles interfere with my notions of the rights of nations.'[17]

The same may be said of Communism. It is a theory of domestic society, a political theory, which since Russia after Lenin's death came to acquiesce for the time being in remaining the only Socialist state in international society, has been tugged and cut about to cover a much wider range of political circumstances than it was designed for. Marx and Lenin saw the three principal contradictions of capitalism as, first, the struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie in the advanced industrial states; secondly, the struggle between these imperialist states themselves, as exemplified by the First World War; thirdly, the struggle between the colonial masses and their alien exploiters. This was the hierarchy of importance that they gave to these three struggles, and it is a commonplace that the course of events has reversed the order, so that the struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie in the Western world has almost ceased, and the struggle between the colonial peoples and their imperialist masters and former masters has become the main theme of international politics. According to Mr Deutscher, it was Trotsky who first saw that this was happening, and who coined the phrase about the path to London and Paris lying through Calcutta and Peking.[18]

Neither Marx, Lenin nor Stalin made any systematic contribution to international theory; Lenin's *Imperialism* comes nearest to such a thing, and this has little to say about international politics. The absence of Marxist international theory has a wider importance than making it difficult to recommend reading to an undergraduate who wants to study the principles of Communist foreign policy in

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[17] House of Commons, January 21, 1794 (*Speeches during the French Revolutionary War Period,* Everyman's Library, p. 124). Cf. the discussion of Genêt in Wight, "Western Values in International Relations," p. 55 in this volume.

[18] Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Armed* (Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 457–8.

the original sources. It creates the obscurity, so fruitful to the Communists themselves, about what these principles actually are: so that only an expert sovietologist can usefully discuss what Lenin really said (and where) about the inevitability of conflict between the socialist and capitalist camps, and how this doctrine has been revised by Malenkov and Khrushchev. Perhaps it is a misconception, however, to say that all these revolutionary political theories are primarily concerned with the state. It may be truer to see them as attempts to reconstitute that older political phenomenon, a universal church of true believers; and in the light of such an undertaking the realm of the diplomatic system and sovereign states and international law is necessarily irrelevant, transitory, trivial, and doomed to pass away. At the heart of Calvinism and Jacobinism there was something like the exaltation and impatience with international politics which Trotsky showed, when he defined his task on becoming the Soviet Republic's first Foreign Commissar: 'I shall publish a few revolutionary proclamations and then close shop.'[19]

   And secondly, international politics differ from domestic politics in being less susceptible of a progressivist interpretation. In Western Europe, at least, national histories considered in isolation do show evidence of progress—even when, as in the case of Germany, they are marked by recurrent catastrophe. There has been growing social cohesion, growing interdependence among the people, growth of state power, increasing flexibility in its operation, increasing wealth and its better distribution, diffusion of culture among the masses, the softening of manners, perhaps the lessening of violence—everything that the Victorians believed was inevitable. If Sir Thomas More or Henry IV, let us say, were to return to England and France in 1960, it is not beyond plausibility that they would admit that their countries had moved domestically towards goals and along paths which they could approve. But if they contemplated the international scene, it is more likely that they would be struck by resemblances to what they remembered: a state-system apportioned between two Great Powers each with its associates and satellites, smaller Powers improving their position by playing off one side against the other, universal doctrines contending against local patriotism, the duty of intervention overriding the right of independence, the empty professions of peaceful purpose and common interest, the general preference for going down to defeat fighting rather than consenting to unresisted subjugation. The stage would have become much wider, the actors fewer, their weapons more alarming, but the play would be the same old melodrama. International politics is the realm of recurrence and repetition; it is the field in which political action is most regularly necessitous. This, I take it, is what Burke means when he says that because commonwealths are not physical but moral essences, the internal causes which affect

   [19] *Ibid.*, p. 327.

their fortunes 'are infinitely uncertain and much more obscure, and much more difficult to trace, than the foreign causes that tend to raise, to depress, and sometimes to overwhelm a community.'[20]

If this is indeed the character of international politics, it is incompatible with progressivist theory. Therefore international theory that remains true to diplomatic experience will be at a discount in an age when the belief in progress is prevalent. This may be illustrated by the penetrating observations upon international politics that are to be found scattered about in earlier political writers. Here is an eighteenth-century description of the competition in armaments:

'Une maladie nouvelle s'est répandue en Europe; elle a saisi nos princes, et leur fait entretenir un nombre désordonné de troupes. Elle a ses redoublements, et elle devient nécessairement contagieuse; car, sitôt qu'un État augmente ce qu'il appelle ses troupes, les autres soudain augmentent les leurs: de façon qu'on ne gagne rien par là que la ruine commune. Chaque monarque tient sur pied toutes les armées qu'il pourroit avoir si ses peuples étoient en danger d'être exterminés; et on nomme paix cet état d'effort de tous contre tous. (Il est vrai que c'est cet état d'effort qui maintient principalement l'équilibre, parce qu'il éreinte les grandes puissances.) Aussi l'Europe est-elle si ruinée, que les particuliers qui seroient dans la situation où sont les trois puissances de cette partie du monde les plus opulentes, n'auroient pas de quoi vivre. Nous sommes pauvres avec les richesses et le commerce de tout l'univers; et bientôt, à force d'avoir des soldats, nous n'aurons plus que des soldats, et nous serons comme les Tartares.'[21]

In its exaggeration as well as its perception, this passage written during the War of the Austrian Succession has a timeless quality when read during the Cold War. One seeks to separate the truth from the changing circumstances, asking how far industrialism may have altered the economic burden of armaments, and so on. But no sooner is one in the posture of recognizing a perennial truth in

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[20] *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, No. 1, third paragraph *(Works,* ed. H. Rogers Holdsworth, 1842, vol. ii, p. 275).

[21] Montesquieu, *De l'Esprit des Lois*, book xiii, ch. 17. [Ed. Wight provided a translation of this passage in his book *Power Politics*, ed. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978), pp. 242, 251, with italics in the original in this translation: "A new disease has spread across Europe; it has smitten our rulers and makes them keep up an exorbitant number of troops. The disease has its paroxysms, and necessarily becomes contagious; for as soon as one power increases its forces, the others immediately increase theirs, so that nobody gains anything by it except common ruin. Every sovereign keeps in readiness all the armies he would need if his people were in danger of extermination; and peace is the name given to this general effort of all against all. (It is true that this general effort is the chief thing that preserves the balance, because it is breaking the backs of the great powers.) Thus Europe is ruined so completely that individuals who found themselves in the position of the three richest powers of this part of the world would have no means of subsistence. We are impoverished despite the riches and commerce of the whole world; and soon, by dint of raising troops, we shall have nothing *except* troops, and we shall be like the Tartars."]

Montesquieu's words, than all one's progressivist instincts revolt. By now, we say, we have seen the arms race run its full cycle sufficiently often to know what it means; our protest is born of knowledge and experience and not, like his, of intuition alone; because our knowledge is greater our strength to break the circle is greater; and to accept Montesquieu's words as a description of our own predicament would be treason to mankind, because it implies the fatalistic doctrine that what has been will be.

In progressivist international theories, the conviction usually precedes the evidence. And when the conviction is analysed or disintegrates, one is apt to find at the centre of it what might be called the argument from desperation. This is already used by Kant, who first channelled the doctrine of progress into international theory through his *Eternal Peace*. Having established the three definite articles of an eternal peace, he argues that such a peace is guaranteed by Nature herself, who wills that we should do what reason presents to us as a duty; *volentem ducit, nolentem trahit*.[22] And she effects this by means of the commercial spirit, which cannot coexist with war, and sooner or later controls every nation.[23] 'In this way Nature guarantees the conditions of perpetual peace by the mechanism involved in our human inclinations themselves.'[24] But a little later, in discussing the disagreement between morals and politics in relation to eternal peace, he seems to reach the ultimate point of his argument, and to take a flying leap beyond it:

'The process of creation, by which such a brood of corrupt beings has been put upon the earth, can apparently be justified by no theodicy or theory of Providence, if we assume that it never will be better, nor can be better, with the human race. But such a standpoint of judgment is really much too high for us to assume, as if we could be entitled theoretically to apply our notions of wisdom to the supreme and unfathomable Power. We shall thus be inevitably driven to a position of despair in consequence of such reasonings [zu solchen verzweifelten Folgerungen werden wir unvermeidlich hingetrieben], if we do not admit that the pure principles of right and justice have objective reality and that they can be realized in fact.'[25]

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[22] [Ed.: She leads the willing and drags the unwilling.]
[23] The best English translation is still that by W. Hastie, in *Kant's Principles of Politics* (Clark, 1891). See pp. 105, 111.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 115.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 136; *Werke* (Academy edition), vol. viii, p. 380. Cf. *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte,* ninth principle: 'Denn was hilfts, die Herrlichkeit und Weisheit der Schöpfung im vernunftlosen Naturreiche zu preisen und der Betrachtung zu empfehlen, wenn der Theil des grossen Schauplatzes der obersten Weisheit, der von allem diesem den Zweck enthält,—die Geschichte des menschlichen Geschlechts—ein unaufhörlicher Einwurf dagegen bleiben soll, dessen Anblick uns nöthigt unsere Augen von ihm mit Unwillen wegzuwenden und, indem wir verzweifeln jemals darin eine vollendete vernünftige Absicht anzutreffen, uns dahin bringt, sie nur in einer andern Welt zu hoffen?' (*Werke,* vol. viii, p. 30; Hastie, pp. 27–28). [Ed.: The Hastie translation praised by Wight reads as follows: 'For,

It is surely not a good argument for a theory of international politics that we shall be driven to despair if we do not accept it. But it is an argument that comes naturally to the children of Hegel (and Kant) when they are faced with defeat. Communists, as the Germans neared Moscow, and Nazis, as the Russians returned upon Germany, alike cried that defeat was unthinkable because if they were defeated history would be meaningless. 'To imagine for a moment the possibility of Hitler's victory meant to forego all reason; if it were to happen then there could be no truth, logic, nor light in the development of human society, only chaos, darkness and lunacy; and it would be better not to live.'[26] 'We shall conquer, because it lies in the logic of history, because a higher destiny wills it,…because without our victory history would have lost its meaning; and history is not meaningless.'[27]

Perhaps the prevalent belief that nuclear weapons have transformed international politics, giving the Great Powers something to fear more than they fear one another, and so making war impossible, has a similar root. It is clear, at least, that it is the latest in a series of optimistic constructions going back more than a hundred years. In the nineteenth century, public opinion was given the first place as transformer of international politics; in the twentieth century it has usually been the fear of war. The argument that the hydrogen bomb has made war impossible usually contains two propositions: first, that war waged with the new weapons will destroy civilization; secondly, that it is therefore too horrible to happen. Joad used it in 1939 in respect of the bombing aeroplane.[28] Bloch used it in 1900 in respect of mass armies, quick-firing artillery, small-bore rifles, and smokeless powder.[29]

It may be an illusion produced by treating the material selectively; but it sometimes seems that whereas political theory generally is in unison with political activity, international theory (at least in its chief embodiment as international law) sings a kind of descant over against the movement of diplomacy. Political theory is in a direct relation with political activity—whether justifying recent developments as Hooker did the Anglican settlement and Locke the Glorious Revolution, or providing a programme of action that the next generation carries out, as Bentham did for administrative reform in England or Marx and the other

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what avails it, to magnify the glory and wisdom of the creation in the irrational domain of Nature, and to recommend it to devout contemplation, if that part of the great display of the supreme wisdom, which presents the End of it all in the history of the Human Race, is to be viewed as only furnishing perpetual objections to that glory and wisdom? The spectacle of History if thus viewed would compel us to turn away our eyes from it against our will; and the despair of ever finding a perfect rational Purpose in its movement, would reduce us to hope for it, if at all, only in another world.']

[26] Evgeny Krieger, *From Moscow to the Prussian Frontier* (Hutchinson, 1945), p. 8: of November 1941.

[27] Goebbels, speech in the Berliner Sportpalast, October 3, 1943 (*Völkischer Beobachter,* October 4, 1943).

[28] C. E. M. Joad, *Why War?* (Penguin, 1939), pp. 50, 52.

[29] Ivan Bloch, *Modern Weapons and Modern War* (Grant Richards, 1900).

socialist writers for the working-class movement. But international law seems to follow an inverse movement to that of international politics. When diplomacy is violent and unscrupulous, international law soars into the regions of natural law; when diplomacy acquires a certain habit of co-operation, international law crawls in the mud of legal positivism. It was in 1612, in the armistice between the Western European wars of religion and the Thirty Years' War, that Suarez enunciated his belief that mankind 'constitutes a political and moral unity bound up by charity and compassion.'[30] The old view that Grotius had a humanizing influence on the later stages of the Thirty Years' War no longer has any credit. 'Undoubtedly, the general picture of international relations in the two centuries which followed the publication of *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*', Lauterpacht has written, 'was not one pointing to any direct influence, in the sphere of practice, of the essential features of the Grotian teaching.'[31] International theory did not approximate to international practice until the doctrine of natural law had become completely subjectivized in Wolff and Vattel, and transformed into a doctrine of autonomy of the national will, a counterpart of the theory of the rights of man. Frederick the Great's reign might be taken as the point of intersection of theory and practice. It saw the last stage of naturalism pass over into positivism, and the first great work of positivist jurisprudence, J. J. Moser's *Versuch des neuesten europäischen Völkerrechts*, which came as near to codifying *Realpolitik* as any work of international law can do, was published in 1777–80. Moser set the prevailing tone of nineteenth-century theory. Yet it is curious that a theory which starts from the axiom of legal self-sufficiency, separating the law both from the other normative spheres and from its social context—which sees the will of sovereign states as the exclusive source of international law, and defines international law as nothing but such rules as states have consented to—should have flourished in an age when the conception of Europe as a cultural and moral community acquired a new vigour, and the diplomatic system of the Concert maintained standards of good faith, mutual consideration and restraint higher probably than at any other time in international history. 'Chaque Nation a ses droits particuliers; mais l'Europe aussi a son droit; c'est l'ordre social qui le lui a donné', ran a protocol of the London Conference on Belgium of 1831.[32] It is surely a deeper theory of international law than the consensual principle could offer. With the signing of the League Covenant (if not indeed with the Hague Conferences) the relation

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[30] *De Legibus,* book II, ch. xix, section 9. Cf. the discussion of Suarez in Wight, "Western Values in International Relations," p. 55.

[31] 'The Grotian Tradition in International Law', *British Year Book of International Law,* 1946, p. 16.

[32] See C. K. Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston* (Bell, 1951), vol. i, pp. 109, 132. [Ed.: Wight provided the following translation of this sentence in his posthumous book, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* ed. Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991), p. 127: 'Each nation has its individual rights; but Europe has also her rights; it is the social order that has given them to her.']

of theory and practice was once more reversed, and positivist jurisprudence itself by an agreeable irony followed its naturalist predecessor into altitudes of fiction through the multiplication of worthless agreements in the age of Mussolini and Hitler.

The tension between international theory and diplomatic practice can be traced to the heart of international theory itself. It may be seen in the identification of international politics with the pre-contractual state of nature by the classical international lawyers. This identification was apparently first made by Hobbes, and was carried from him into the law of nations by Pufendorf. But already in Hobbes one can detect an inconsistency. He describes the state of nature, when men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, as a condition of war of every man against every man; and forestalling the argument that such a condition never existed, he points to the relations of sovereign states as exemplifying it. But he adds this sentence: 'But because they uphold thereby (viz., by their 'posture of war'), the industry of their subjects; there does not follow from it, that misery, which accompanies the liberty of particular men.'[33] This is empirically true. Competition in armaments secures full employment as well as bringing war; tariff barriers protect as well as obstruct. Or at least it has been empirically true until the present day, when for the first time we may be beginning to ask whether there may not follow from international anarchy as much misery as follows from civil anarchy. But it is theoretically odd. It introduces an ambiguity into the conception of the state of nature which becomes a persistent feature of international theory. For individuals, the state of nature, whether it is imagined in Hobbesian or Lockean terms, leads to the social contract. For sovereign states, it does no such thing. International anarchy is the one manifestation of the state of nature that is not intolerable. The coexistence of states, said Pufendorf, 'lacks those inconveniences which are attendant upon a pure state of nature.'[34] Wolff conceived of international society as a *civitas maxima*, of which states were citizens, but this was a deliberate fiction constructed to support the theory of an international legal order. Vattel gives the fullest account of the ambiguity.

'It is clear that there is by no means the same necessity for a civil society among Nations as among individuals. It cannot be said, therefore, that nature recommends it to an equal degree, far less that it prescribes it. Individuals are so constituted that they could accomplish but little by themselves and could scarcely

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[33] *Leviathan,* ch. xiii. (Cf. Hedley Bull, "Society and Anarchy in International Relations," in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, eds., *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966, and London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 45).

[34] *De jure naturae et gentium,* book II, ch. ii, section 4.

get on without the assistance of civil society and its law. But as soon as a suffi-
cient number have united under a government, they are able to provide for most
of their needs, and they find the help of other political societies not so necessary
to them as the state itself is to individuals.'[35]

It was left to nineteenth century writers such as Laurent and Oppenheim to crown
the argument by pointing out that sovereign states are more moral than
individuals.

'There is a profound difference between individuals and nations; the former
have their vices and their passions which are continually leading them to do
wrong; the others are fictitious beings whose agents are generally the most intel-
ligent and most ethical of their time. And even where intelligence and morality
are lacking, public opinion contains them and will increasingly contain them
within the limits of duty.'[36]

It may seem puzzling that, while the acknowledged classics of political study
are the political philosophers, the only acknowledged counterpart in the study
of international relations is Thucydides, a work of history. And that the quality
of international politics, the preoccupations of diplomacy, are embodied and
communicated less in works of political or international theory than in historical
writings. It would be possible to argue that the highest form of statecraft,
both in the end pursued and in the moral and intellectual qualities required, is
the regulation of the balance of power, as seen in Lorenzo the Magnificent or
Queen Elizabeth, Richelieu or William III, Palmerston or Bismarck. But to
understand this statecraft one can turn to no work of international theory; in
the way, for example, that to understand the Founding Fathers one reads *The
Federalist*. One turns rather to historical writing; to Ranke or Sorel. Works of
international history, whether of wide chronological range (for example,
Seeley's *Growth of British Policy*, Mattingly's *Renaissance Diplomacy*, or
Hudson's *The Far East in World Politics*), or detailed studies (for example,
Sumner's *Russia and the Balkans*, Wheeler-Bennett's *Brest-Litovsk*, or even
Sorensen's account of Kennedy's handling of the Cuba crisis), convey the nature
of foreign policy and the working of the states-system better than much recent
theoretical writing based on the new methodologies. It is not simply that
historical literature is doing a different job from systems analysis. Historical lit-
erature at the same time does the same job—the job of offering a coherent

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[35] *Le Droit des Gens,* preface.
[36] François Laurent, *Études sur l'histoire de humanité*, vol. i (2nd ed., 1879), p. 42. I owe this quota-
tion to Walter Schiffer, *The Legal Community of Mankind* (Columbia University Press, 1954), p. 160.

structure of hypotheses that will provide a common explanation of phenomena; but it does the job with more judiciousness and modesty, and with closer attention to the record of international experience. So one might venture tentatively to put forward the equation:

Politics: International Politics=Political Theory: Historical Interpretation.

By another intellectual route, Henry Adams came to a similar conclusion. 'For history, international relations are the only sure standards of movement; the only foundation for a map. For this reason, Adams had always insisted that international relations was the only sure base for a chart of history.'[37]

What I have been trying to express is the sense of a kind of disharmony between international theory and diplomatic practice, a kind of recalcitrance of international politics to being theorized about. The reason is that the theorizing has to be done in the language of political theory and law. But this is the language appropriate to man's control of his social life. Political theory and law are maps of experience or systems of action within the realm of normal relationships and calculable results. They are the theory of the good life. International theory is the theory of survival. What for political theory is the extreme case (as revolution, or civil war) is for international theory the regular case. The traditional effort of international lawyers to define the right of devastation and pillage in war; the long diplomatic debate in the nineteenth century about the right of intervention in aid of oppressed nationalities; the Anglo-French argument in the nineteen-twenties about which precedes the other, security or disarmament; the controversy over appeasement; the present debate about the nuclear deterrent— all this is the stuff of international theory, and it is constantly bursting the bounds of the language in which we try to handle it. For it all involves the ultimate experience of life and death, national existence and national extinction.

It is tempting to answer the question with which this paper begins by saying that there is no international theory except the kind of rumination about human destiny to which we give the unsatisfactory name of philosophy of history. The passage from Kant quoted above illustrates the slide-over into theodicy that seems to occur after a certain point with all international theory. At all events, it is necessary to see the domain of international theory stretching all the way from the noble attempt of Grotius and his successors to establish the laws of war, at one extreme, to de Maistre's 'occult and terrible law' of the violent destruction of the human species at the other.[38] 'La terre entière, continuellement imbibée de sang,

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[37] *The Education of Henry Adams* (New York, Modern Library, 1931), p. 422.
[38] *Soirées de St. Pétersbourg, 7*me entretien (Paris, Emmanuel Vitte, 1924, vol. ii, p. 14); cf. *Considérations sur la France,* ch. iii.

n'est qu'un autel immense où tout ce qui vit doit être immolé sans fin, sans mesure, sans relâche, jusqu'à la consommation des choses, jusqu'à l'extinction du mal, jusqu'à la mort de la mort'[39]—which de Maistre, at least, supposed to be political theology. An extra-galactic examiner in tellurian international theory might well hold that the writer of this answer, however curious the language in which it was couched, deserved a mark over some other candidates for not misrepresenting the historical record.

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[39] *Soirées de St. Pétersbourg,* 7me entretien (vol. ii, p. 25). [Ed.: 'The whole earth, continually drenched with blood, is nothing but an immense altar where all living things must be sacrificed without end, without limit, without ceasing, until the consummation of things, until the extinction of evil, until the death of death.']

2

An Anatomy of International Thought

This is an attempt at analysing the political philosophy of international relations in a very short span of time, so I do not propose to discuss questions of method.* Indeed I may sound dogmatic, but that is merely because I shall not have the time to exhibit my diffidence.

You might say there is no such thing as the political philosophy of international relations; I have therefore played safe and called it 'international thought' in my title to use the least pretentious phrase describing speculation about international relations. International thought is what we find in the discussions of the man-in-the-street or in the popular press. International theory is what we find in the better press and hope to find in diplomatic circles and foreign offices. The political philosophy of international relations is the fully conscious, formulated theory, illustrations of which you may find in the conduct of some statesmen, Wilson, probably Churchill, perhaps Nehru; and it may be expressed by serious writers, for example, Kant or Kennan, Machiavelli or Morgenthau. The differences between thought, theory, and philosophy are partly in the precision with which they are formulated, and partly in the degree of their profundity. But I am not concerned with these and ignore them.

To help us examine international thought let us first consider international relations themselves, the state of affairs which produces international theory. As a preamble to our philosophical analysis, a sociological analysis will ask the following question: what *is* this condition which we study under the name of international relations? What does it consist of, what are its ingredients? It has three component social elements:

1. *International anarchy*: the multiplicity of sovereign states acknowledging no political superior. Politics here are not 'government'; they presuppose the absence of government.
2. *Habitual intercourse*: expressed in the institutions of diplomacy, international legal rules, commerce, etc.

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* [Ed.] Wight gave this lecture at the Institut Universitaire de Hautes Études Internationales in Geneva in February 1961. It was published posthumously in *Review of International Studies*, 13(3) (July 1987), pp. 221–227, and subsequently republished, with some corrections in the text and the notes, as an appendix to *Four Seminal Thinkers in International Theory: Machiavelli, Grotius, Kant and Mazzini*, ed. Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (London: Oxford University Press, 2005).

3. *Moral solidarity*: the communion deeper than politics and economics, it is psychological and cultural, expressed in such phrases as the 'society of states', the 'family of nations', 'world public opinion', and 'mankind'.

To each of these elements there corresponds a way of looking at international relations. It may be by temperament and bias, it may be by intellectual conviction. Everybody is inclined to give greater importance and value to one or another of these three elements and in consequence one can trace three—at least three—coherent patterns of thought about international relations, two of which are indeed self-conscious intellectual traditions. To illustrate this, let us enquire into the nature of international society.

The First Pattern

The most fundamental question you can ask in international theory is, 'What is international society?', just as the central question in political theory is, 'What is a State?'. Thinkers who emphasize the element of international anarchy in international relations answer this quite simply: Nothing. A fiction. An illusion. *Non est*. The first to make it explicit is probably Hobbes. Hobbes was certainly the first to make the equation between international relations and the state of nature. In the famous ch. 13 of *Leviathan* he anticipates the question whether the state of nature, as he describes it, ever existed. He points first to American Indians, and second to 'Kings, and Persons of Soveraigne authority, [who] because of their Independency, are in continuall jealousies, and in the state and posture of Gladiators'.[1] This equation, that the state of nature = international relations, that sovereign states in their mutual relations are in a pre-contractual condition, passes from Hobbes into the general stream of public law and political theory.

But there is a second equation: international relations may = the state of nature, but what is the state of nature? *Bellum omnium contra omnes*. The state of nature = international relations = the war of all against all; therefore there cannot be an international society. Society is established by the contract; international relations is pre-contractual; the term 'Society of Nations' is contradictory. This is implicitly the position of Machiavelli and Bodin and explicitly that of Spinoza, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Fichte and most legal positivists.

Bismarck, for example, showed impatience when the words 'Christendom' or 'Europe' were introduced into diplomatic language. Once, when Gorchakov was urging on him the view that the Eastern Question was not a German or Russian but a *European* question, Bismarck replied: 'I have always found the word Europe

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[1] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1914), p. 65.

on the lips of those politicians who wanted something from other Powers which they dared not demand in their own names.'[2] At the core of this pattern of thought is the doctrine that power is anterior to society, law, justice, and morality. E. H. Carr in *The Twenty Years' Crisis* restates the Hobbesian position: 'Any international moral order must rest on some hegemony of power.'[3] Here is Hobbes: '…before the names of Just, and Unjust can have place, there must be some coërcive Power.'[4] This position is also expressed by Morgenthau, when he says: '[a]bove the national societies there exists no international society so integrated as to be able to define for them the concrete meaning of justice or equality, as national societies do for their individual members.'[5] For this line of thought the question: 'What is international society?' admits of only one answer: Nothing!—until there is a world state.

This was the governing conception behind the United Nations Charter. The essentials of the Charter were agreed and drafted at the Dumbarton Oaks Conference in September 1944, when international relations were a state of war. The Third Reich and Japanese Empire were raging undefeated and nobody was confident of peace within a year. Hobbes argued that the only remedy for the state of war was an unlimited contract, whereby we all reduce our wills to one will, and appoint one man, or assembly of men, to act on our behalf in those things which concern the common peace and safety.[6] This is precisely what signatories of the Charter did by Articles 24, 25, and 48. The Smutsian preamble to the Charter, which is in another tradition of thinking, was tacked on later; and it was only later again that it appeared that the Hobbesian sovereign of the United Nations was a schizophrenic paralytic incapable of action, so that the United Nations has never worked as it was intended. [Written in 1961: Eds (Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter).]

The Second Pattern

But the two Hobbesian equations I have mentioned are not inseparable. It is possible to accept the identification of international relations with the state of nature without accepting the description of the state of nature as *bellum omnium contra omnes*. This is what Locke apparently does in the *Second Treatise of Civil*

[2] Quoted by A. J. P. Taylor in *Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1955), p. 167.

[3] E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1939), p. 213.

[4] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 74.

[5] Hans J. Morgenthau, *In Defense of the National Interest: A Critical Examination of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, l 951), p. 34. Cf. Hans J. Morgenthau, *Dilemmas of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 80–1.

[6] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, p. 89.

Government. He repeats Hobbes' argument that if you are skeptical about a state of nature ever having existed you need only look at interstate relations,[7] but he goes on to argue, for a whole chapter, that whereas the state of war is a state of enmity and mutual destruction, the state of nature is a state of goodwill and mutual assistance. I say 'what Locke *apparently does*' because Professor Richard Cox's book on Locke[8] has placed a large question mark over the traditional interpretation of Locke, but perhaps we may still accept the public Locke at his face value.

Grotius likewise conceded that the social condition was inaugurated by the social contract but argued that the pre-contractual state of nature was the condition of sociability—the capacity for becoming social. Suarez argued that although every state is a perfect community, it is none the less a member of a universal body, this membership being the basis of international law, and with nice precision he described the universal body as '*unitas quasi politica et moralis*'.[9]

This is the sort of answer you will expect from those who emphasize our second component of international relations, habitual intercourse, institutions of diplomacy and law. Sovereign states, they will say, do form a society; they do not exist in a political or cultural vacuum, but in continuous political relations with one another. It is a society which must be understood on its own terms and not by comparison with domestic society, a society governed less by force, as the thinkers of the first group may hold, than by custom. It is a society with a system of law that is crude and not centrally enforced but still true law, a society without a government but regulated by certain special institutions such as diplomacy, the balance of power, and alliances.

Locke's conception of the state of nature leads to a different kind of contract from Hobbes'. If the state of nature is not so beastly, civil society need not be so severe, and the social contract can be limited as was the Covenant compared with the Charter. The men who drafted the Covenant (excluding Wilson) did not think international life had broken down, only that it had suffered unusual interruption, and had shown it was deficient in means for the pacific settlement of international disputes, and what was needed was (in Locke's words) 'umpirage…for…ending all differences that may arise amongst' states.[10] For this a limited contract was sufficient. Signatories did not surrender their natural liberties, their sovereignty; states simply undertook to limit the exercise of their sovereignty, the unanimity rule was not abrogated. If we can detect the sardonic smile of Hobbes between the

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[7] John Locke, *Two Treatises of Civil Government* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1924), para.14, p. 124.

[8] Richard H. Cox, *Locke on War and Peace* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960).

[9] Francisco Suárez, *Tractatus de Legibus, ac Dea Legislatore*, 1612, bk II, ch. XIX, in *Selections from Three Works of Francisco Suárez, S. J.*, ed. James Brown Scott (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1944), vol. I, p. 190. [Eds (Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter): The translation of this phrase as 'a moral and political unity (as it were)' may be found in vol. II, p. 348.]

[10] Locke, *Two Treatises*, para. 212, p. 225.

lines of the Charter, in the Covenant we may discern the more bland and amiable assumptions of traditional Locke.

The Third Pattern

Now there is a third, quite distinct way of conceiving international society and it is related to those who tend to emphasize in international relations the element of moral solidarity. They will answer the question, 'What is international society?' in such a fashion as this: international society is none other than mankind, encumbered and thwarted by an archaic fiction of an international society composed of sovereign states. States are *not* persons, they have no wills but the wills of the individuals who manage their affairs, and behind the legal façade of the fictitious Society of Nations is the true international society composed of men. Now, this much is not in contradiction with the second complex of ideas which we have just been noticing: you will find Grotius speaking of *societas generis humani* more often than of *societas gentium*.

But this third pattern of ideas is distinguished by two master-premises: first, that the existing state of affairs, the existing arrangements of international life, are invalid and illegitimate; second, that they are going to be modified or swept away by the course of events itself. Both these premises are religious in nature. The first expresses the impulse to eradicate sin and suffering, which are condemned by being identified, or that austere moral concern which made Kant argue, in *Rechtslehre*, that if nations were in the state of nature it was their duty to pass out of it, and 'all international rights…are purely *provisional* until the state of nature has been abandoned'.[11] The second premise, that the course of events itself is tending to bring about desired change, shows a desire for a theodicy. Every age has wanted to vindicate the justice of the universe in view of the existence of evil, but it is a peculiar modern manifestation of this desire to believe that the vindication will be accomplished by the historical process itself. The belief in progress, historical inevitability, and the linear development of human affairs, whether evolutionary or catastrophic, is now often named 'historicism'.

'Historicism' is a word that has changed its meaning since Meinecke wrote the history of *Historismus*. Then it had its original sense, of the doctrine that all values are historically conditioned, that reality itself is a historical process, and that history can teach nothing except philosophical acceptance of change. Now it has a new sense: the doctrine that history has a purpose and direction, that its movement is largely predictable, and that it can (under proper interpretation) teach

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[11] Immanuel Kant, 'The Metaphysics of Morals', sec. 61, in *Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss and tr. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 171; italics in the original.

everything we need to know about life and prescribe our duties. In this new sense it is a label for Hegel and Marx, Spengler and Toynbee.

There are two historical agencies which, in this pattern of thinking, promote desirable international change. Kant, who is responsible for so much else in modern thought, was as far as I know the first to describe these historical agencies in this context.

First was what he called 'the commercial spirit', 'which cannot exist along with war, and which sooner or later controls every people'.[12] We should probably translate it as the growing material interdependence of mankind, due to the economic unification of the world and industrialization. Its greatest English prophet was Cobden, whose motto was 'Free Trade, Peace, Goodwill among Nations' and in whose political writings and speeches the expected consequences of growing material interdependence are made plain.

Second was what Kant called 'the spirit of enlightenment'. 'Enlightenment... must ever draw mankind away from the egoistic expansive tendencies of its rulers once they understand their own advantage.'[13] We might translate it as the growing moral interdependence of mankind due to education, cultural exchange, and intellectual standardization. It is manifested in the formation of a world public opinion, which some see as the animating principle of the United Nations.

Kant's imaginary treaty of Perpetual Peace contained a secret article, that before going to war, governments must consult the maxims of the philosophers. It is not to be expected (he says) that kings should philosophize or philosophers become kings, but kings can let philosophers speak freely, 'because this is indispensable for both in order to clarify their business.'[14] Kant was the subject of a Prussian monarch whose minister of education had not allowed him to speak freely: he himself would have liked to be on the Brains Trust of a President F. D. Roosevelt or on the Democratic Advisory Council, Committee on Foreign Policy, of a President Kennedy. This 'secret article' is the expression and possibly the direct inspiration of the Wilsonian belief that enlightened public opinion, instructed public opinion in all countries, will promote peace and goodwill in international affairs.

It must be noticed here that this third pattern of ideas is not characterized by *recognizing* these two historical agencies. The growing material and moral interdependence of mankind as historical tendencies or trends would scarcely be denied by any thinker. But while a thinker of the first class might suppose that these trends would lead to more savage internecine conflicts culminating in a

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[12]   Immanuel Kant, 'Perpetual Peace', first published in 1795, in *Kant's Principles of Politics*, tr. and ed. W. Hastie (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1891), first supplement, p. 115.

[13]   Immanuel Kant, 'Idea for a Universal History with Cosmopolitan Intent', 8th principle, in *The Philosophy of Kant: Immanuel Kant's Moral and Political Writings*, ed. Carl J. Friedrich (New York: Modern Library, 1949), p. 128.

[14]   Kant, 'Eternal Peace', second addition, in *The Philosophy of Kant*, ed. C. J. Friedrich, p. 456.

world despotism, and a thinker of the second class would believe that they posed continually new and agonizing problems, the historicist believes that these trends carry within themselves the solution of the problems they pose and will lead in the desired direction.

Given these premises, our question 'What is international society?' appears foolishly academic: 'The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point is to *change* it.'[15] Very well then: change it how? By bringing out its essential nature, by making explicit what is implicit, by eradicating evil and making it virtuous, by clearing away the irrelevant historical clutter of states and forms to produce the regularity, uniformity, and homogeneity of virtue. That is, by redrawing the map.

What kind of uniformity? Here there are two answers. First, to assimilate all existing states, members of international society, to a pattern of conformity which alone confers legitimacy, and to eradicate inconsistencies. An early example is Kant's *Perpetual Peace*. He works out an ideal, make-believe treaty of eternal peace. Its first definitive article is that the constitution of each state should be republican, that is, what we should call constitutional. But the principle that members of international society should be doctrinally uniform can be used by ideologists of more than one kind.

Kant's principle was put into effect in a counter-revolutionist sense by Alexander and Metternich in the Holy Alliance, and for purposes of political theory it is necessary to define counter-revolutionism as a mode of revolutionism. Mazzini gave the principle a violent push in the opposite direction, so that it swung to a more extreme point than with Kant: that there would be no valid international society till all its members were nation-states. This was the principle of national self-determination which triumphed in 1919. It was connected with Wilson's original demand that the League be a league of democratic states, which had its counterpart in the initial idea that the United Nations was to be a league of peace-loving states. This produced as a by-product the attempted international ostracism of Spain in 1946. Both the League and the United Nations were originally exclusive and limited bodies, whose membership depended on a qualifying test; but both became inclusive and unlimited bodies, admission to which depended on no scrutiny, and thus became degraded.

The same principle gave its driving force to Afro-Asian anti-colonialism. As Sukarno, host at the Bandung Conference of 1955, said then: 'Wherever, whenever, and however it appears, colonialism is an evil thing, and one which must be eradicated from the earth.'[16] One is not surprised to learn that Mazzini was held

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[15] Karl Marx, 'Theses on Feuerbach', no. 11, in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1938), p. 199, and ed. C. J. Arthur (New York: International Publishers, 1970), p. 123.

[16] President Sukarno's opening speech at the Bandung Conference, 18 April 1955, *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 1955/6, p. 14181.

in respect by Nehru, and is widely read in south-east Asia. But there is an alternative to the Kantian and Mazzinian line of reducing all members of international society to uniformity.

A more radical change and more drastic uniformity lies in the direction of the Cosmopolis. A Cosmopolis too is immanent in the existing state-structure. Behind the empirical historical members of international society lies mankind, the City of Man, the City of the World, the Great Society, *Civitas Maxima*, the Parliament of Man, and the Federation of the World. The supreme exponent of this view is Dante. *De Monarchia* presents a tight argument, a completely satisfying piece of intellectual architecture:

1. Mankind is a unity, united by the faculty of reason, capable of pursuing the same ends through the same channels: 'humanity'.
2. Mankind can only fulfil itself under a single government.
3. Providence designed for this rule the Roman Empire.

Today we accept the first two points, and can easily substitute for the Roman Empire either the United States or the Soviet Union. If we accept Gilson's view, Dante was the first person to conceive of mankind as a universal *temporal* community, a universal community capable of and requiring a World Federation or the World State.[17]

This idea, whether directly from Dante or not, has haunted international thought. In Vitoria, the earliest international theorist after Machiavelli,[18] and Alberico Gentili[19] you have the idea of mankind as a great society whose majority vote can override individual nations. In Calvin and the *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos* you have the idea of this great society having a right of intervention against a non-conformist member,[20] and Christian Wolff (1679–1754) who was Professor at Halle made the fiction of the *civitas maxima*, of which states were citizens and which could exercise authority over them, the basis of his theory of international law.[21] Kant too finds the idea of human progress in a 'continuously growing state consisting of various nations' to which the 'federative union' of states of the *Perpetual Peace* is a second-best.[22]

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[17] Étienne Gilson, *Dante the Philosopher*, tr. David Moore (London: Sheed and Ward, 1952), pp. 164–6.

[18] See James Brown Scott, *The Spanish Origin of International Law: Francisco de Vitoria and his Law of Nations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), p. 165 and appendix C.

[19] Alberico Gentili, *De Jure Belli Libri Tres* (Hanan: Guilielimus Antonius, 1598).

[20] See Otto Gierke, *Natural Law and the Theory of Society, 1500–1800*, tr. Ernest Barker (London: Cambridge University Press, 1934), vol. II, p. 283, note 62.

[21] Christian Wolff, *Institutiones Juris Naturae et Gentium* (Halle: Prostat in officina Rengeriana, 1754).

[22] Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace*, ed. Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis and New York: Liberal Arts Press and Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1957), pp. 19, 31.

Philip II of Spain believed it his duty to suppress heresy and impose doctrinal uniformity not only in his own vast dominions but throughout Christendom as well, and there hovered before the eyes of some of his diplomats and propagandists the mirage of a '*monarquia del mundo*'. The first French Republic imposed Rights of Man wherever its armies could conquer. Hitler and after him Stalin did the same [with their ideologies] in the parts of Europe they conquered. The same aim, of imposing uniformity on the state-system by transforming it into a universal satellite state-system, and this as a preliminary to absorbing the satellite state-system into a universal state, has inspired, however dimly, the successive waves of doctrinal imperialism that have characterized international history from Philip II of Spain down to Mr Khrushchev.[23]

Patterns and Traditions

If we speak of each of these three types of international theory as *patterns of thought* we approach them from a philosophical standpoint. We shall be likely to note the logical interrelation, the logical coherence of the complex of thought, and how acceptance of any one unit-idea is likely to entail logically most of the others, so that the whole is capable of being a system of political philosophy. If we speak of them as *traditions of thought* we consider them historically as embodied in and handed down by writers and statesmen. Here we are more likely to notice illogicalities and discontinuities because exigencies of political life often override logic. We shall find all kinds of intermediate positions. Interesting academic questions arise, such as whether Rousseau's international theory is contradictory to his political theory; how Kant, starting from acceptance of the Hobbesian doctrine of the state of nature, reached totally opposite conclusions; why it is that you so often find the jump from a shrewd realistic appraisal of international politics to a sentimental idealism, even pacifism, in Tolstoy, Kennan, or Butterfield.

It is tempting to develop a psychological typology supposing that each pattern of thought corresponds to a temperament. Coleridge has a tripartite distinction between the politics of sensation (Hobbes), of reason (Rousseau), and of understanding (S. T. Coleridge and Woodrow Wilson). Max Weber analyses three qualities in a politician: a passionate devotion to a cause, a feeling of responsibility, and a sense of proportion. If we brought all this in we might speedily have a comprehensive psychological theory on which to base the understanding of international relations. But I speak of this as a temptation. I only feel capable of analysing political ideas—not psychologies—and when I scrutinize my own psyche I seem to find all these three ways of thought within me.

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[23] See Elliot R. Goodman, *The Soviet Design for a World State* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960).

All I am saying is that I find these traditions of thought in international history dynamically interweaving, but always distinct, and I think they can be seen in mutual tension and conflict underneath the formalized ideological postures of our present discontents. It may be that China is passing out of her first revolutionary fervour into the phase where Machiavellian postulates of national interest will predominate over revolutionary expansion. The USA may yet prove itself a more Kantian society than the Soviet Union in its formal policies, as it seemed to be doing in Dulles' time. The Russia of Khrushchev may show itself more Grotian than the USA or Britain in its acceptance of the principle of seeking a common interest in the limitation of war.

Perhaps the mere formulation of such hypotheses implies a faint ray of hope.

3

Western Values in International Relations

Western values are commonly identified with the freedom and self-fulfilment of the individual.*,** The history of Western Civilization is thus seen as primarily the development and organization of liberty, especially in the form of the tradition of constitutional government which descends from Aristotle through Aquinas to Locke and the Founding Fathers of the United States. The aim of the present paper is not to trench upon this familiar ground, but to follow some of its lines of thought into the fields of diplomacy and international relations.

Two assumptions may be remarked at the outset. 'Western values' is an awkward phrase because it is bound up with the Cold War. I assume that it is *not* our present purpose to define 'what we are fighting for in the Cold War'. By Western values we shall not mean, what all Western men believe in or ought to believe in. Western men are perhaps more various in their range of beliefs than the men of any other culture. They may be pacifists, Roman Catholics, scientific humanists, or Marxists. It is likely that the more definite a man's beliefs, the less satisfied will he be to hear them described as 'Western values'. At best, Western values are the highest common factor of the range of beliefs by which Western men live. At worst, the phrase is the label of the undifferentiated, the waste-paper basket for half-believers in casual creeds, like 'C. of E.' for British Army recruits.[1] I assume, then, that we discuss Western values without the impulses of personal commitment: that even if we were able to agree completely on a description of Western values, some of us might say 'My values are different from this': that our concern is detached analysis, not to hammer out a creed.

A deeper question may be asked. Is the capacity for detached self-scrutiny itself a Western quality, the fruit of a 'Western value'? Is there a correlation between Western values and toleration, self-analysis, the scientific outlook? There are those who argue that the West will not be able to resist the attack from Communism unless the West discovers or rediscovers a creed as powerful as Communism: that only ideas can destroy ideas, that if Marx is to be beaten at all,

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* [Ed.] Wight published this chapter in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966, and London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), pp. 89–131.

** Reproduced from *Diplomatic Investigations*, by Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, published by Allen and Unwin. Copyright ©1966 by the Author.

[1] [Ed.: 'C. of E.' is an abbreviation for the Church of England.]

he will be beaten by Thomas Jefferson, or Thomas Aquinas. But it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to formulate a creed that will be subscribed by a Dulles, a Maritain, a Croce, a Russell, a Waddington and a Sartre. Any such creed will exclude some of them, thereby stamping them arbitrarily as un-Western. There are those, on the other hand, who argue that the common ground in the West is the very agreement to differ, the critical spirit, the tradition of questioning what is traditional; and that this liberal scepticism is both less dangerous to mankind than Communist dogma, and has greater intrinsic vitality. The present paper will not try to say anything on this profound issue, but we may recognize that it is at our elbow.

Secondly, it is assumed that there is no simple way of deducing Western values from Western practice. For example, the tradition of British diplomacy is by itself a weak authority for Western values. This tradition is likely to be construed less favourably by non-British Westerners than it may be by ourselves. And there are other traditions of diplomacy—the French or the American—which have as much right as the British to be regarded as the bearers of Western values. Is the traditional American doctrine of recognition and non-recognition in international law less Western than the traditional British doctrine? There is not a simple answer.

We can perhaps discern the values of a society, not so much in the record of its practice, nor even in the simple doctrines which, like those of international law, are mainly a codification of practice, as in the history of its ideas. This paper will try to indicate a certain coherent pattern of ideas that may be detected from time to time in Western statesmen, political philosophers and jurists. For preliminary identification it may be described as the Whig or 'constitutional' tradition in diplomacy, and it is exemplified in different ways by Suarez, Grotius, Locke, Halifax, Callières, Montesquieu, Burke, Gentz, Coleridge, Castlereagh, Tocqueville, Lincoln, Gladstone, Cecil of Chelwood, Ferrero, Brierly, Harold Nicolson, Churchill, Spaak. The names are merely illustrative. It is ideas and assumptions we are concerned with, and their logical interdependence; and this commits us to the dangerous method of tracing ideas through a variety of writers and politicians without dwelling on their place in each's complex aggregate of doctrine. We are not primarily concerned with the gulf between Hooker and Locke, or the problem of the development or contradiction in Burke's political philosophy, or whether Gladstone's radicalism is a matter more of his language or his thought.

This pattern of ideas is persistent and recurrent. Sometimes eclipsed and distorted, it has constantly reappeared and reasserted its authority, so that it may even seem something like a consensus of Western diplomatic opinion. As Guizot said, 'C'est aussi une majorité que celle qui se compte par générations.'[2] It is

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[2]   [Ed.: 'It is also a majority that is counted by generations.']

likewise a coherent pattern. It will be necessary to try to break it up into what Lovejoy (in *The Great Chain of Being*) calls its unit-ideas; but these unit-ideas are generally found in mutual association, the reason perhaps being that diplomatic theory is among the least profound and individual branches of political philosophy. Nevertheless, there are other patterns of ideas in international history for which persistence, recurrence and coherence can be claimed. But there may be reasons for thinking that the tradition we are at present considering is specially representative of Western values. One is its explicit connection with the political philosophy of constitutional government. The other is its quality of a *via media*. This pattern of ideas usually appears as the *juste milieu* between definable extremes, whether it is Grotius saying: 'A remedy must be found for those that believe that in war nothing is lawful, and for those for whom all things are lawful in war'³ or Halifax's classic exposition of the balance of power in *The Character of a Trimmer*, or Gladstone's conception of the European Concert seen as a middle way between the radical non-interventionism of Cobden and Bright and the *Realpolitik* of Beaconsfield and Bismarck, or the policy of collective security between the World Wars as a middle way between the pacifists and disarmers on the one side and the imperialists turned appeasers on the other. The golden mean can be an overcautious and ignoble principle as a guide to action, but it may also be an index to the accumulated experience of a civilization which has valued disciplined scepticism and canonized prudence as a political virtue. The disposition to think of true policy as a difficult path between seductive but simplified alternatives is a likely, though not of course an infallible, sign of the tradition we are concerned with. 'We must neither count upon its immediate efficacy, nor reject the hopes that it awakens.'⁴

This paper will try to outline the following figures in the pattern:

1. International Society
2. The Maintenance of Order
3. Intervention
4. International Morality.

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³ *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, Prolegomena, para. 29.

⁴ Charles de Visscher, *Theory and Reality in Public International Law* (Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 129. The configuration of thought may be seen in John Strachey's last book, *On the Prevention of War* (Macmillan, 1962). 'It would however be a disastrous error to suppose that there is nothing between leaving things as they are and the creation of a fully-developed world authority. It will be suggested below that what may yet be possible is the gradual emergence of an elementary sense of common purpose, in a strictly limited field, between the Russian and American Governments.' (p. 195).

1. **International Society**

The primary questions of international theory concern the nature of international society and of international law. (Sociologists have not agreed on a satisfactory distinction in usage between the words 'society' and 'community', and in this paper, as in most of the literature of international law, they will be used interchangeably.)

Ever since Machiavelli and Hobbes there have been those who take the view that there is no such thing as international society: that international relations constitute an anarchy whose social elements are negligible. The doctrine that the state is the ultimate unit of political society entails the doctrine that there is no wider society to embrace states. In this conclusion, in the nineteenth century, the separate influences of Hegel, of Social Darwinism and of legal positivism converged. It is true that there exists, empirically, a network of relationships which used to be called 'the diplomatic community': a system of resident ambassadors reciprocally recognized which antedates the formulation of the question whether international society exists. To the diplomatic system was added, in the nineteenth century, the network of functional international organizations beginning with the Telegraphic and Postal Unions. But it is possible to deny that the diplomatic system and the international organizations constitute a society. Some, perhaps most, of the greatest diplomatists have made this denial. 'Qui parle Europe a tort, notion géographique: *Who is Europe*?' Bismarck noted irritably on a memorandum by Gorchakov.[5] 'Some one has said before me,' wrote Saburov to Jomini: '"The European Concert is only a dream of the idealists. There is no Europe; there is a Russia, a Germany, a France, an England". In order that there may be a Europe, there must be a Confederation obeying a single will. But there are five of them (sc. the Great Powers).'[6] Many diplomatists have written with similar scepticism of the notion that the League of Nations or the United Nations afford evidence of an international society. Indeed, an interesting development in international theory since the Second World War has been the spread of this scepticism among those who have hitherto been the professional supporters of the notion of an international community, the international lawyers themselves. The American jurist P. E. Corbett may be quoted:

'Consensus is the life of society, and the dominant characteristic of our world is conflict, not consensus. The question may of course be asked whether it has ever been otherwise. The vaunted unity of medieval Europe was a unity of culture among intellectuals, not a unity of purpose or of action among the powerful.

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[5] *Die Grosse Politik*, vol. ii, p. 87. [Ed.: 'Who speaks of Europe is wrong, it is a geographical notion*: Who is Europe?*']

[6] J. Y. Simpson, *The Saburov Memoirs* (Cambridge University Press, 1929), p. 136.

The vaunted peace of the nineteenth century was kept in anxious suspense by the maneuvers of competing alliances, when it was not interrupted by bloody wars. At the present time, the spectacle presented is not that of one society but of two great power-concentrations struggling by every means short of declared general war to increase their strength for a feared battle to the death. Over the contest hovers, as in all ages, a concept of society formulated and fostered by intellectuals. This is not a reflection of reality, but a goal and hope of good men. To present the hope as a reality renders no service to humanity, because it obscures the complex obstacles that still stand in the way of realization.'[7]

If international society is a fiction or an illusion, then international law is radically different from municipal law, law as generally understood. It is only the sum of the principles and rules which states—the *real* political units—have agreed to regard as obligatory; and the basis of international obligation is purely contractual. This is the doctrine of legal positivism. It follows that the subjects of international law can only be independent states. The only international persons are these collective persons, of whom it is postulated that they have a moral nature analogous with that of individuals, making them capable of enjoying rights and assuming obligations. It might even be said of legal positivism (which it must be added has been for two centuries the orthodoxy of international legal philosophy) that by recognizing no international society except the society of sovereign states, it denies the existence of an effective international society.

At the opposite extreme, the nature of the international community is conceived in a different way by those who believe that the society of states is the *unreal* thing—a complex of legal fictions and obsolescent diplomatic forms which conceals, obstructs and oppresses the *real* society of individual men and women, the *civitas maxima*. On this view, international society is none other than the community of mankind. If the community of mankind is not yet manifested, yet it is latent, half glimpsed and groping for its necessary fulfilment. The prototypal *a priori* argument is provided by Dante. The specific capacity of man consists in his possible intellect; the task of mankind is to fulfil the total capacity of the possible intellect all the time; universal peace is the best condition for fulfilling this task. The argument of Kant's *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht* is curiously similar. Man is the only rational animal; nature intends the full development of his rational faculties in the species, not the individual; nature accomplishes the development of all the faculties by means of the antagonism of men in society, which in the end becomes the cause of a lawful order in society. The difference lies between Dante's 'proprium opus humani generis' and

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⁷ P. E. Corbett, *Law and Society in the Relations of States* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1951), pp. 51–52.

Kant's 'Naturabsicht, die ihnen selbst unbekannt ist'.[8] Like Turgot before him and like most thinkers since, Kant clarified or simplified the mysteries of Providence into a perceptible linear movement of history that would bring about, irrespective of individual human strivings, the fruition of collective human aims. Hence the belief, common in varying degrees to the Huguenots, the Jacobins, Mazzini, President Wilson and the Communists, that the whole of diplomatic history has groaned and travailed together until now, and that the community of mankind, like the kingdom of God, is the glory that shall be revealed, is within reach, is at hand.

Such beliefs mean that the existing society of states is to dissolve and merge into the world community, cosmopolis. There are various elements in the expected transformation, some complementary, some alternative. Either the society of states will become co-operative and homogeneous through the universal acceptance of some standard of legitimacy, so that all states will become Catholic, or Communist, or national, or republican. Or the society of states will federate and form a world government. Or the principles of transformation will establish themselves first, in accordance with the law of uneven development, in a single country, whether an insignificant city-state like sixteenth-century Geneva or in a Great Power like eighteenth-century France or 20th-century Russia. This state thus becomes the bearer and exemplar of the new order, and its relations with the unregenerate society of states will reproduce the relations of the Church militant with the secular and infidel world. There follows no single or simple notion of international law. One set of beliefs is governed by the idea that the whole is prior to the part, that the greater includes the less, and that the state is or ought to be subordinate to the international community. This will tend to minimize the difference between international and municipal law. The word 'law' denotes a system of rules which is created and modified by a legislature, interpreted and applied by a judiciary, and enforced by an executive; and if these organs appear rudimentary or non-existent in diplomatic life, the task is to create them, since the urgent need of international relations is to establish the rule of law. Another set of beliefs is governed by the idea of the impassable gulf between believers and infidels, the elect and the reprobate, and the impossibility of co-operation between them. Therefore the revolutionary state opts out of the existing law of nations because it is defective and unjust, or observes it as a matter of expediency not of legal obligation. A true international law awaits the final transformation of international

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[8] Dante, *De Monarchia*, book i, ch. 4 *ad init*; Kant, *Idee*, first paragraph (*Werke*, Academy edition, vol. viii, p. 17). [Ed.: Donald Nicholl translated Dante's phrase 'proprium opus humani generis' as 'the task proper to mankind', while William Hastie translated Kant's phrase 'Naturabsicht, die ihnen selbst unbekannt ist' as 'a Purpose of Nature which is unknown to them'. Dante, *Monarchy*, trans. by Donald Nicholl (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1954), p. 8; and Immanuel Kant, *Kant's Principles of Politics: Including His Essay on Perpetual Peace, A Contribution to Political Science*, trans. by William Hastie (Edinburgh: Clark, 1891), p. 4.]

society; meanwhile it is adumbrated by the diplomatic principles of the revolutionary state itself. When President Washington's administration in 1793 accused Genêt, the French Convention's ambassador to the United States, of proceedings contrary to the spirit of the doctrines of Grotius and Vattel, Genêt replied that he knew nothing of Grotius and Vattel and that his conduct was conformable to the doctrines of the French constitution. 'This was either ignorance, or design; if the one, it can form no case; but if the other, it was almost a direct notice, that the French meant to retire from the obedience they had paid to the Code of the European Law.'[9]

Between the belief that the society of states is non-existent or at best a polite fiction, and the belief that it is the chrysalis for the community of mankind, lies a more complex conception of international society. It does not derogate from the moral claims of states, conceding that they are, in Suarez's phrase, *communitates perfectae* (exercising valid political authority);[10] but it sees them as relatively, not absolutely, perfect, and as parts of a greater whole. It does not see international society as ready to supersede domestic society; but it notes that international society actually exercises restraints upon its members. Such a conception lacks intellectual conciseness and emotional appeal. The language in which it is stated is necessarily full of qualifications and imprecision. Thus, the famous and noble description of international society in Suarez:

'The human race, though divided into no matter how many different peoples and nations, has for all that a certain unity, a unity not merely physical, but also in a sense political and moral. This is shown by the natural precept of mutual love and mercy, which extends to all men, including foreigners of every way of thinking. Wherefore, though any one state, republic or kingdom be in itself a perfect community and constant in its members, nevertheless each of the states is also a member, in a certain manner, of the world, so far as the human race is concerned.'[11]

'Aliquid unitas…quasi politica et moralis.'[12] Tocqueville has similar language of half-lights and indefinition: 'Cette société des nations où chaque peuple est un citoyen, société toujours un peu barbare, même dans les siècles les plus civilisés,

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[9] Robert Ward, *An Enquiry into the Foundation and History of the Law of Nations in Europe* (1795), vol. i, p. 161 n.

[10] *De Legibus*, book I, ch. vi, section 19, following Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1ª2ªᵉ, qu. 90, art. 2, and Aristotle, *Politics*, book I, ch. i, section 8.

[11] *De Legibus*, book II, ch. xix, section 9.

[12] Cf. Vitoria, *De Potestate Civili*, section xxi, para. 4: 'totus orbis, qui aliquo modo est una respublica' (*Relecciones Teológicas*, ed. Fr. Luis G. Alonso Getino (Madrid, La Rafa, 1933–35), vol ii, p. 207). Brierly, following Professor Barcia Trelles, has suggested that in Suarez the quasi-political and moral unity of mankind, and the state as a *communitas perfecta*, are really two irreconcilable concepts (*The Basis of Obligation in International Law* (Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 362).

quelque effort que l'on fasse pour adoucir et régler les rapports de ceux qui la composent.'[13] Compare the Belgian jurist de Visscher:

> 'If the international community, or more accurately the sense of such a community, finds so little echo in individual consciences, this is less because power obstructs it than because the immense majority of men are still infinitely less accessible to the doubtless real but certainly remote solidarities that it invokes than to the immediate and tangible solidarities that impose themselves upon them in the framework of national life.'[14]

Language so indefinite, and embodying such tension between opposites, is likely to be unsatisfactory to the political and legal scientist: but the school of thought we are considering may claim that it corresponds more accurately to the intractable anomalies and anfractuosities of international experience.

International society, then, on this view, can be properly described only in historical and sociological depth. It is the habitual intercourse of independent communities, beginning in the Christendom of Western Europe and gradually extending throughout the world. It is manifest in the diplomatic system; in the conscious maintenance of the balance of power to preserve the independence of the member-communities; in the regular operations of international law, whose binding force is accepted over a wide though politically unimportant range of subjects; in economic, social and technical interdependence and the functional international institutions established latterly to regulate it. All these presuppose an international social consciousness, a world-wide community-sentiment. The language in which these 'doubtless real but certainly remote solidarities' have been asserted deserves note, both for its strength and its weakness. Two famous examples may be given. One is from Gladstone's speech in the Don Pacifico debate:

> 'There is a further appeal from this House of Parliament to the people of England; but, lastly, there is also an appeal from the people of England to the general sentiment of the civilized world; and I, for my part, am of opinion that England will stand shorn of a chief part of her glory and her pride if she shall be found to have separated herself, through the policy she pursues abroad, from the moral supports which the general and fixed convictions of mankind afford—if the day shall come in which she may continue to excite the wonder and fear of other nations, but in which she shall have no part in their affections and regard.'[15]

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[13] Address to the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, April 3, 1852 (*Oeuvres*, vol. ix, pp. 120–1). [Ed.: 'This society of nations in which each people is a citizen, a society still a little barbarous, even in the most civilized centuries, whatever the effort made to soften and regulate the relations among those who compose it.']

[14] *Theory and Reality in Public International Law*, p. 92.

[15] House of Commons, June 27, 1850 (Hansard, 3rd Series, vol. cxii, col. 589).

The other is from the first *Letter on a Regicide Peace*:

> 'In the intercourse between nations,' wrote Burke, 'we are apt to rely too much on the instrumental part…Men are not tied to one another by paper and seals. They are led to associate by resemblances, by conformities, by sympathies. It is with nations as with individuals. Nothing is so strong a tie of amity between nation and nation as correspondence in laws, customs, manners, and habits of life…The secret, unseen, but irrefragable bond of habitual intercourse holds them together, even when their perverse and litigious nature sets them to equivocate, scuffle, and fight, about the terms of their written obligations.'[16]

What E. H. Carr calls the realist critique of such doctrines is easiest when they are translated into statements of fact. Brierly in 1936 could adduce in support of the international social consciousness the evidence of the mandates system, the minorities treaties, the Nansen Office, the International Red Cross, the ILO,[17] the effort of the great majority of states to enforce the rule of law on Italy when she violated the Covenant, as well as the regional sense of community that binds together severally the Scandinavians, the English-speaking and the Spanish-speaking peoples.[18] But every undergraduate who has taken a course in international relations thinks he can debunk the irrefragability of these bonds. Were not the age of Gladstone and of the League of Nations exceptional and illusory periods of international lull? Did not Brierly's vision overlook the secession from the international community of Russia and Germany? Has not the Cold War swept the whole argument into limbo? Is it not sufficient comment on Burke's picture of the 'commonwealth of Europe' that it was prompted by the need to denounce France for having torn herself from its communion with studied violence?

Yet it might be answered that in the long run Burke's conception of the European community was vindicated, rather than his emotional reaction against the threat to it. European society was more resilient than he feared, more capable of development than he imagined. It withstood French aggression, it tamed the French Revolution, it digested French principles. War does not disprove the existence of international society, because war is followed by peace. Nor even does ideological conflict, because it is followed at a longer interval by ideological accommodation. And this is implied in Burke's own treatment, in *Thoughts on French Affairs*, of the previous international 'revolution of doctrine and theoretick dogma', the Reformation. The Religious Wars, like the French Revolutionary, had

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[16] Burke, *Works*, ed. H. Rogers (Holdsworth, 1842), vol. ii, pp. 298–9.
[17] [Ed.: Founded in October 1919 under the League of Nations, the International Labour Organization (ILO) is the oldest of the specialized agencies of the United Nations.]
[18] *Basis of Obligation in International Law*, pp. 251–3.

been 'a real crisis in the politicks of Europe', but he does not suggest that they had dissolved European society. They had in the end only introduced a little diversity into 'the similitude throughout Europe of religion, laws and manners'.[19] Two elements must be distinguished in Burke's doctrine of international society. One is a broad description of its nature and origin. The other is his linking it with the social and political structure of the Europe he knew, so as to find its indefeasible principle of legitimacy in Christianity and prescription. It was the second theme that made him construe the French Revolution as a wilful act of secession from international society followed by an assault upon it from the outside, instead of a debate within international society which would in the end produce a modified principle of legitimacy. But a hundred years later Westlake, who in fundamental matters was in the tradition of Burke, could put in a striking sentence what had by then become accepted doctrine: 'The international society to which we belong is not one for the mutual insurance of established governments.'[20]

But the case of Burke is not quite disposed of. To speak of the principle of legitimacy being modified, as if the international social consciousness has a changing content, runs the danger of a certain kind of historicism. Is it indefinitely modifiable? Is it the random deposit of wars and settlements, informed by no rational theme? Is there no change or modification conceivable where we could say that international society has abandoned its essential principles, has become wholly other than what it was? In the pattern of ideas we are considering Westlake's principle is complementary to, not inconsistent with, another, which was put in this way by Phillimore:

The first Limitation of the general right, incident to every State, of adopting whatever form of government, whatever political and civil institutions, and whatever rules she may please, is this:

'No State has a right to establish a form of government which is built upon professed principles of hostility to the government of other nations.'[21]

The force of this principle has been unintentionally illustrated by George Kennan. No contemporary writer has argued more persuasively and consistently than Kennan for moral non-interventionism—that one nation cannot judge the interests of another, and one nation has no right to judge the affairs of another. But when he comes to consider the conditions on which we can live in peace with Russia, he writes thus:

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[19] *Works*, vol. i, p. 564; vol. ii, p. 299.
[20] *The Collected Papers of John Westlake on Public International Law,* ed. L. Oppenheim (Cambridge University Press, 1914), p. 124.
[21] Robert Phillimore, *Commentaries upon International Law* (Benning, 1854), vol. i, p. 435.

'What attributes are we, as responsible members of the world community, entitled to look for in the personality of a foreign state, and of Russia in particular?

'We may look, in the first place, for a Russian government which, in contrast to the one we know today, would be tolerant, communicative and forthright in its relations with other states and peoples. It would not take the ideological position that its own purposes cannot finally prosper unless all systems of government not under its control are subverted and eventually destroyed…

'Secondly, while recognizing that the internal system of government is in all essential respects Russia's own business and may well depart drastically from our own, we are entitled to expect that the exercise of governmental authority will stop short of that fairly plain line beyond which lies totalitarianism. Specifically, we may expect that any regime which claims to contrast favourably with that which we have before us today will refrain from enslaving its own labour—industrial and agricultural…In this way, excess of internal authority leads inevitably to unsocial and aggressive conduct as a government among governments, and is a matter of concern to the international community…

'The third thing we may hope from a new Russia is that it will refrain from pinning an oppressive yoke on other peoples who have the instinct and the capacity for national self-assertion…

'These, then, are the things for which an American well-wisher may hope from the Russia of the future: that she lift for ever the Iron Curtain, that she recognize certain limitations to the internal authority of government, and that she abandon, as ruinous and unworthy, the ancient game of imperialist expansion and oppression…If she is prepared to do these things, then Americans will not need to concern themselves more deeply with her nature and purposes; the basic needs of a more stable world order will then have been met, and the area in which a foreign people can usefully have thoughts and suggestions will have been filled.'[22]

This is simply an application of Phillimore's principle. The modest and conciliatory tone cannot disguise the extent of the demand. Nor does it alter the implication of these words that they were written before the death of Stalin. A Russian of

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[22] G. F. Kennan, 'America and the Russian Future', *Foreign Affairs*, April 1951, reprinted in his *American Diplomacy 1900–1950* (University of Chicago Press, 1952), pp. 136–7, 138–40, 143. Macmillan held the same doctrine in his speech to the South African Parliament at Cape Town on February 3, 1960: 'It is the basic principle for our modern Commonwealth that we respect each other's sovereignty in matters of internal policy. At the same time, we must recognize that in this shrinking world in which we live today, the internal policies of each nation may have effects outside it. We may sometimes be tempted to say to each other, "Mind your own business." But in these days I would myself expand the old saying so that it runs: "Mind your own business but mind how it affects my business too"' (*Guardian*, February 4, 1960).

the new dispensation would equally reply: 'Imperialist expansion is not in question: this is your sort of activity. We are agreed on peaceful coexistence. But you ask us to allow the free circulation of corrupting bourgeois influences and imperialist spies among our people; to dismantle the dictatorship of the proletariat; and to cease to believe that Communism is the only road for mankind.' Is it fair to say that Burke's writings against the French Revolution illustrate a central paradox of the view of international society he propounded, that its principles of legitimacy have been modified instead of being dissolved, only because men have been ready to fight that they should undergo no change at all? It is those who have died to prevent modification who have made possible a modification within limits that posterity can accept.

There is one further element in the picture of international society that we are considering. It does not easily accommodate the strict doctrine that the only international persons, the only subjects of international law, are states. In international legal practice there have always been anomalies, and it has seemed that the laws of diplomatic privilege, of extradition, of piracy, of prize, have regarded the individual as the subject of rights and duties, enforceable by or against him. Explaining or reconciling these anomalies with the orthodox doctrine has been a useful field for examination questions. Breaches in the doctrine have multiplied as the doctrine has hardened. Not only certain individuals but certain institutions other than states have attained a rudimentary international personality, reminiscent of the crusading Orders of the Middle Ages. The great chartered corporations, like the East India Company and the British South Africa Company, seemed, although subject in relation to their own government, to be sovereign in relation to the barbarians they treated with. The status of the Pope from 1870 to 1929 was an interesting problem, when the only generally accepted definition of his position was the Italian Law of Guarantees. 'An Italian statute,' wrote T. J. Lawrence, 'cannot confer international personality; but the tacit consent of a large number of states to treat a given prelate as if he possessed some of the attributes of an international person puts him in a very different position from that of an ordinary individual.'[23] The public international unions that multiplied from the end of the nineteenth century were accorded by treaties what seemed a quasi-personality in international law. The Central American Court of Justice instituted in 1907 had jurisdiction to hear a claim by an individual against a state. The League of Nations possessed rights and duties and appeared to be an international person *sui generis*.[24] The United Nations and its organs, the partial recognition of individuals by the Declaration on Human Rights, and the urgent problem of

[23] *The Principles of International Law* (Macmillan, 7th edition, 1925), pp. 76–7. Cf. A. Pearce Higgins, *Studies in International Law and Relations* (Cambridge University Press, 1928), ch. iv.
[24] Oppenheim, *International Law*, vol. i, para. 167c; W. E. Hall, *A Treatise on International Law* (8th edition, 1924), pp. 32, 72.

stateless persons, have multiplied such confusions and emphasized the defects of the doctrine of exclusive state-personality.

But this doctrine only became definite with Wolff and Vattel in the eighteenth century, in whose writings the idea of the *jus gentium* as the basis of international law fades and is replaced by the notion of the abstract personality of the state as the sole titulary of rights. An earlier tradition saw the princes and subjects of different states as all bound together by the obligations of the *jus gentium*. Such doctrine was less clear-cut and intellectually satisfactory than that which superseded it, but more loose, flexible and true to the variety of international life. In Grotius's description of international society there is a fruitful imprecision. *Communis societas generis humani*, *communis illa ex humano genere constans societas*, *humana societas*, *magna illa communitas*, *magna illa universitas*, *magna illa gentium societas*, *mutua gentium inter se societas*, *illa mundi civitas*, *societas orbis*— such is his range of language. Are kings or peoples or individuals the members of this ambiguous society? exclaims the positivist in irritation. All were. Nor was this tradition entirely eclipsed by the orthodox doctrine of state-personality. Perhaps it might be said that it survived among the lawyers who saw international law rather as a legitimate child of political philosophy than as a recalcitrant vassal of legal science. It may be traced in the attempt to develop an *a priori* jurisprudence by James Lorimer, who held the Chair of the Law of Nature and of Nations at Edinburgh from 1865 to 1890. It is seen in the doctrine of T. J. Lawrence that 'there are grades and degrees among the subjects of International Law'.[25] It was admirably expressed by Westlake as the first of his principles of international law:

> '1. The society of states, having European civilization, or the international society, is the most comprehensive form of society among men, but it is among men that it exists. States are its immediate, men its ultimate members. The duties and rights of states are only the duties and rights of the men who compose them.'[26]

It is represented more recently by those like Brierly and Philip Jessup, who have argued that a broadening of the notion of international personality is needed both to bring international law into closer relation with political experience, and to develop and strengthen the effectiveness of the law itself.

2. The Maintenance of Order

If there is no international society, then international relations are not only the state of nature, but also the state of nature Hobbes described. There is no call to

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[25] *Principles of International Law*, p. 47.   [26] *Collected Papers*, p. 78.

maintain order, there is only a struggle for survival—which may lead in the end to the *creation* of an order through the survival of a single strongest Power which has subordinated its rivals. Security, on these premises, is necessarily exclusive, and your security is my insecurity. Foreign policy is essentially self-regarding, and all international action is to be explained as self-help.

If there is an international society, however, then there is an order of some kind to be maintained, or even developed. It is not fallacious to speak of a collective interest, and security acquires a broadened meaning: it can be enjoyed or pursued in common. Foreign policy will take some account of the common interest. It becomes possible to transfer to international politics some of the categories of constitutionalism.

How is this international order to be conceived? Is it an even distribution of power? Is it, as Burke and Metternich and Bismarck believed and as many Americans today believe, a distinct international social order? Is it a distinct moral or ideological order? The two last conceptions are probably bound up with the notion of international society as a *civitas maxima*, with the assimilation of international society to domestic society; and the second is the conservatives' inversion of the third. The Holy Alliance and the Dreikaiserbund displayed the pattern of ideas of the Jacobins, but in a counter-revolutionary key. Perhaps the distribution of power is the central preoccupation of those whom we are considering, but it is not possible to say that concern for the social and moral order are excluded.

The postulate that there is an international society generally entails the following beliefs:

1. That international society exists and survives by virtue of some core of common standards and common custom, difficult to define, but having its partial embodiment in international law.
2. That the tranquillity of international society and the freedom of its members require an even distribution of power. This presupposes a belief that some degree of objectivity and disinterestedness are possible in international politics: that the majority of states can agree on a broad comparative estimate of international power, and can co-operate in a common policy to maintain it.
3. That international society has a right of self-defence and of coercion. If its common standards are challenged, they may be defended and reimposed by force; and if the distribution of power is threatened it may be restored by force.
4. That the exercise of this right of self-defence and coercion is most fully justified when it is undertaken by the members of international society collectively, or by the majority of them, or by one of them with the authorization of the others. But this does not exclude the possibility of separate action by an individual Power deserving the approval of the rest.

The interdependence of the core of common standards and the even distribution of power is illustrated in the notion of aggression. Aggression is both a violation of the legal and moral order, and a threat to the balance of power. It is a classic test of statesmanship to keep both evils of aggression in view, and not to remedy one by neglecting the other; and around this much diplomatic controversy and historical interpretation ranges. Thus the diplomacy of Harley and St John from 1711 to the Peace of Utrecht is generally justified as having avoided a vindication of the moral and legal order at the expense of acquiescing in a derangement of the balance of power (the succession of the Emperor Charles VI to the Spanish inheritance) as dangerous as that which had occasioned the war; Roosevelt's policy in the Second World War is condemned for having failed to do the same; and the strongest case against the attempt by the League of Nations to coerce Italy by sanctions in 1935–6 is that it tended to break down one of the obstacles to German predominance in Europe. On the other hand, criticisms of the Peace of Vienna in 1815 usually take the form of asserting that it restored a balance of power at the expense of the legal order (e.g. by confirming the extinction of Polish sovereignty and by not allowing the doctrine of legitimacy to extend to Venice, Genoa and many German states) or at the expense of the moral order (which was now developing in the direction of recognizing the claims of nationality).

The word 'aggression' places the weight of moral approval on the side of the order which aggression violates. The notion that there could be a lawless or delinquent state has been integral to this conception of international society. In 1602, in the course of the long-drawn war in the East Indies, the Dutch naval commander in the Malacca Straits captured the Portuguese carack *Catharine* with a cargo of merchandise. A prize court in Amsterdam considered the legality of the seizure, declared the captured property a good prize, and awarded the proceeds to the Dutch East India Company. Some of the shareholders, however, especially the Mennonites, had conscientious scruples, withdrew from the Company, and controversy continued. 'A situation has arisen that is truly novel, and scarcely credible to foreign observers, namely: that these men who have been so long at war with the Spaniards and who have furthermore suffered the most grievous personal injuries, are debating as to whether or not, in a just war and with public authorization, they can rightfully despoil an exceedingly cruel enemy who had already violated the rules of international commerce.' These are the opening words of Grotius's *De Jure Praedae*.[27] At the very beginning of the classical literature of international law there is this dramatic confrontation between the state that is law-abiding even in war and the delinquent state (it is also a confrontation between the state with constitutional processes and the despotic state). The

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[27] *De Jure Praedae Commentarius* (Clarendon Press, 1950), ch. i.

De Jure Praedae argued that in international society there could be a robber or bandit, *praedo* or *latro*, whose crime even according to the established law of nations deserved punishment; that it was in the interest of the international community and of unconcerned nations that violation of the law should not pass unnoticed; that a penal code for states was as indispensable as a penal code for citizens. This was the central doctrine of Grotius's bigger and more famous book, published twenty-one years later, when he was no longer pleading the cause of the Seven Provinces against Portugal, but of international society at large against all the Great Powers. If there is an international society at all, then its members have duties, and the duties are enforceable.

In the later nineteenth century, the same argument inspired the international coercion of a Turkey that was reluctant to conform to the changing standards of domestic government required by international society. Between the World Wars, it inspired the doctrine of collective security, the demand for effective sanctions against any aggressor, the conception of the League of Nations as 'a potential alliance against the *unknown* enemy'.[28] After 1919 the Grotians discovered, with a kind of messianic wonder, that the doctrines of the master had at last, after three hundred years, been embodied in the first written constitution of international society. Here, it may seem, is the point of closest approximation between the pattern of ideas under consideration (which at this point has generated a theory of international constitutionalism) and theories of world government. Those who propounded the sincere milk of the League Covenant saw the establishment of the rule of law in international society not only as necessary for the continuance of orderly social relations but as a path to a more orderly future, where international law might progressively acquire the coercive jurisdiction of municipal law. But this was to be achieved, not through the creation or imposition of an international government, but by the collective action of the members of international society inspired by a clearer recognition of their legal duties. The same idea is buried in the obsolete articles of the United Nations Charter which prescribe the duties of the Security Council.

Underlying this theme is the insistent question of the relation between order and justice, or more precisely, between the moral order, legal order, and the balance of power. For Grotius this was not a problem. The moral and the legal order were the same; there was no general demand of unsatisfied justice, such as oppressed nationality, to create a cleavage. The threat to the moral and legal order was occasional and particular, the criminal state. Punishment of the criminal state restored order by vindicating justice. With the balance of power he was not concerned at all. After Westphalia, the moral and legal order became increasingly identified with the balance of power, a development that strict Grotians like the

²⁸ Sir Arthur Salter, *Security* (Macmillan, 1939), p. 155.

Dutch jurist Vollenhoven regard as a dilution, even a perversion of the gospel.[29] After 1815, a cleavage appeared between the legal and moral orders, as the Vienna Settlement fell into disrespect for obstructing the rightful claims of nationality. But the balance of power was sufficiently stable (and the consequences of its overthrow were sufficiently uncalamitous if this had to be contemplated) to allow the revision of the legal order. In the key case of Italy it was possible to indulge a moral condemnation of the legal order because this would not seriously endanger the balance of power. Hence the paradox noted by A. J. P. Taylor about the war of 1859; 'though the war lacked justification on any basis of international law, no war has been so unanimously approved by posterity.…The historian cannot be expected to explain this paradox; while himself approving of the war, he can only record that it was incompatible with any known system of international morality'.[30] Cavour and Palmerston would have answered that a new legal and moral order was coming to birth, in which states would be based on the consent of the governed. The liberation of the Balkan nations, from the rising in the Morea in 1821 down to the Treaty of Bucarest in 1913, was a more delicate process, but here, too, far-sighted policy could pursue national justice without allowing the balance of power to be deranged. Order, in fact, did not preclude a peaceful advance towards greater justice, until the rising tide drove Austria to desperation; and then the Grotian theorem seemed to become fact, and punishment of the criminal state restored order by vindicating justice.

After 1919 the question appears in a new light. The League of Nations seemed to combine the Grotian doctrine about the enforcement of law against a delinquent state with the system of the balance of power. The balance of power was now institutionalized, and would work against any state that resorted to war in defiance of its obligation to observe the procedures of the Covenant. At the root of the argument about collective security preceding peaceful change lay the principle that order precedes justice; that the prevention of violence is prior to the redress of grievances, that law can only function within a frame-work of order. Acknowledgment of this principle grew slowly, with growing acknowledgment of the nature of the threat to international order. It might be found, variously expressed in the writings of Brierly, Hancock, Salter and Zimmern.[31] What distinguished this doctrine was not the premise that the breakdown of order was so calamitous that peace must be preserved, because everybody agreed on this and

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[29] Cf. C. van Vollenhoven, *The Three Stages in the Evolution of the Law of Nations* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1919), pp. 17–22.

[30] *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848–1918* (Clarendon Press, 1954), p. 112. Cf. H. Temperley and L. M. Penson, *Foundations of British Policy* (Cambridge University Press, 1938), pp. 226–9.

[31] See for example J. L. Brierly, *The Basis of Obligation in International Law*, pp. 262–3 and ch. 20, and *The Outlook for International Law* (Oxford University Press, 1944), pp. 73–4; W. K. Hancock, *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs*, vol. i (Oxford University Press, 1937), pp. 314–15, 492–3; Salter, *Security*, p. 135; Sir Alfred Zimmern, *Spiritual Values and World Affairs* (Clarendon Press, 1939), pp. 112–13.

the argument was about what might preserve it. Nor was it the premise that order was precarious, that the victory of 1918 had been hardly won, that the doctrine of national self-determination left Germany potential master of the Continent, and that time and prudent exercise were needed for the new legal order created by the Covenant to become habitual; because in the 1920s the balance of power was all in favour of the upholders of the Versailles settlement. The premise lay rather in the hard-won recognition that the Versailles Settlement, the existing order, embodied no substantial injustice, when compared to what had come to challenge it. The majority of the inhabitants of Europe enjoyed the right of self-determination on which the existing order claimed to be based. The exceptions were marginal and explicable by reference to the needs of the balance of power. The advocates of collective security had become unhappily involved by their opponents in bewailing the injustices of the peace settlement, the lack of provision for peaceful change, the inefficacy of Article 19 of the Covenant. It might have made for intellectual clarity if they had early taken the ground roundly defended by Headlam-Morley in a Foreign Office memorandum of 1925, that the fabric of the continent depended on the maintenance of the peace settlement just because it represented, in broad outline, a peace of reason and justice.[32]

Since 1945 the doctrine that order precedes justice has been maintained by Reinhold Niebuhr, a writer perhaps with a different configuration of thought, and whose views were not quite the same in earlier days when the United States admitted no responsibility for upholding world order. In 1932 he wrote: 'A society of nations has not really proved itself until it is able to grant justice to those who have been worsted in battle without requiring them to engage in new wars to redress their wrongs'.[33] In his books reflecting the beginnings of the United Nations, in the last years of the Second World War and the brief interval before the Cold War was acknowledged, the emphasis falls differently. 'Order precedes justice in the strategy of government; but only an order which implicates justice can achieve a stable peace.'[34] 'The first task of government is to create order. The second task is to create justice.'[35] But more generally, since 1945, the relationship between order and justice has undergone a new transformation. It has now seemed that there is a direct and positive relation between national justice and the maintenance of order: that if the Western Powers could not free their colonies quickly enough the colonies would secede morally to the opposing camp, that the West must run at top speed in order to remain in its existing position, that peaceful change is no longer the antithesis of security but its condition. Order now requires justice. The premise here is that security is not seriously endangered.

[32] J. W. Headlam-Morley, *Studies in Diplomatic History* (Methuen, 1930), pp. 184–5.
[33] *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (Scribner, 1932), p. 111.
[34] *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* (Nisbet, 1945), p. 123.
[35] *Discerning the Signs of the Times* (S.C.M. Press, 1946), p. 46.

It is assumed that the balance of power is frozen into the balance of terror, and that the apparent delinquency of states is only their striving for national justice. Perhaps this premise is as ill-founded, this assumption as delusory, as those of the preceding epoch.

Aggression in the extreme case evokes the traditional instrument of the grand alliance, which prevents international society from being subverted and transformed into a universal empire. The archetypal example is the Grand Alliance of 1701 between England, the United Provinces and the Emperor, though it is neither the earliest example nor even the first to which the name 'grand alliance' has been applied. But it seems to be the only grand alliance concluded in advance of a general war, and with the partial aim of averting the war. The treaty was contingent on further negotiations with France, and the three Powers did not declare war on her until eight months later. Moreover, the treaty concerted the interests of the three Powers who were to prosecute the war if war became necessary, and partly for this reason its provisions were strikingly similar to those of the peace settlement twelve years afterwards. In the wars against Revolutionary France, Imperial Germany and Nazi Germany, by contrast, the grand alliance did not come about until after the event, by a process of undignified muddle and compulsion, and its war aims were only slowly hammered out in the course of the fighting. The Grand Alliance of 1701, therefore, might be regarded as marking a high point of rational international politics, and has been appealed to by generations of statesmen as a model of political sagacity. It was recalled by the Dutch Government in 1793 as the great paradigm for co-ordinating resistance to France (it had the incidental advantage for the Dutch of placing them on an equal footing with the Great Powers). It was large in Churchill's mind when, after the remilitarization of the Rhineland, rather belatedly, he tried to conjure a grand alliance out of the dying League of Nations, for he was fresh from the biography of the English plenipotentiary in the negotiations at The Hague of 1701.

Two notions are prominent in this view of the grand alliance. One is that of collective action. When Powers become aware of an overriding common interest, they can co-ordinate and even subordinate their parochial interests, and pursue a common policy. The external expression of such common policy, only gradually arrived at in diplomatic history, is the multilateral treaty. '*Separate conventions* between each power will not answer the end', said the Grand Pensionary to Malmesbury in 1793, 'and such necessarily will create *separate operations*, and in the result perhaps *separate interests*; they must all be circled by one strong and common political chain for one common and distinct cause'.[36] Perhaps the most subtle and sophisticated theory of collective action is found in Gladstone's doctrine of the Concert of Europe. Gladstone reflected on how Canning, in the Greek

[36] *Diaries and Correspondence of the First Earl of Malmesbury* (2nd edn, Bentley, 1845), vol. iii, p. 11.

question, and Palmerston, in the Eastern crisis of 1839–40, had developed a tradition of working with the Power whose independent action they most feared, and he concluded that when two Great Powers co-operate for a common object, they not only assist one another but also act as a check upon each other.

> 'By keeping all in union together', he said in one of the Midlothian speeches, 'you neutralize and fetter and bind up the selfish aims of each.…They have selfish aims as, unfortunately, we in late years have too sadly shown that we, too, have had selfish aims; but then, common action is fatal to selfish aims. Common action means common objects; and the only objects for which you can unite together the Powers of Europe are objects connected with the common good of them all.'[37]

But there are instances where the Great Powers (or a number of them) have united in order to pursue by agreement their selfish aims, by partitioning weaker Powers; and it is not clear whether Gladstone would have regarded these as illustrating moral perversion or an imperfect conception of the common good.

The second notion is that of anticipating and thereby controlling events. Collective action, prepared in advance, can coerce the unruly and regulate the general consequences. If we reflect upon the general correspondence of the peace terms of 1713 with the aims of the Allies of 1701, and mark the growing degree of unpredictability in subsequent general wars, we might believe that the Spanish Succession War marked the nearest point that international society has come to directing its own destiny. (Observers with different premises will not fail to comment that essential to this happy result was the unscrupulousness of Bolingbroke and Britain's desertion of her Allies in the field; the strongest Ally coercing her indignant partners into accepting peace on terms that suited her.) And connected with the notion of forestalling events is that of averting them. It lurked in the Treaty of the Hague, 1701, though such a hope was not seriously entertained by the signatories, and all of them looked to profit if the war was not averted. It was laid down by Gentz as the second of the three essential maxims of the balance of power,

> 'that to escape the alternate danger of an uninterrupted series of wars, or of an arbitrary oppression of the weaker members in every short interval of peace; *the fear* of awakening common opposition, or of drawing down common vengeance, must of itself be sufficient to keep every one within the bounds of moderation.'[38]

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[37] Speech at West Calder, November 27, 1879 (*Selected Speeches on British Foreign Policy* (World's Classics, 1914), p. 372).
[38] *Fragments upon the Balance of Power in Europe*, p. 62.

And as, in the next century, the common interest in averting war seemed to grow greater, so did the logical step between anticipating events and preventing them from happening seem to grow clearer. Now the argument is heard that collective action, prepared sufficiently in advance, can prevent a crisis from reaching the point of danger. 'The coercion we recommended', said Gladstone, 'was coercion by the united authority of Europe, and we always contended that in the case where the united authority of Europe was brought into action there was no fear of having to proceed to actual coercion.'[39] This became the central, most intellectualized doctrine of orthodox collective security between the World Wars, easy to ridicule and misrepresent, yet expressing a possibility, in Ranke's phrase, 'at the glimmering boundaries of experience': that if each Member of the League regarded its obligations under the Covenant with as much seriousness as it did its own vital interests, then an overwhelming preponderance of power would always be capable of being mobilized against an aggressor, and consequently aggression would not take place. 'The collective authority behind the prohibition of war', wrote Salter, 'would prevent it from either occurring or being seriously threatened'.[40] Intelligent precaution and common action would regulate the balance of power without war being necessary at all. Deterrence would be perfected.

3. Intervention

One of the most notable means of coercion for upholding standards and maintaining order in international society is intervention. Intervention perhaps gives rise to more controversy than any other international conduct. Violating the assumption of the equal independence of all members of the society of states, it is *prima facie* a hostile act. Yet it is so habitual and regular that it is impossible to imagine international relations without it; and international law can only make a system out of it by losing touch with diplomatic facts.

The very usage of the word intervention is fluid and imprecise. We say that Charles VIII intervened in Italy in 1494; that the United States intervened in the First World War in 1917; that Russia, Germany and France by the Triple Intervention in 1895 compelled Japan to relinquish the Liaotung Peninsula which she proposed to annex from China; that Britain in 1961 at the request of the Ruler

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[39] Speech at Edinburgh, November 25, 1879 (*Political Speeches in Scotland* (Elliot, 1880), vol. i, p. 53).
[40] Sir Arthur Salter, *Recovery* (Bell, 1932), p. 278; cf. *Security*, pp. 106, 128. The same idea is present in John Strachey's argument for a rudimentary world condominium by the two nuclear Great Powers: 'What, it may be asked, would an American and a Russian Government actually *do* to enforce their will…upon a recalcitrant nation-state? I should not have thought that once the all-important, and so far unfulfilled, condition of their having a *joint* will, had been achieved, they would have much difficulty.…It is most unlikely that they would actually have even to rattle the terrible sword of ultimate nuclear power in its scabbard. No, the difficulty lies in the achievement of a joint will, not in its implementation once achieved.' (*On the Prevention of War*, p. 167 n. Cf. pp. 282–3, 314–15.)

of Kuwait intervened in the dispute between Kuwait and Iraq; that Hitler and Mussolini intervened in the Spanish Civil War; that the United States tried with no success to intervene in Cuba for the purpose of overthrowing Castro in April 1961; that it is improper for a British Minister to intervene in an American presidential election by publicly expressing a wish about the outcome. Here the meaning ranges from a campaign of conquest among weaker Powers, through taking part in a war or a dispute between other Powers, and taking part in a civil war, to attempts to overthrow the regime or influence the domestic affairs of another country. Winfield has distinguished usefully between (1) *internal* intervention: interference in the domestic affairs of another state; (2) *external* intervention: interference in the relations, usually hostile, of two or more other Powers; and (3) *punitive* intervention: measures such as pacific blockade adopted by one state against another to compel observance of treaty engagements or redress a breach of law.[41] But the distinction between internal and external intervention constantly breaks down. Russell's despatch of 27 October 1860, recognizing the Garibaldian revolution in Naples and the Papal States, was argued as an intervention on the side of the rebellious subjects against their rulers, but it was also an intervention against the King of the Two Sicilies and the Pope on the side of the King of Sardinia. Anglo-American intervention in Lebanon and Jordan in 1958 was designed to protect those countries from external dangers in Iraq and the UAR,[42] but it also gave their regimes another lease of life against the internal pressure of Arab nationalism.

We may try to confine attention here to internal intervention, and understand it as unwelcome interference by one member of international society in the domestic affairs of another. Intervention is always unwelcome, because it implies coercion. If intervention is solicited from within the country intervened in, it shows that the country is divided, and the intervention will be unwelcome to one party or faction. If it is solicited by a faction out of power, as was regularly the case in Balkan states in the nineteenth century, and has been in Middle Eastern states in the twentieth, it is in order to get into power. In many cases the initiative probably lies with the intervener rather than with the nominal inviter, as it did in Hitler's relations with the Sudeten Germans. In some cases it is difficult to tell where the initiative lies, because intervener and inviters are united in a common loyalty and a common purpose; and these cases illustrate a world in which intervention is the norm and the independence and frontiers of states are an irrelevance. The Greek government intervened regularly in Cyprus by propagandist inflammation of the Enosis movement, but who can say whether the Cypriots

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[41]   P. H. Winfield, in Lawrence, *Principles of International Law*, pp. 119–20.
[42]   [Ed.: The United Arab Republic was a political union of Egypt and Syria from 1958 to 1961, when Syria withdrew. Egypt kept the name until 1971.]

asked for this help or had it thrust upon them? There is the same uncertainty about the relationship between Soviet Russia and local Communist parties.

On the one side are statesmen and publicists who deny the right of intervention. Wolff in the mid-eighteenth century was apparently the first jurist absolutely to prohibit intervention, as violating the natural liberty of nations.[43] Canning in 1823, at the time of the French intervention in Spain, laid down the doctrine that no ground for intervention is given by disturbances confined within the territory of a state, and not leading (as the French Revolution had done) to subversion or conquest abroad.[44] The tradition of positivist international law is represented by the classic treatise of W. E. Hall: 'No intervention is legal, except for the purpose of self-preservation, unless a breach of the law as between states has taken place, or unless the whole body of civilized states have concurred in authorizing it.'[45] But the ambiguities of Canning's own policy towards Latin America, Portugal and Greece, and the exceptions given by Hall, are enough to show the difficulties of denying absolutely a right of intervention. Cobden's political non-interventionism probably attained a more perfect consistency, but then it was the obverse of a gospel of unrestricted commercial interventionism.

On the other side are statesmen and publicists who consider intervention, in principle, as a continuing and universal duty. This duty can be derived from two opposite grounds: either the belief that the society of states ought to be revolutionized and made uniform, or the belief that it ought to be preserved as it is and kept uniform. In both views, the independence and separateness of states is less important than the homogeneity of international society, and the inviolability of frontiers is subordinated to the illimitability of truth. Thus the doctrine of the *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos*, that the Church is recommended and given in charge to all Christian princes in general, and to every one of them in particular, 'insomuch that if a prince who has undertaken the care of a portion of the church, as that of Germany and England, and, notwithstanding, neglect and forsake another part that is oppressed, and which he might succour, he doubtless abandons the church, Christ having but only one spouse, which the prince is so bound to preserve and defend, that she be not violated or corrupted in any part, if it be possible'.[46] Thus, Mazzini's argument that the principle of non-intervention could only be justified if the international system that is not to be intervened against is itself already perfectly just, which it isn't.

'What does this Non-intervention principle in real fact now mean? It means precisely this—Intervention on the wrong side; Intervention by all who choose, and

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[43] *Jus Gentium Methodo Scientifica Pertractatum* (first published 1749), sections 255–7.
[44] E.g. memorandum of March 31, 1823 (*British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. x, p. 66).
[45] *International Law*, pp. 343–4.
[46] Junius Brutus, *A Defence of Liberty against Tyrants*, ed. H. J. Laski (Bell, 1924), p. 217.

are strong enough, to put down free movements of peoples against corrupt governments. It means co-operation of despots against peoples, but no co-operation of peoples against despots.'[47]

Mazzini's doctrine has become the doctrine of the anti-colonialist campaign in the United Nations. The Latin American states have every reason to fear intervention in one form from the United States, but they have never abandoned a general theory of intervention, in earlier days *inter se*, and latterly in respect of the world at large.

> 'On the one hand we have the clear danger of intervention', said the Costa Rican delegate in the General Assembly in 1953; 'on the other, international indifference in the face of tyranny, genocide, the violation of rights, the fact that sovereignty is being snatched out of the hands of the people....Non-intervention, in that extreme form, sometimes assumes the attributes of intervention against the people....My country believes in collective surveillance.'[48]

The doctrine of the Troppau Protocol of 1820, which proclaimed a general right of the Holy Alliance to intervene anywhere to put down revolutionary manifestations, is the obverse of this, and illustrates a corresponding theory of international right. Similar ideas were expressed in the resolution entitled 'The Preservation and Defence of Democracy in America' adopted by the Bogota Conference of the Organization of American States in 1948, and found a more definite form in the provisions for intervening to prevent subversion in the Manila Treaty of 1954 setting up SEATO. These ideas were clearly if unfortunately expressed by Spruille Braden, a former US ambassador to Argentina, in a speech in 1953:

> 'I should like to underscore that because Communism is so blatantly an international and not an internal affair, its suppression, even by force, in an American country, by one or more of the other republics, would not constitute an intervention in the internal affairs of the former.'[49]

At the Caracas Conference of the OAS, in March 1954, there was embarrassed discussion of the supposed inalienable right of each American state to set up its own form of government, and whether non-intervention logically followed if an American state chose Communism. Dulles replied: 'The slogan of

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[47] 'Non-Intervention', *Life and Writings of Joseph Mazzini* (Smith, Elder, 1870), vol. vi, pp. 305–6.
[48] U.N. General Assembly, 469th meeting, December 8, 1953 (*Plenary Meetings*, 8th session, p. 438).
[49] Speech at Dartmouth College, March 12, 1953 (*New York Times*, March 13, 1953).

non-intervention can plausibly be invoked and twisted to give immunity to what is in reality flagrant intervention'.[50] Three months later the United States intervened or non-intervened to overthrow the government of Guatemala: intervening in substance by arming the rebels and the countries which gave them a base, non-intervening in form by pretending it was a simple revolt of Guatemalans against Guatemalans. The Guatemalan government appealed to the Security Council. The United States proposed that the matter should be referred to the appropriate regional organization, the OAS. The USSR vetoed the proposal, arguing that wherever aggression occurred it was the Security Council's responsibility to deal with it and that Central America was no exception. Colombia replied that the power of veto should not be accepted in the western hemisphere because it meant intervention by Communism. When Talleyrand was asked in 1832 to explain the real meaning of the word non-intervention, he replied: 'C'est un mot métaphysique, et politique, qui signifie à peu près la même chose qu'intervention.'[51] This was the practical judgment of a diplomatist in a generation which had explored the problems of intervention and non-intervention with more conscious thoroughness than any before or since. Without adopting the tacit premises of the remark, one may recognize that it is very difficult to give precision to the terms intervention and non-intervention, and very difficult to erect either of them into a theoretical norm of international conduct.

Between the opposing positions of non-interventionism and interventionism, there is a central doctrine of what might be called the moral interdependence of peoples, which its holders would claim to be based on the requirements of social existence and true to the constant experience of diplomatic life. 'States are not isolated bodies,' as Webster has put it simply, 'but part of an international community and the events which take place in each of them must be of interest and concern to all the rest.'[52] The doctrine might for convenience be reduced to the following points:

1. That intervention, in the sense of unwelcome interference by one member of the community of states in the internal affairs of another, is an occasional necessity in international relations, because of the permanent instability of the balance of power and the permanent inequality in the moral development of its members.

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[50] Speech of March 8, 1954 (*New York Times*, March 9, 1954).
[51] Thomas Raikes, *A Portion of the Journal* (Longmans, 1856), voi. i, p. 106. [Ed.: Wight supplied a translation of Talleyrand's definition of non-intervention in his book *Power Politics*, ed. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978), p. 199: 'non-intervention is a term of political metaphysics signifying almost the same thing as intervention'.]
[52] Sir Charles Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston* (Bell, 1951), vol. i, p. 99.

2. That it is an unfortunate necessity, because it conflicts with the right of independence; and it should be the exception rather than the rule.
3. That in a moral scale, to maintain the balance of power is a better reason for intervening than to uphold civilized standards, but to uphold civilized standards is a better reason than to maintain existing governments.

These principles postulate the existence of an international society of which states are the immediate but men the ultimate members. In such a society, there will be social duties not only towards the states but also towards the individuals whom the states represent and for whom they exist. Moreover, the members will have the capacity in some degree to reconcile their own interests with those of others and to attain to the idea of a common interest. 'Kings,' said Grotius, 'in addition to the particular care of their own state, are also burdened with a general responsibility for human society',[53] and the idea has been repeated in many ways. Intervention, therefore, may present itself as an exercise, not simply of the right of self-preservation, but of the duty of fellow-feeling and co-operation. Seen in this light, the theory of the rightful occasions for intervention falls at once into the same pattern as the theory of the just causes of war.

If the existence of international society is conceded, it might indeed be supposed, *prima facie*, that intervention would play a greater part internationally than domestically, simply because the organization of international society is more rudimentary than that of domestic society. It is often argued that international society is in a condition analogous to that of English society at any time before the legal innovations of Henry II, with customary law, great local concentrations of power, no effective executive, no legislature in the modern sense, and a rudimentary judiciary. But the frankpledge system,[54] and the duty of pursuing felons from hundred to hundred by hue and cry (if it ever existed), were in modern terms intolerable invasions of the independence of individuals. It might be true to say that the possibility of non-intervention among the members of any society varies with the effectiveness of its police system.

After the decline of intervention on religious pretexts (except in the relations between Russia and Turkey) two broad grounds of intervention remained generally accepted: the interests of the balance of power and the interests of humanity. From the middle of the seventeenth century it was a maxim of European diplomacy that intervention to uphold the balance of power was necessary and just. But ambiguity arose, inasmuch as it has always been universally conceded that the duty of self-preservation can confer a right of intervention, and most states

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[53] *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, book II, ch. xx, section xliv.1.
[54] [Ed.: The medieval English frankpledge arrangement mandated a collective sharing of responsibility for producing any member of the unit suspected of criminal behavior. The suspect's failure to appear could subject all members of the unit to fines.]

seek their preservation by pursuing the balance of power. The various eighteenth century examples of intervention—the Partition Treaties for settling the Spanish succession, and the repeated interference of the Great Powers in the affairs of Sweden, Poland, Geneva or Holland—were in the last resort justified by reference to the balance of power, but the franker language would be that of commercial and political interest. Thus Vergennes wrote:

> 'Les insurgents que je chasse de Genève sont les agents de l'Angleterre, tandis que les insurgents américains sont nos amis pour longtemps. J'ai traité les uns et les autres, non en raison de leurs systèmes politiques, mais en raison de leurs dispositions pour la France. Voilà ma raison d'Etat.'[55]

When one compares the rather loftier language of Castlereagh, the greater sense he gives of being aware of the interests of the community of nations as a whole, it is impossible not to connect it with the conception of the balance of power that pervaded all his thought. When Castlereagh came to formulate a British doctrine of intervention against the interventionism of the Holy Alliance, it was the main-tenance of the balance of power as against a guarantee of regimes that provided implicitly his point of difference. 'The only safe Principle is that of the Law of Nations—That no State has a right to endanger its neighbours by its internal Proceedings, and that if it does, provided they exercise a sound discretion, their right of interference is clear.'[56] In later statements he threw the emphasis the other way, not on the existence of the right but on the rarity of the occasions for exer-cising it.

> 'It should be dearly understood,' he wrote in the Circular of January 19, 1821, 'that no Government can be more prepared than the British Government is, to uphold the right of any State or States to interfere, where their own immediate security, or essential interest, are seriously endangered by the internal transac-tions of another State. But, as they regard the assumption of such right, as only to be justified by the strongest necessity, and to be limited and regulated thereby; they cannot admit that this right can receive a general and indiscriminate appli-cation to all revolutionary movements, without reference to their immediate bearing upon some particular State or States, or be made prospectively the basis of an Alliance. They regard its exercise as an exception to general principles, of

[55] Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, vol. i, p. 66. [Ed.: 'The insurgents that I am driving out of Geneva are agents from England, while the American insurgents have been our friends for a long time. I have treated these and the others, not as a function of their political systems, but as a function of their policies toward France. That is my reason of state.']
[56] Memorandum of October 19, 1818: Temperley and Penson, *Foundations of British Policy*, p. 44. 'It was a private document, never intended for formal communication, far less for publication, and may be taken as expressing Castlereagh's most sincere views' (*ibid.*, p. 38).

the greatest value and importance, and as one that only properly grows out of the circumstances of the special case; but they, at the same time, consider, that exceptions of this description never can, without the utmost danger, be so far reduced to rule, as to be incorporated into the ordinary diplomacy of States, or into the institutes of the law of nations.'[57]

This language has been criticized from the one side as lacking in generous sympathy and readiness to offer help to the constitutional cause abroad; it has been criticized from the other side, as by Westlake, in that it failed sufficiently to repudiate, as Canning afterwards did, 'intervention for self-preservation against the mere contagion of principles.'[58] Castlereagh was trying to minimize the breach with Britain's allies which Canning delighted to widen; he had a greater sense than Canning of the interdependence of states and greater experience in reconciling their interests. The collective interventions of the Concert of Europe to maintain the balance of power, in the Belgian question and repeatedly in Turkey, were in the spirit of Castlereagh rather than Canning.[59]

Humanitarian grounds for intervention were conceived first of all in terms of protection against tyranny, and the right of intervention followed the right of rebellion. Here is one of the explicit links between constitutionalist political theory and the tradition of international theory under present consideration. Grotius was surprisingly cautious about the right of rebellion (perhaps, as Carlyle suggested,[60] because he was a Roman lawyer and a political refugee in the French monarchy): he refused to allow oppressed subjects to take up arms in their own behalf, but permitted a foreign Power to intervene for them, as an application of the principle of trusteeship: 'quod uni non licet, alteri pro eodem liceri potest.'[61] Vattel's pattern of ideas is in many respects different, but it is part of his charm (and no doubt of his lasting influence) that he contains inconsistent arguments that can be used to support contradictory policies. He follows his master Wolff in a general condemnation of intervening, but then adds:

'Mais si le Prince, attaquant les Lois fondamentales, donne à son peuple un légitime sujet de lui résister; si la Tyrannie, devenue insupportable, soulève la Nation; toute Puissance étrangère est en droit de sécourir un peuple opprimé,

[57] Sir Charles Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh 1815–1822* (Bell, 2nd edition, 1934), pp. 322–3.

[58] *Collected Papers*, p. 125.

[59] In the editions of Oppenheim's *International Law* issued after 1919, the sections dealing with the balance of power as a ground for intervention have been replaced by others treating of collective intervention under the Covenant of the League, and later the U.N. Charter.

[60] A. J. Carlyle, *Political Liberty* (Clarendon Press, 1941), p. 95.

[61] *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, book II, ch. xxv, section viii.3. [Ed.: The principle *quod uni non licet, alteri pro eodem liceri potest* has been translated as 'what is refused to one may be permitted to another on his behalf'. Hugo Grotius, *The Law of War and Peace, De Jure Belli ac Pacis Libri Tres*, trans. Francis W. Kelsey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), *Volume Two: The Translation*, p. 584.]

qui lui demande son assistance…Quand un peuple prend avec raison les armes
contre un oppresseur, il n'y a que justice et générosité à sécourir de braves gens,
qui défendent leur Liberté. Toutes les fois donc que les choses en viennent à une
Guerre Civile, les Puissances étrangères peuvent assister celui des deux partis,
qui leur paroît fondé en justice.'[62]

Vattel was a quiet Neuchâtelois who admired England and the Glorious
Revolution; but in these words he unintentionally foreshadowed much of the
international experience of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This passage
was quoted with some glee by Russell in his despatch of October 27, 1860, sup-
porting the overthrow of the Neapolitan and Papal governments.[63]

In the history of nineteenth century intervention, humanitarianism became
increasingly the prime motive, as the balance of power was always the limiting
one. The joint intervention in 1827 by France, Britain and Russia in favour of the
Greek insurgents was justified first by reference to the material damage to nation-
als of the intervening Powers, and only secondly by 'the sentiment of humanity
and interest in the repose of Europe'.[64] But when Britain and France withdrew
their ambassadors from Naples in 1856 and staged a naval demonstration, it was
because Ferdinand II refused to listen to their advice about his prison system. The
Russian Government remonstrated that, 'To endeavour to obtain from the King
of Naples concessions concerning the internal government of his state by threats,
or by a menacing demonstration, is a violent usurpation of his authority, an
attempt to govern in his stead; it is an open declaration of the right of the strong
over the weak'; and some jurists support the condemnation.[65] The collective
intervention in the Lebanon in 1860 to stop the massacres of the Maronites by the
Druses was a greater and longer exercise of force, but is described by Lawrence as
'destitute of technical legality, but…morally right and even praiseworthy to a
high degree'.[66] Lansdowne's commission to Casement, a consular official, to
enquire into the administration of the Congo Free State, and the publication of
his report, is another example of humanitarian intervention that has received the
general approval of posterity. In 1902 the persecution of the Jews in Rumania led
the signatories of the Treaty of Berlin to enforce the articles protecting the Balkan
minorities. The United States was not a signatory, but John Hay wrote that though

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[62] *Le Droit des Gens*, book II, ch. iv, section 56. [Ed.: 'But if the prince, by attacking fundamental
laws, gives his people a legitimate ground for resisting him; if tyranny, having become unbearable,
stirs up the nation; any foreign power has a right to give succor to an oppressed people that requests
assistance…When a people rightly takes up arms against an oppressor, it is nothing but justice and
generosity to help the brave people who are defending their liberty. Whenever therefore matters come
to a civil war, foreign powers can assist whichever of the two parties that seems to them to be founded
in justice.']
[63] Temperley and Penson, *Foundations of British Policy*, pp. 223–4.
[64] Treaty of London, 1827, preamble.
[65] Hall, *International Law*, p. 344, n. 2.   [66] *Principles of International Law*, p. 128.

not entitled to invoke the treaty, she 'must insist upon the principles therein set forth, because these are principles of law and eternal justice'.[67] It will be noted that all such historical examples of intervention show the powerful correcting the weak. The moral interdependence of peoples has never been so strong, nor the circumstances so favourable, that there has been collective intervention to suppress the iniquities of a Great Power. Hence one may possibly feel a certain satisfaction that the United Nations, for all the doctrinaire extravagances of its interventionism, has accidentally developed into the first international organization that has been able to subject the Great Powers to systematic nagging.

4. International Morality

The morality of international politics is a vast and embracing subject, but it is here that there will be perhaps more agreement on a pattern of ideas that represents Western values. In this paper it is only possible to comment briefly on two intertwined elements from that complex: the place of the individual conscience in international politics, and the notion of ethical limits to political action.

The school of American realists in political theory who acknowledge Reinhold Niebuhr as their patriarch are accustomed to argue that it is only in national life and institutions that ideals such as justice, freedom and equality have a concrete meaning.

> 'Since nations in the present anarchic world society tend to be repositories of their own morality,' says Kenneth Thompson, 'the ends-means formula has prevailed as an answer to the moral dilemma, for undeniably it is a concealed but essential truth that nations tend to create their own morality.'[68]

The argument has been used more trenchantly by Morgenthau in words that have caused some debate:

> 'There is a profound and neglected truth hidden in Hobbes's extreme dictum that the state creates morality as well as law and that there is neither morality nor law outside the state…For above the national societies there exists no international society so integrated as to be able to define for them the concrete meaning of justice or equality, as national societies do for their individual members.'[69]

[67] De Visscher, *Theory and Reality in Public International Law*, pp. 122–3.
[68] Kenneth W. Thompson, *Political Realism and the Crisis of World Politics* (Princeton University Press, 1960), p. 137.
[69] Hans J. Morgenthau, *In Defense of the National Interest* (Knopf, 1951), p. 34.

Morgenthau has interpreted this passage against possible misunderstanding, and perhaps lessened its force, by saying that the operative words are 'Hobbes's *extreme* dictum' rather than 'a profound and neglected truth'.[70] Nevertheless it is clear that Hobbes's doctrine that effective social power is antecedent to morality and law has acquired a new cogency and relevance in our lifetime. E. H. Carr's *Twenty Years' Crisis*, which has dominated the study of international relations in Britain since 1939, is essentially a brilliant restatement of the Hobbesian themes. The new kingdom of the fairies that seduces the intelligence of men is not the Roman Church but the League of Nations, which is none other than the ghost of the Pax Britannica, sitting crowned upon the grave thereof, and the principal old wives who circulate its fables are President Wilson, Lord Cecil, Professors Toynbee and Zimmern, and the Winston Churchill of *Arms and the Covenant*.

To the student who asks, where else can one look for the concrete meaning of ideals than in national institutions—or in the life and institutions of some single state which is seen to embody the movement of history and the destiny of mankind—the ultimate answer seems to be 'In the individual who defies the state'. At its noblest, this defiance may be embodied in the just man who is thrown into prison, scourged and racked, and after every kind of torment is impaled; at its humblest, it may be in the man who, having watched the frenzy of the multitude, keeps his own way, like the traveller who takes shelter under a wall from a driving storm of dust, and seeing lawlessness spreading on all sides, is content if he can keep his hands clean from iniquity while his life lasts.[71] (There are some people, with experience of the storms of nationalist politics in the twentieth century, who find the latter passage the most profound and piercing in the *Republic* for the ordinary man.) Two ideas are bound up in this answer. There is a positive denial that ideals are concretely embodied in social institutions, and the strength of the denial grows in proportion to the strength and exclusiveness of the claim. And this denial is made, not in the name of some political or social institutions against others, but in the name of the non-political against them all. Thus the pretensions of existing states may be repudiated in the name of the aspirations of the multitude of individuals who are the ultimate (but disfranchised) members of international society; but this does not mean that if their aspirations were fulfilled in the establishment of a world state, the world state would become the concrete embodiment of justice. In its turn it would be subject to the same repudiation in the name of the non-political. A world state more than others might be likely to embody a fundamental lawlessness that impaled the absolutely just man and compelled others to behave like travellers in a duststorm.

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[70] See his letter in *International Affairs*, October 1959, p. 502. [Ed.: Wight's review of Morgenthau's *Dilemmas of Politics* and the subsequent correspondence between Morgenthau and Wight are included in this collection of Wight's works: *International Relations and Political Philosophy,* pp. 321–323.]
[71] *Republic*, 361–2, 496 C-E.

It seems that these ideas cohere with the pattern of thought I have tried to sketch. They contain the paradox, that the health of the political realm is only maintained by conscientious objection to the political. While Tawney delivered the Burge Memorial Lecture in 1949, choosing as his subject 'The Western Political Tradition', he made this point in language of characteristically inspissated grandeur:

> 'That denial of the finality of human institutions is both for practice and for theory a key position. It makes it not a paradox to assert that the most significant characteristic of the western political tradition—its peril, but also its glory and salvation—consists in a quality which, from Socrates to the least of those who have resisted dictators, has drawn its nourishment from sources so profound as to cause the word 'political' to be an inadequate expression of the obligations felt to be imposed by it.'[72]

It is clear that the natural law tradition is the soil out of which these ideas have sprung. In his paper on 'Natural Law', Donald MacKinnon found the continued vitality of the natural law ethic in the encouragement it may give to ordinary men to criticize or even disobey their rulers. But he has a sentence which it may be permissible to gloss. 'Those who are in government,' he says, with the supposed exigencies of defence policy in mind, 'are inevitably caught up in the running of a machine which they find running one way, and whose history they feel themselves bound to defend'.[73] He may not have intended to suggest that the distinction between governors and governed corresponds to the distinction between *raison d'état* and moral sensitivity. For it would be equally true to say that those who are in government are inevitably more aware of the practical complexities of every political decision than their constituents can be, and probably more aware of the moral ambiguities. The history of democratic government has as much evidence of enlightened governments hampered by the folly and ignorance of the public and the selfishness of vested interests, as it has of the plain people judging right on broad considerations of humanity and justice against narrow-minded governments. The public is still the greatest of all sophists, and by and large there is a congruity between peoples and governments. The individual defying the state is not to be identified with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament demonstrating against the government, although the CND may contain some who are potentially individuals defying the state. For the CND is not the repudiation of politics in the name of the non-political, so much as the assertion of an illusory or

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[72]   R. H. Tawney, *The Western Political Tradition* (S.C.M. Press, 1949), p. 16.
[73]   See D. M. MacKinnon, "Natural Law," in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, eds., *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966, and London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 86.

ill-considered alternative within the realm of the political; and to this extent it is itself but one of the heads of the many-headed beast.

The vitality of the natural law ethic might be looked for, not only in the encouragement it may give to ordinary men to criticize their rulers, but also in the encouragement it may give to rulers themselves to break free from political categories, to deny the finality of human institutions. The conscientious objection of politicians has perhaps been less studied by political philosophers than the conscientious objection of subjects, yet, on the view we are considering, it will not be less necessary to the health of society. What we are concerned with here is not so much the doctrine of natural law (whatever that is), as a certain ethical temper which may be regarded as its residue or hangover. Cicero's one eternal unchangeable law, the same at Athens as at Rome, the same in the future as now, may be an archaic fancy, or the archaic expression of something true.[74] But 'dis te minorem quod geris, imperas' has had more continuing power.[75] It is echoed in Burke's

> 'Among precautions against ambition, it may not be amiss to take one precaution against our *own*. I must fairly say, I dread our *own* power, and our *own* ambition; I dread our being too much dreaded'.[76]

It is echoed in Lincoln's Second Inaugural. It directly inspired Kipling's *Recessional*. It is reflected in the sense common to politicians as different as Bismarck, Gladstone, Salisbury and Churchill, of being in various modes and with varying degrees of humility the instruments of Providence.

It might be thought enough to say of the natural law ethic that it survives in an awareness of the moral significance and the moral context of all political action. But the moral context is focused more precisely where it is seen as imposing prohibitions on political action—at the point where the politically expedient and the morally permissible come into conflict. Thus the doctrine of the just war (which is essentially connected with the complex of ideas we are considering) includes the principle that military necessity is itself subject to moral limits. Is political necessity similarly limited, and if so can this limitation be illustrated in the concrete case? What is to be answered to the sceptic who crudely says, 'Show me a single example of your natural law ethic restraining a statesman from a course of action which was politically expedient'?

The question may be made more pointed by reference to antiquity. The moralistic repertoire of Roman education contained celebrated examples, supposedly historical, of the ethical veto on political action. There is the story Plutarch tells in

[74] *De Republica*, book iii, ch. 22.
[75] Horace, *Odes*, iii, 6. [Ed.: 'It is because you hold yourselves inferior to the gods that you rule.' (Loeb Classical Library translation.)]
[76] *Remarks on the Policy of the Allies* (*Works*, vol. 1, pp. 602–3). Cf. Wordsworth, letter to Captain Pasley, March 28, 1811, in *Tract on the Convention of Cintra*, ed. A. V. Dicey (Milford, 1915), p. 237.

the lives both of Themistocles and Aristides. After the withdrawal of Xerxes and the defeated Persians from Greece, the allied Greek fleet moved north to Pagasae on the Thessalian coast. Themistocles told the Athenians in the assembly that he had a proposal that would tend greatly to their interests and security, but of such a nature that it could not be made public. The assembly instructed him to tell it to Aristides, and if Aristides approved, to carry it out. Themistocles told Aristides that his project was to set fire to the allied fleet in harbour, which would give the Athenians the mastery of Greece. Aristides returned to the assembly and reported that Themistocles' plan was exceedingly advantageous and exceedingly dishonourable; 'on which the Athenians commanded Themistocles to think no farther of it'.[77] There is a similar story told of the Roman general Fabricius, who, as Cicero says, 'was to our city what Aristides was to Athens'. Fabricius disdainfully rejected a proposal for poisoning the invader Pyrrhus which was put to him by a deserter from Pyrrhus' camp, and handed the man over to Pyrrhus. Cicero comments that if we consult the vulgar conception of expediency, this one deserter would have put an end to a wasting invasion, but it would have been at the price of lasting disgrace.[78] Each of these tales has been subjected to realistic modern critique. Hume discusses the Themistoclean story, to illustrate how general ideas have less power over the imagination than particular ideas. If Themistocles' proposal had been made public, he argues, instead of being made known only under the general notion of advantage, it is difficult to conceive that the assembly would have rejected it.[79] Machiavelli comments on the Fabricius story with less subtlety, saying (quite unhistorically) that the revelation of Fabricius's generosity made Pyrrhus quit Italy, which Roman arms had not been able to do; so ethics paid off politically. He adds by contrast that the Romans hounded Hannibal to death, but they hated him more than they did Pyrrhus.[80]

Modern history does not seem to offer, even in legend, such copybook examples of rectitude in international relations. Only two similar instances come to mind. One is Fox, when as Foreign Secretary in 1806 an approach was made to him for the assassination of Napoleon, instantly informing Talleyrand of it. There can be little doubt that Fabricius was in Fox's mind. The other is an incident at the Teheran Conference described in Churchill's Memoirs:

'Stalin, as Hopkins recounts, indulged in a great deal of "teasing" of me, which I did not at all resent until the Marshal entered in a genial manner upon a serious

[77]   Plutarch, *Vita Themistoclis*, ch. 20; cf. *Vita Aristidis*, ch. 22. The story may be a dramatizing of the trick by which Themistocles deceived Sparta over the fortification of Athens: Diodorus, book xi, ch. 42; Grote, *History of Greece*, ch. 44 (Everyman edition, vol. v, p. 346, n. 3); A. W. Gomme, *Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, vol. i (Clarendon Press, 1945), p. 260.
[78]   *De Officiis*, book iii, ch. 22. Cf. Livy, book xiii.
[79]   *A Treatise of Human Nature*, book II, part iii, section vi.
[80]   *Discourses*, book iii, ch. 20.

and even deadly aspect of the punishment to be inflicted upon the Germans. The German General Staff, he said, must be liquidated. The whole force of Hitler's mighty armies depended upon about fifty thousand officers and technicians. If these were rounded up and shot at the end of the war German military strength would be exterminated. On this I thought it right to say, "The British Parliament and public will never tolerate mass executions. Even if in war passion they allowed them to begin they would turn violently against those responsible after the first butchery had taken place. The Soviets must be under no delusion on this point".

'Stalin, however, perhaps only in mischief, pursued the subject. "Fifty thousand," he said, "must be shot." I was deeply angered. "I would rather," I said, "be taken out into the garden here and now and be shot myself than sully my own and my country's honour by such infamy."

'At this point the President intervened. He had a compromise to propose. Not fifty thousand should be shot, but only forty-nine thousand. By this he hoped, no doubt, to reduce the whole matter to ridicule. Eden also made signs and gestures intended to reassure me that it was all a joke. But now Elliot Roosevelt rose in his place at the end of the table and made a speech, saying how cordially he agreed with Marshal Stalin's plan and how sure he was that the United States Army would support it. At this intrusion I got up and left the table, walking off into the next room, which was in semi-darkness. I had not been there a minute before hands were clapped upon my shoulders from behind, and there was Stalin, with Molotov at his side, both grinning broadly, and eagerly declaring that they were only playing, and that nothing of a serious character had entered their heads. Stalin has a very captivating manner when he chooses to use it, and I never saw him do so to such an extent as at this moment. Although I was not then, and am not now, fully convinced that all was chaff and there was no serious intent lurking behind, I consented to return, and the rest of the evening passed pleasantly.'[81]

If it were true that modern history does not contain such clear-cut instances as classical antiquity of the moral veto on political action, the reason might be that the conception of policy has changed. Perhaps modern Europe has acquired a moral sensitiveness, and an awareness of the complexities of politics, denied to a simpler civilization. The Greeks and Romans gave small thought to political ethics, still less to international ethics. It is striking that the civilization which invented political philosophy and political science gave so little attention to the relations between states. In so far as it had a conception of an international society, it was much simpler than that of modern Europe. Hellas for the Greeks was a

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[81] *The Second World War*, vol. v, ch. xx, *ad fin.*

community of blood and language and religion and way of life;[82] but the Greeks never developed the theory of a society of states mutually bound by legal rights and obligations. There was no Greek Grotius. And the international experience of Rome, first in the consolidating of Italy, and then in the Mediterranean world at large, was that of conqueror, aggressive ally and patron of clients—never of equal intercourse between states. The true 'international law' of the Roman Republic was the fetial law;[83] but since its principles were defensive, it was early circumvented and superseded by the expansionist principle of *fides Romana* pledged to threatened client-states.[84] If the Roman Empire is dated by external hegemony, not by the ending of civil war, it begins (as Polybius saw) at Pydna not at Actium.[85] For the last century and a half of the Republic Rome had no diplomatic equal, and her foreign policy was analogous to that of the British in India after 1798, not to that of any Great Power in modern Europe. The *jus gentium*, which became identified with the law of nature and then presided over the origins of modern international law, was a collection of rules and principles common to Rome and to the Italian tribes from whom Rome's immigrants came, and constantly growing with the acquisition of new provinces. It was mainly concerned with the sphere of commercial law and law of contract. It began as a body of what in modern terms is called *private* international law, and developed into the common law of a universal empire; public international law between states represents a stage it never went through.

Such thought as the ancients gave to international ethics found little middle ground between the statesman's personal honour on the one side, and on the other, the justification of what we should describe as humane action on grounds of pure expediency, such as the arguments Thucydides puts in the mouth of Diodotus against carrying out the Athenian decree for the destruction of Mytilene, the massacre of its men and the enslavement of its women and children.[86] Perhaps it is a characteristic of medieval and modern Europe that, in contrast to classical civilization, it has cultivated this middle ground, and developed the conception of a political morality distinct equally from personal morality and from *Realpolitik*. Cicero it is true reached the point of describing the administration of government as a trust, *tutela*, for the benefit of those entrusted to its care, not of these to whom it is entrusted;[87] but he was thinking of the class-struggles within the state, not of the field to which Burke extended the notion of trusteeship, still less of foreign relations. In the later Roman Empire the idea turns into

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[82] Herodotus, book viii, ch. 144.

[83] [Ed: The fetials, priests of Jupiter and other gods in ancient Rome, advised the Senate on foreign relations, declared war and peace, confirmed treaties, and served as heralds or ambassadors to communicate with foreign powers.]

[84] E. Badian, *Foreign Clientelae* (Clarendon Press, 1958), pp. 31, 35, 68.

[85] [Ed.: In the Battle of Pydna (168 BC) Rome defeated Macedon. In the Battle of Actium (31 BC) Octavian's fleet was victorious over the combined forces of Cleopatra and Mark Antony.]

[86] Thucydides, book iii, chs. 42–8.   [87] *De Officiis*, book i, ch. 85.

paternalism, that the king must be a father to his subjects, consulting their interests and not living for himself. It might roughly be said that it was left for medieval thinkers to explore the doctrine that governments are stewards for their peoples and for future generations, having duties analogous to those of trustees; and for modern thinkers to explore the doctrine that these duties are owed, not only by each government to its subjects, but by one government to another, and by one people to another.

The cultivation of this middle ground, and the discovery of political morality, seem peculiarly related to Western values. Political morality is different from personal morality, as the moral duties of a trustee are different from those of one who acts on his own behalf. In the profoundest passage of the War Memoirs, Churchill reflects (like others before him) that the Sermon on the Mount is not the terms on which Ministers assume their responsibility of guiding states.[88] The incident in Teheran shows, however, that political ethics have their ultimate sanction in the personal ethics of the politician, and a nation's honour cannot rise higher than the personal honour of its representatives. But political morality is equally different from *raison d'état*, since it upholds the validity of the ethical in the realm of politics. It follows that the whole conception of policy is broadened and capable of being suffused with moral value. Political expedience itself has to consult the moral sense of those whom it will affect, and even combines with the moral sense of the politician himself. Thus it is softened into prudence, which is a moral virtue. The occasions for conscientious objection are diminished, since conscience has already had its say in the debate in which policy is shaped.

Therefore the characteristic fruit of the natural law ethic in modern politics is not so much the dramatic moral veto on political action (though this is always held, as it were, in reserve) as the discovery of an alternative positive policy which avoids the occasion of the veto—an *alternative* policy, because it embodies the notion of a middle course, of a permissible accommodation between moral necessity and practical demands. At the worst, the alternative rests on self-deception, and the search for it becomes the kind of supple casuistry that finds moral arguments to cover the dictates of interest or passion, of which their enemies accused the Jesuits or Cromwell or Gladstone. Thus Robert Dell's bitter description of Lord Halifax, when he attended the 101st session of the League Council in May 1938 to propose the recognition of Italian sovereignty over Ethiopia:

'Lord Halifax did not make a good impression at Geneva, where the tendency was to call him insincere. That, I am convinced, is unjust. He seems to me to be a mixture of the typical high-minded God-fearing English gentleman and a Jesuit moral theologian. He is, I should say, one of those over-scrupulous persons who

[88] *The Second World War*, vol. i, ch. xvii, *ad fin.*

never take any action without first having weighed the arguments for and against and convinced themselves that it is justified by the principles of moral theology, and usually succeed in finding a moral justification for any action they wish to take.'[89]

But at its best, the alternative policy is both a true alternative and a positive one, attaining justice or magnanimity or self-control. There are many examples in medieval and modern politics of restraint in the exercise of power, of refusal to exploit an advantage, where the motive seems to have been not the avoidance of moral self-condemnation, still less of awkward consequences, but the attainment of better relations. Such were St Louis' magnanimity to Henry III at the Treaty of Paris in 1259, or Castlereagh's and Wellington's magnanimity to France at the end of the Napoleonic War, or Gladstone's grant of independence to the Transvaal after Majuba, or perhaps Attlee's grant of independence to India. The moral evaluation of such policies requires, first of all, a careful examination of the language in which they were first privately formulated.[90] Thus it may appear that the arguments which Bismarck used against his king at Nikolsburg in 1866 for not imposing a severe peace on Austria did not spring from the natural law ethic but resembled those used by Diodotus in the Mytilenean debate.[91]

On the horizon of every discussion of the moral prohibition in politics there beckons the maxim, *Fiat justitia et pereat mundus*.[92] If this is indeed first recorded as the motto of the Emperor Ferdinand I[93], it might be taken as one of the most profoundly paradoxical expressions of the modern international anarchy. The maxim has been applied in many different circumstances, and with many interpretations both of 'justice' and of 'the world perishing'. But on the whole it is not a formula that comes naturally to the representatives of the tradition we are considering. Robespierre in the debate on white supremacy in the French colonies in May 1791 crying 'Périssent les colonies si elles nous en coûtent l'honneur, la liberté';[94] George Hardinge, the Tory MP for Old Sarum, saying 'Perish commerce, let the constitution live!' in the debate on the Traitorous Correspondence Bill in 1793; Milner's 'damn the consequences' speech in the Budget controversy of 1909—these belong to a different ethical style, perhaps because the criterion of repudiation is itself implicitly political. Or the maxim is used rhetorically, and

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[89] Robert Dell, *The Geneva Racket* (Hale, 1941), p. 137.

[90] It also requires, of course, consideration of the consequences of the policies, probably unforeseen and unforeseeable. But this raises different issues.

[91] *Gedanken und Erinnerungen*, ch. 20.

[92] [Ed.: This is usually translated as 'Let justice be done, even if the world perish.']

[93] Johannes Manlius, *Locorum Communium Collectanea* (Basel, 1563), vol. ii, p. 290; Julius Wilhelm Zincgref, *Der Teutschen Scharpfsinnige Kluge Sprüch, Apophthegmata genant* (Strassburg, 1628), p. 107. Rex Warner, in his two novels on the life of Julius Caesar, several times attributes this dictum to Cato the Younger, and calls it Stoic. For this attribution I can find no evidence.

[94] [Ed.: 'Let the colonies perish if they cost us honor and liberty.']

without strict attention to the meaning of its second part. When the historian Freeman, at a public meeting in London in 1876 to express sympathy with the Balkan insurgents against Turkey, cried 'Perish the interests of England, perish our dominion in India, rather than that we should strike one blow or speak one word on behalf of the wrong against the right', it is not to be supposed that he envisaged these consequences, because he went on to argue that Constantinople was not on the path to India and that the Russians anyway were not threatening Constantinople.[95] No more did A. J. P. Taylor when he quoted Freeman's words and made them his own at a Caxton Hall meeting during the Suez crisis in August 1956; because he went on to argue that there was no need for the interests of England to perish because properly understood they did not conflict with the interests of Egypt.[96] It is indeed only since 1945 that it has been possible to imagine that the price of justice may literally be the ruin of the world. Sir Llewellyn Woodward referred to the translation of the maxim out of rhetoric into actuality in his Stevenson Memorial Lecture in London in 1955. 'What does this change signify? Does it mean that, for the rest of its poor duration, the human race must give up the attempt to establish and sustain justice, and must accept, century after century until the whole house crumbles in corruption, the triumph of wickedness in high places?'[97]

Fiat justitia et pereat mundus marks an extreme position. The opposite extreme has many landmarks, from the Athenian case in the Melian Dialogue to Fisher's dictum at the Hague Conference, 'If the welfare of England requires it, international agreements can go to the Devil', and Salandra's *sacro egoismo per l'Italia*. Between lies the moral sense we are considering. It can reach the point of uttering a moral prohibition in politics. But it assumes that moral standards can be upheld without the heavens falling. And it assumes that the fabric of social and political life will be maintained, without accepting the doctrine that to preserve it any measures are permissible. For it assumes that the upholding of moral standards will in itself tend to strengthen the fabric of political life. These assumptions seem to lie within the province of philosophy of history, or belief in Providence, whither it is not the purpose of this paper to pursue them.

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[95] W. R. W. Stephens, *Life and Letters of Edward A. Freeman* (Macmillan, 1895), vol. ii, p. 113; cf. vol. i, p. 151.

[96] Speech of August 14, 1956 (*Arab News Letter*, Issue Nos. 12, 13, undated).

[97] E. L. Woodward, 'Some Reflections on British Policy, 1939–45', *International Affairs*, vol. 31, no. 3 July 1955, p. 290.

4

Three Questions of Methodology

There are three preparatory points to be made in considering this study of international theory.* Firstly, the sources used are not only theoretical writers, formal political theorists and international lawyers, but also statements by, and perhaps indeed the policies of, politicians. The distinction is not hard-and-fast anyway: Machiavelli was a retired Secretary of State of the Republic of Florence; Bismarck spent his retirement writing his *Reflections and Reminiscences*,[1] which is unreliable history but perhaps the greatest book on statecraft of the nineteenth century (one might perhaps compare Churchill in the twentieth). Lenin's theoretical writings were all blows struck in the day-to-day political struggle, and so were Burke's and Hamilton's. Some of the greatest statesmen have not written books or even journalism, yet they have personalities which reveal their political theory. The ideas which Gladstone or Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson or Lord Salisbury represent in politics can be gathered from their speeches. The main source for the theory of Asian neutralism in the 1950s must be Nehru's speeches; and it would be foolish to neglect Vyshinsky's or Khrushchev's in considering international Communism. One can even learn something about politics from listening to statesmen at press-conferences or eavesdropping upon them when they are undressed as when Dulles talked to the editor of *Life* magazine.[2]

The second point concerns the hypostatization of categories. There is always the important risk of taking a classificatory system too seriously and too concretely: "what the Germans in their terse and sparkling way call the hypostatization of

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* [Ed.] Martin Wight appears to have drafted this note for possible inclusion in an introduction to the lectures eventually published as *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* ed. Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991).

[1] Otto Prince von Bismarck, *Reflections and Reminiscences*, trans. by A. J. Butler (London: Smith, Elder, and Company, 1898), two volumes.

[2] [Ed.] Wight evidently refers to the famous 'verge of war' statement by John Foster Dulles, then the US Secretary of State: 'You have to take chances for peace, just as you must take chances in war. Some say that we were brought to the verge of war. Of course we were brought to the verge of war. The ability to get to the verge without getting into the war is the necessary art. If you cannot master it, you inevitably get into war. If you try to run away from it, if you are scared to go to the brink, you are lost. We've had to look it square in the face—on the question of enlarging the Korean war, on the question of getting into the Indochina war, on the question of Formosa. We walked to the brink and we looked it in the face. We took strong action.' Dulles quoted in James Shepley, 'How Dulles Averted War', *Life*, 16 January 1956, p. 78.

methodological categories, or the habit of treating a mental convenience as if it were an objective thing."[3]

It is convenient to group international theorists under headings, but when the question is asked: "What is the Revolutionist position on this issue?" the danger is incurred of believing that there is such a person as "the Revolutionist," whereas "the Revolutionist" is only an attempted generalization about political thinkers as varied as Junius Brutus, Cardinal Bellarmine, Christian von Wolff, Kant, Robespierre, Mazzini, Lenin, and Nehru. This is once again the ancient, fundamental question of Universals, which has been debated between the Realists and the Nominalists under different names in all ages: do genera and species have a substantial existence, or do they consist in bare intellectual concepts only?[4]

It is best to think of the totality of international theorists as a spectrum: a progressive series of colors imperceptibly merging into one another; and just as on the spectrum one can point and say: "Here it is green, here it becomes blue, here indigo," so there are three lines drawn across this belt of political theory, lines of which one will be the axis of Realism, the others of Rationalism and Revolutionism, each trying to transfix or graze the maximum number of representatives of the group. But one must always remember that the concrete is more important than the abstract, and that these men and their books or their wrestlings with political problems individually matter more, and are more worthy of attention than generalizations about what they have in common; indeed, many of the greatest are great because they have a foot in both camps. There is another criticism, of a similar kind which deserves less sympathy. The spectre of Progress arises, clothed in polished steel, glass, and aluminum, and says, "How can you generalize about sixteenth and twentieth century thinkers, confusing them in common categories? The only valid classification is later against earlier."

The last point to be made concerns value judgments. My purpose is exposition and comparison, not criticism in any sense of propounding theory which they are measured against. My own beliefs are of course implicit in the exposition and comparison but I shall try to restrain them and to give as little material as possible for speculating whether I would classify myself as Realist, Rationalist, or Revolutionist.

A person came to make him [the Earl of Shaftesbury] a visit whilst he was sitting one day with a lady of his family, who retired upon that to another part of the room with her work, and seemed not to attend to the conversation between the earl and the other person, which turned soon into some dispute upon subjects of

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[3] G. M. Young, *Victorian England: Portrait of an Age*, second edition (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 185.

[4] [Ed.] Martin Wight's note is incomplete: 'Aristotle, in Rashdall (?) Universalities.' Wight may have intended to refer to a work by Hastings Rashdall (1858–1924), an English historian and philosopher, the author of *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* (1895), among other works.

religion; after a good deal of that sort of talk, the earl said at last, 'People differ in their discourse and profession about these matters, but men of sense are really but of one religion.' Upon which says the lady of a sudden, 'Pray, my lord, what religion is that which men of sense agree in?' 'Madam,' says the earl immediately, 'men of sense never tell it.'[5]

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[5] The Earl of Shaftesbury quoted in Gilbert Burnet, *Burnet's History of My Own Time*, ed. by Osmund Airy, vol. I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897), p. 172n.

5

Machiavellian Temptations: Methodological Warning

Three points may be made about the enterprise of studying theories of international politics.* Firstly, there is the difficulty of identifying a theory in practice; arguably, politics and political situations are not determined by beliefs and theories, but by other matters, such as power-status and interest. For example, was Bismarck a Machiavellian in action or simply an agent of a rising great power which was attaining predominance? If a state is quite plainly pursuing a divide-and-rule policy, is this to be attributed to a theoretical premise or to the necessities of security? If the French between the wars perpetually came back to the proposal for an international force (and Selwyn Lloyd proposed one in British disarmament proposals),[1] did this illustrate a Grotian philosophy, or just the status quo position? Take the question of political nominalism: when Bismarck said that Europe means several great powers, he illustrated the nominalist thinking of the Machiavellians; the nominalist boot can sometimes be put on the other foot. Consider this example, from the late fifties:

> The Prime Minister of the Central African Federation, Sir Roy Welensky, said to-day that it might have been politically expedient for him to have allowed Nyasaland to secede from the Federation, but that he was "not prepared to bargain over the future of the Federation."[2]

Here Welensky is a philosophical Realist about the Federation, but one can imagine a Bismarck caustically asking: "What is the Central African Federation but a constitutional engine for extending the rule of European settlers in Southern

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* [Ed.] Martin Wight appears to have drafted this note as part of a possible introduction to the lectures eventually published as *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* ed. Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991).

[1] [Ed.] Selwyn Lloyd served as Britain's Foreign Secretary in 1955–1960. The British government at that time appears to have defined a guarded and nuanced approach to the idea of a permanent UN force. London publicly expressed interest in a study of such a force while rejecting the idea as undesirable and even dangerous in its internal deliberations. For background, see Edward Johnson, 'A Permanent UN Force: British Thinking after Suez', *Review of International Studies*, 17(3) (July 1991), pp. 251–266.

[2] Welensky quoted in *The Guardian*, 19 September 1959.

Rhodesia over the neighboring territories?" Does one conclude that Welensky was a Grotian? This seems unlikely; he is probably to be classified as a Machiavellian. One can imagine Welensky talking nominalism in certain circumstances. Thus in response to the argument that African nationalism and the African National Congress were the real forces in the area, not the Federation, Welensky would have argued that the ANC had no standing and upheld instead the moderate and loyal men whom Macmillan appointed to the Monckton Commission; these men in turn could be dismissed as stooges, mere window-dressing.

This imaginary argument casts doubt on the suggestion that nominalism is a Machiavellian characteristic. It would appear, rather, that each side is a philosophical Realist about its own projects and a nominalist about its opponents', and about the forces or institutions to which they pointed. There are other examples to support such a view: The Japanese were Realist about the Co-Prosperity Sphere;[3] the Germans were Realist about the New Order in Europe but nominalist about the Slav nations; and Hitler was nominalist about the USA.

The conclusion to which this line of argument tends is not, as suggested, that political nominalism is a characteristic of Machiavellianism, but rather, that everybody is Realist about his own schemes, and nominalist about his adversaries'. This would be a Machiavellian conclusion on a profounder level; it is a clarification or extension of Machiavelli's own doctrine that "men in general are more affected by what a thing appears to be than by what it is, and are frequently influenced more by appearances than by the reality."[4]

Let me make three provisional suggestions about this: in historical retrospect, the philosophies of statesmen do seem observably to colour their policies. It is difficult to explain Napoleon III without allowing for a genuine and effective belief in nationalism, especially as regards Italy and Rumania; difficult to think about the American Civil War without supposing that Lincoln fought it differently from one who had different political beliefs; and similarly, it is difficult to explain American policy at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 simply on the principle that the USA was now a Dominant Power without allowing for Wilson's peculiar idealism; and difficult to understand German policy from 1933 to 1945 without understanding Hitler's beliefs.

The change in Soviet policy since the 1950s is partly due to the restiveness of the Soviet people, and their demand for more consumer goods, but also due to the personal contrast, first between Khrushchev and Stalin, and more recently between Brezhnev and the Kremlin Old Guard.

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[3] [Ed.] The Japanese termed the regions under their control from the 1930s through the end of World War II in 1945 the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.
[4] [Ed.] Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Discourses*, trans. Leslie J. Walker (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950), vol. I, Book One, Discourse 25, p. 272.

If statesmen's philosophies seem to colour their policies, perhaps International Theory is to International Politics what the colour is to a picture or painting. Power, status, interest, security and so on provide the form, design and composition, while political philosophy provides the colour. Then one can see the American Civil War as a kind of Tintoretto, a masterpiece painted by Abraham Lincoln in all the rich colours and pigments of his warm humanity, his profound sense of responsibility and melancholy and tragic vision. But this conception easily lends itself to Machiavellian use. Design, drawing, and composition are prior to colour in a picture, the Machiavellian will say; it is possible to have a picture without colour, with a black outline and a grey background, but not to have a picture without any drawing or some structure of composition. Similarly, you always have the power situation, the inescapable framework of necessity that confines international relations, but the colour provided by beliefs and moralities is secondary and, so to speak, optional. "Give me a single instance of a politician or nation who has sacrificed national interest to theory."[5]

But one can grant the Machiavellian much of his case without capitulating wholly: of course all statesmen work within the framework of necessity and are concerned with the defense of the national interest, but this blessed phrase covers large ambiguities, and wide degrees of enlightenment are possible in the interpretation of self-interest. It is just these differences of accent and of emphasis that are interesting and significant, and in the study of international relations cultivating a sense of colour is as important as appreciating form: appreciating the Venetians as important as appreciating the Florentines.[6]

The second point to be raised when discussing the theory of international politics is whether international theory is now obsolete. It has been argued sometimes that nuclear weapons have revolutionized international politics, making all previous rules of power-politics, national security, and strategy redundant, and likewise all previous theory. What on earth have ancient dug-outs like Kant, Grotius or Machiavelli to tell us about the world of the megaton-bomb? The issue facing mankind is one of survival, and Kant is as obsolete and irrelevant as he would be to shipwrecked sailors in an open boat in the middle of the Atlantic. This argument probably illustrates the state of hypnosis by technological

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[5] [Ed.] Wight appears to have put this sentence in quotation marks to indicate that it is a commonplace observation among Realists, not to cite a specific source. In another work, he asked, 'What is to be answered to the sceptic who crudely says, "Show me a single example of your natural law ethic restraining a statesman from a course of action which was politically expedient"?' Wight, 'Western Values in International Relations', in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966, and London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 124. 'Western Values in International Relations' is reproduced in this volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, and the passage in question may be found on p. 81.

[6] [Ed.] See Wight's essay 'Spiritual and Material Achievement: The Law of Inverse Operation in Italian Visual Art', in Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, vol. VII (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 711–715.

development, or the fallacy of dehumanising. A person in a space rocket is still human, as well as the men who commissioned it, and moral faculties are not extinguished by reason of finding oneself in a new mode of transport. It is this realisation that makes science-fiction one of the great popular moral literatures of our time (as the Western was for previous generations), and all the traditional problems of political philosophy are projected into interstellar space.[7]

The third point is whether the relevance or application of these three ways of thought is preselected. This is a more sophisticated and insinuating doubt. One might argue that there is a Kantian way of looking at life, a Kantian theory of morals, but that this is the morality and philosophy of private personal life. "Act according to a principle which you can will should become a universal law"[8] is obviously a useful yardstick in private relations but begins to break down in politics.

And there is a Grotian political philosophy, of sociability, Natural Law and moral responsibility, which provides useful guidance in civic affairs and domestic politics, at least in law-abiding states, but has little relation to international affairs. (This would amount to saying Grotius had failed, because his explicit concern was with international relations and he wanted to transfer certain political concepts such as the punitive use of force to international life.)

But it is the Machiavellian political philosophy which describes, explains and gives guidance in international politics. Thus we get a picture where Kantianism is on the whole relevant to personal relations, Grotianism to politics proper, and Machiavellianism to international relations. Perhaps the three traditions are concentric circles.

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[7] For example, James Blish, "A Case of Conscience," in *Best Science Fiction* (London: Faber, 1958).
[8] [Ed. This is a paraphrase of Kant's 'categorical imperative', set out in his *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals* in 1785.]

6

The Balance of Power
in *The World in March 1939*

Hitler's entry into Prague on the evening of 15 March 1939 was the climax of German territorial aggression in time of formal peace.* For five years Germany had dominated and terrorized Europe, in widening circles, without beginning a war. For the past year Hitler's chalet at Obersalzberg had been the centre of European diplomacy, as once were the convent of the Escurial and the palace of Versailles. Like Philip II's occupation of Portugal in 1580, and Louis XIV's seizure of Strasbourg in 1681, the German annexation of Bohemia and Moravia in March 1939 was the last expansionist triumph of an overmighty state before the tardy revival of a concern to preserve the balance of power produced a grand alliance in counterpoise and led to general hostilities.

After the First World War it was possible to believe that the Great Powers had lost something of their former primacy in the international system, because of the multiplication of small states on the principle of nationality and the new attempt to constitutionalize international politics through the League of Nations. In the course of the 1930s the Great Powers reasserted their predominance, and by 15 March 1939 the ultimate decisions of peace and war were seen to lie once more with them and not with the majority of states.[1] Since the final territorial

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* [Ed.] Wight published this chapter, "The Balance of Power," in Arnold Toynbee and Frank T. Ashton-Gwatkin (eds), *The World in March 1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), pp. 508–531.

[1] See Arnold J. Toynbee, *The World after the Peace Conference: Being an Epilogue to the 'History of the Peace Conference of Paris' and a Prologue to the 'Survey of International Affairs, 1920–1923* (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), pp. 24–35; Arnold J. Toynbee and V. M. Boulter, *Survey of International Affairs, 1936* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), pp. 30–31. [Ed. Subsequent references to this annual survey published by Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs are indicated simply by *Survey* and the year covered.]
Of the many attempts to define a Great Power (cf. H. C. Hillmann, "Comparative Strength of the Great Powers," in Arnold Toynbee and Frank T. Ashton-Gwatkin, eds., *The World in March 1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 367, note 2) perhaps the best is Treitschke's: 'A State may be defined as a Great Power if its total destruction would require a coalition of other States to accomplish' (Heinrich von Treitschke: *Politics,* translated from the German by Blanche Dugdale and Torben de Bille (London, Constable, 1916), ii. 607; cf. *Survey* for 1937, i. 1–2). A Small Power may be defined as any state that is not a Great Power—a negative quality that outweighs in importance all variations of size, population, and resources. Seldom since the system of independent sovereign states first appeared in the sixteenth century has the number of Great Powers approached as much as one-quarter of the whole. This highest proportion of Great to Small Powers was probably attained between 1870 and 1914, when the number of Great Powers rose to eight, and the principle of nationality had not yet run its length in multiplying the small (Toynbee: *World after the Peace Conference,* pp. 7–8, 12).

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resettlement after the First World War there had been several clashes between the Small Powers, but only two had been on a scale amounting to war, the Bolivian-Paraguayan conflict of 1932–5 and the Saʿūdī–Yamani War of 1934, and these happened to be in regions of the world remote from Great Power rivalries.[2] But the acts of international violence that succeeded one another in an unbroken chain of causation and with increasing momentum up to Hitler's seizure of Prague had all been done by Great Powers—the Japanese conquest of Manchuria in 1931–2,[3] the Italian conquest of Ethiopia in 1935–6,[4] the Japanese invasion of China in 1937,[5] and the series of aggressions by Germany herself that culminated in the conquest of Bohemia and Moravia on 15 March 1939; and it was through the intervention of the Great Powers that the Spanish Civil War, which came to an end in the same month, had been magnified into an international danger.[6] It had always rested with the Great Powers whether a local conflict should develop into a general war, for a general war is to be defined as one in which all the Great Powers take part.[7] By 1939 the psychological ascendancy of the Great Powers was so marked that it rested with them whether there should be any local conflict at all.

   An attempt had been made in 1919 to restrain the collective authority of the Great Powers within the forms of permanent membership of the Council of the League of Nations. The Great Powers soon threw off these constitutional trappings. Some did not join the League, some resigned from it, and those which retained their membership found a greater common interest with the Great Powers outside than with the other members of the League. As early as the Corfù dispute of 1923 the tendency reappeared for the Great Powers to act as a supreme junta, directing international relations if necessary at the expense of the Small Powers as the Concert of Europe had done in the nineteenth century.[8] This habitual trend ran on through the Four-Power Pact of 1933,[9] the Laval–Hoare Plan of 1935,[10] and the British policy of appeasement, to culminate in the Munich Conference of 1938. None the less, the solidarity of the Great Powers was never more than the thin casing of an explosive bomb. Their consciousness of a common interest became most acute in international crises as a symptom of rising conflict between their private interests, a spasm of contraction before the flight

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[2] *Survey* for 1933, pp. 393–438 and *Survey* for 1936, pp. 837–72; *Survey* for 1934, pp. 310–21. The Bolivian-Paraguayan conflict had produced the first declaration of war since the end of the First World War *(Survey* for 1933, pp. 398, 417. It was also to be the last declaration of war before the British declaration of war on Germany on 3 September 1939). The Anatolian War of 1919–23 (*H.P.C.* vi. 25–26, 31–39, 44–48, 104–6), the Russo-Polish War of 1920 (ibid. vi. 318–22), and the Najdi-Hijāzī War of 1924–5 *(Survey* for 1925, i. 271–308) may be regarded as parts of the territorial resettlement immediately consequent on the First World War. [Ed. *H.P.C.* stands for *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, ed. H. W. V. Temperley (London: Oxford University Press for British Institute of International Affairs, 1920–1924) here and in subsequent references.]

[3] *Survey* for 1931, pp. 438 seqq.; *Survey* for 1932, pp. 432–70.   [4] *Survey* for 1935, vol. ii.

[5] *Survey* for 1937, i. 145 seqq.   [6] Ibid. ii. 126 seqq.; *Survey* for 1938, i, 307 seqq.

[7] See Toynbee: *World after the Peace Conference*, p. 4.   [8] *Survey* for 1920–3, pp. 348–56.

[9] *Survey* for 1933, pp. 206–24.   [10] *Survey* for 1935, ii. 280–311.

from unity. 15 March 1939 marked the point at which the pretence of common interest between the two coalitions of Great Powers was finally abandoned and the conflict of private interests was recognized as insuperable.[11]

The Great Powers now fell into three divisions: the Western Powers, the Anti-Comintern Powers, and Soviet Russia. The Western Powers were the rump of the victorious alliance of the First World War; the phrase meant primarily Britain and France. These were the two senior nation-states of Western Christendom, whose rivalry had long determined European politics, until both alike were threatened in the nineteenth century by the ascendancy of newcomers to the Western power-system, Russia and Prussia, who lacked or rejected the traditions of Western Civilization.[12] The United States of America was grouped with them by a more tenuous historical association and by a community of political ideals.[13] But their common ideals had not precluded mutual conflicts in the past,[14] and it could not be said that if the three Western Powers had been the only Great Powers in the world the danger of war would have been abolished. What made the Western Powers conscious of their common ideals in 1939 was consciousness of their common interests. The principal victors of the First World War, they supported,

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[11] Cf. *Survey* for 1937, i. 6–8.

[12] The rivalry of the French and English Crowns dated from the accession to the English throne in 1154 of a French feudatory who was Duke of Normandy, Count of Anjou, and husband to the heiress of Aquitaine. In the Hundred Years War of 1337–1451 dynastic rivalry became confirmed by the formation of national consciousness on either side, and the Anglo-French conflict replaced the Papal-Imperial conflict as the central issue of Western politics. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Anglo-French conflict was interrupted by the ascendancy of the Spanish Power, between approximately the Treaty of Amiens of 1527, which was the first Anglo-French alliance against Spain, and the Treaty of Dover of 1670, which was the last English alliance with a France that had already replaced Spain as dominant European Power. The traditional Anglo-French hostility was resumed with the adhesion of England to the Grand Alliance against Louis XIV by the Treaty of Vienna in 1689, and lasted down to the final defeat of Napoleon in 1815. From then on France and Britain found themselves increasingly drawn into co-operation—in the nineteenth century against the preponderance of Russia, so that they became allies for the first time since the Franco-Anglo-Dutch War of 1670–4 in the Crimean War of 1854–6, and in the twentieth century against the preponderance of Germany.

[13] In American history Britain was the traditional enemy. The American states fought Britain for their independence in the War of 1775–83; as the United States they fought her again in 1812; and on at least three subsequent occasions war between the two Powers was possible—during the Oregon controversy of 1845–6, during the American Civil War in the Mason and Slidell dispute of 1861 and the Laird rams dispute of 1863, and in the Venezuela dispute of 1895. The unbroken tradition of diplomatic co-operation between Britain and the United States dated only from Britain's tacit support of American interests in the Spanish-American War of 1898. With France, however, the American states formed in 1778 the one 'entangling alliance' of their history; and though there was a breach of diplomatic relations and a *de facto* state of war between the two Powers from 1798 to 1800, and France violated the Monroe Doctrine by intervening in Mexico in 1862–6, nevertheless the United States and France continued to regard one another as traditional friends. The sentiment was symbolized by the Statue of Liberty in New York harbour, which was presented to the United States in 1884 by the French people, and whose new floodlighting system, consisting of ninety-six 1,000-watt lamps flashing upwards on the monument and fourteen 1,000-watt lamps in the torch of the Statue itself, was inaugurated on 26 October 1931 by Mademoiselle José Laval, daughter and companion of the French Premier on his visit to President Hoover (*Survey* for 1931, pp. 124–5), by pressing a button on the top of the Empire State Building.

[14] And their mutual conflicts had modified their common ideals, as when in the nineteenth century Britain built her second empire in accordance with the lessons of the American Revolution, and adapted her political system to the democracy of the French Revolution.

with whatever varieties of emphasis and irresponsibility between themselves, the division of international power that had resulted from the war and the international system based thereon. This, in the last analysis, separated them from the Powers which rejected those international arrangements.

Nevertheless, there were serious divergences of opinion both within and between the Western Powers, whether or not their vital interests were indeed the same. There was a very uneven distribution of power between the three states, and it was characteristic of democratic politics in that period that power varied inversely with acceptance of responsibility for maintaining the international system from which all three benefited. France probably had the clearest understanding of enlightened self-interest in foreign relations, but she was the weakest in resources and geographically the most vulnerable, with the least chance among the three of taking a lead. Britain was the middle term. She had greater resources of strength than France, though she had now yielded the world-predominance of the past two centuries to the United States; she was a member of the League like France, but was trying as far as possible to limit her commitments on the European continent. But since the German remilitarization of the Rhineland France and Britain had walked in step, and the British guarantee of assistance to France of 9 March 1936 was final explicit recognition that the European vital interests of the two Powers were identical.[15] The United States was incomparably the strongest and most impregnable of the Western Powers, but after the First World War she had dissociated herself from them and withdrawn into isolation, repudiating all political commitments outside the American continent and its Pacific outliers. This made it impossible for Britain and France to count upon her support, and easy for their less percipient enemies to suppose that they would not enjoy it.[16] British statesmen assumed after the First World War that henceforward

[15] *Survey* for 1936, p. 275. The evasion by France of her treaty obligations to Czechoslovakia in September 1938 showed that in defining Anglo-French vital interests in Europe the stronger partner would have a preponderant voice, and that the definition would be in minimum rather than maximum terms.

[16] For Hitler's belief in the decadence and imminent collapse of the United States, and in the impossibility of a new American intervention in Europe, see Hermann Rauschning: *Hitler Speaks: A Series of Political Conversations with Adolf Hitler on his Real Aims* (London: Thornton Butterworth Ltd., 1939), pp. 14, 34, 72, 78–9. As late as 23 November 1939 Hitler could write off the United States as a potential factor in the anti-German coalition: 'America is still not dangerous to us because of its neutrality laws. The strengthening of our opponents by America is still not important', conference with his supreme commanders, 23 November 1939 (*I.M.T. Nuremberg*, xxvi. 331–2 (789–PS); *N.C.A.* ii. 576). The Italian Government had a clearer understanding of American politics, and Mussolini saw that the coming war would mean a third term for Roosevelt (conference between Hitler and Ciano, 12 August 1939 (*I.M.T. Nuremberg*, xxix. 49 (1871–PS); *N.C.A.* iv. 514–15; *Documents* (R.I.I.A.) for 1939–46, i. 178. Cf. *N.C.A.* viii. 523 (077–TC)). [Ed. *I.M.T. Nuremberg* stands for *Trials of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg, 1945–1946*, Proceedings and Documents in Evidence, 42 volumes (Nuremberg: International Military Tribunal, 1947–1949) here and in subsequent references. *N.C.A.* stands for *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression* (A collection of documentary evidence and guide materials prepared by the American and British prosecuting staffs for…the International Military Tribunal at Nürnberg.) 8 vols., with 'Opinion and Judgement' and Supplements A and B (Washington, U.S.G.P.O., 1946–1947) here and in subsequent

British policy was conditioned by American policy, at least in issues of peace and war,[17] but they could not assume that American statesmen were making the same assumption on their side. A Power may conclude that its policy is dependent on the policy of a friendly Power with which it possesses no alliance, but it cannot infer that the other Power's policy is based on the reciprocal principle, least of all when the other Power is the stronger and has the greater apparent freedom of action. In the spring of 1939 there was perhaps, among the politicians of the Western Powers, only a single man who could see that the safety of the Rhine frontier was a vital interest of the United States as well as of Britain and France— Franklin Roosevelt. And he was certainly the only man who, for all the limitations imposed by the public opinion of his countrymen, was in a position to say it.[18]

In opposition to the Western Powers stood the three Powers of the Anti-Comintern Pact.[19] Germany was the loser of the First World War. Italy and Japan, the weakest and least satisfied of the victors, had gone over to the malcontents' camp. Banded together by dissatisfaction and greed, the three might appear in

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references. *Documents* (R.I.I.A.) stands for *Documents on International Affairs* for 1928–1938; 13 vols.; for 1939–1946, in progress (London: Oxford University Press for Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1929–) here and in subsequent references.]

[17] The dependence of British upon American policy was illustrated by Baldwin's declaration on 23 November 1935 that 'so long as I have any responsibility in a Government for deciding whether or not this country shall join in a collective peace system, I will say this: never as an individual will I sanction the British Navy being used for an armed blockade of any country in the world until I know what the United States of America is going to do' (quoted in the *Survey* for 1935, ii. 50). The limits to that dependence were illustrated by Chamberlain's rejection of Roosevelt's offer in January 1938 to initiate conversations with the European Powers with the purpose of finding a general settlement (Winston Churchill, *The Second World War* (London: Cassell, 1948–1950; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948–1950), vol. i, pp. 196–199). Cf. Arnold Toynbee, "The British Commonwealth," in Arnold Toynbee and Frank T. Ashton-Gwatkin (eds), *The World in March 1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), pp. 38–40.

[18] He said it in his conference with the Senate Military Affairs Committee on 31 January 1939 (*Survey* for 1938, i. 632–3, and Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner: *American White Paper* (London, Joseph, 1940), pp. 46–8).

[19] The various treaty engagements between the Anti-Comintern Powers were as follows: (1) *The Axis*. A limited German-Italian agreement was announced on 25 October 1936, and followed by Mussolini's speech at Milan on 1 November 1936 proclaiming the existence of the Axis (*Survey* for 1936, pp. 581–2). The German-Italian military alliance known as the Pact of Steel was signed in Berlin on 22 May 1939: this was a general offensive alliance (*Documents* (R.I.I.A.) for 1939–46, i. 68). (2) *The Anti-Comintern Pact*. The German-Japanese Agreement against the Third International was signed in Berlin on 25 November 1936 (*Survey* for 1936, p. 384). Italy adhered, with the status of an original signatory, on 6 November 1937 (*Survey* for 1937, i. 43). Manchukuo adhered on 16 January 1939, Hungary on 24 February 1939, Spain on 27 March 1939. At the Anti-Comintern Conference in Berlin on 25 November 1941, those Powers renewed their adherence, and the following adhered for the first time: Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Nanking (Wang Ching-wei), Rumania, Slovakia. (3) *The Tripartite Pact*. This was a ten-year pact of mutual assistance signed by Germany, Italy, and Japan at Berlin on 27 September 1940: it provided for mutual co-operation in establishing a new world order (*I.M.T. Nuremberg*, xxxi. 55–7; *N.C.A.* v. 355–7). Hungary adhered on 20 November 1940, Rumania on 23 November 1940, Slovakia on 24 November 1940, Bulgaria on 1 March 1941, Yugoslavia on 25 March 1941, Croatia on 15 June 1941. The Tripartite Pact as between Germany, Italy, and Japan was automatically transformed into a full military alliance on the United States' entry into the Second World War.

Western eyes to be a fortuitous confederacy of aggressor states. But their partnership, no less than that of the Western Powers, was an expression of historical forces. Germany and Italy had much in common. They were the newest and most politically retarded of the European Great Powers.[20] The recentness of their national unity, moreover, and the mutual dislike and contempt of Italians and Germans, might tend to obscure the antiquity of a German-Italian association, which went back for twelve centuries to a period before an English or French state existed.[21] It was appropriate that the Nazi appeal to the traditions of the Ottonian Empire should be accompanied by an alliance between Germany and the country whose possession first gave the German kings the imperial title.[22] And as Germany and Italy were the newest of the European Great Powers, Japan was the newest of all the Great Powers, and the only non-Western state (apart from Russia) that had yet attained that diplomatic rank.[23] The envy and admiration felt by Germany and Italy for their more mature, wealthy, successful, and civilized fellow members of Western Civilization was felt by Japan towards Western

[20] Prussia became a Great Power with the conquest of Silesia in 1740 and its successful retention through the ensuing War of the Austrian Succession, though she did not enlarge herself into a national German Great Power until the establishment of the North German Confederation in 1866. United Italy was formally recognized as a Great Power by her invitation to the London Conference on the Luxembourg question in 1867.

[21] The political dependence of Italy upon a transalpine Germanic Power began when the Frankish King Pepin III was recognized as overlord of the Lombard kingdom in 755. In 774 his son Charlemagne annexed the Lombard kingdom and assumed its crown, which proved a prelude to his assumption of the imperial title; in 780 he set up a subordinate *Regnum Italicum*, rather larger than the old Lombard kingdom, on behalf of a son. Otto the Great, king of the Germans, conquered Italy in 951 and assumed the title of king of Italy as a step towards reviving the imperial title. His successors down to the thirteenth century ruled Germany, Burgundy, and Italy, and the title 'the Empire' became the official designation for this complex of lands (see G. Barraclough: *The Mediaeval Empire: Idea and Reality* (London, Philip, Historical Association publications, General Series G17, 1950), p. 16); the kingship of Italy was thus merged in the imperial dignity. The last Emperor to wield effective authority in either sphere was Frederick II Hohenstaufen, and Italy became separated from Germany when Charles IV in 1346 agreed to the virtual abandonment of imperial claims in Italy as the price of papal support for his election. The Italian ascendancy of Charles V (who was the last Emperor, except for Napoleon, to receive the iron crown of the Lombards) was the expression not of German but of Spanish power. But with the partition of the Spanish Monarchy at the Peace of Utrecht in 1713 Italy passed under the domination of the Austrian Habsburgs; and against the Austrian Habsburgs the common interest of national unification brought Prussia and United Italy into alliance in 1866. 'Italy has often revolted against German rule; and Germany has often resented Italy's cultural leadership. The Habsburg monarchy was for long the hyphen between the two; and in the perspective of history the Axis appears as the partition of the Habsburg monarchy by the two revolutionary nations of 1848' (A. J. P. Taylor in *Manchester Guardian*, 3 May 1949).

[22] It reflected the difference in strength and vigour between the two régimes that Nazi political archaism was in terms of the early history of Western Civilization; Fascist political archaism was in terms of a dead civilization, of a balance of historical forces that was remote and irrecoverable. Mussolini's Roman imperialism was the most vapid and pretentious of the political ghosts that have haunted Italian history in medieval and modern times, the successor to the Roman senate of Arnold of Brescia and the tribunate of Rienzi. It could not be logical and claim the Rhine and Danube frontier; but the German front in Italy in 1943–4 was a transient reappearance of the wavering and contracting frontier of the medieval *Regnum Italicum*.

[23] Japan became recognized as a Great Power through her defeat of Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5.

Civilization as a whole. The community which Germany and Italy resented from within, as its most backward and unfortunate children, Japan resented from without as its most precocious apprentice. Thus the three Powers found an ideological affinity in repudiating the Western tradition and embracing a fanatical authoritarian nationalism.

But between the Powers of the Anti-Comintern Pact, as between the Western Powers, it was common international interests that provided the essential link. They were the proletarian nations.[24] Their declared aim was to renovate the world: 'to establish and maintain a new order of things'.[25] This meant territorial redistribution. 'We must not make a purely defensive alliance. There would be no need of one, since no one is thinking of attacking the totalitarian States. Instead we wish to make an alliance in order to change the map of the world.'[26] But the partnership of the Anti-Comintern Powers was inherently limited to a combine of aggression. Their common interest was purely predatory, their common ideology was the assertion of incompatible national egoisms.[27] They had no loyalty to a common tradition, and rejected the conceptions of political morality which mitigated the unequal distribution of strength between the Western Powers. The mutual relations of the Anti-Comintern Powers were implicitly those of naked force. The alliance between Germany and Italy was only possible because there was no question which was lion and which was jackal, and while it sometimes seemed that the co-operation of Germany and Japan was hampered by their geographical remoteness, it was in fact the condition of their effective partnership that they were separated by the whole length of the Soviet Union and of the British sphere of influence in the Indian Ocean.[28]

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[24] For Mussolini's use of this expression as early as 1919 see below, p. 104, note 35. Cf. his speech in the Italian Chamber of 3 June 1925: 'We who, without rhetoric, are a nation eminently proletarian' (quoted in the *Survey* for 1927, p. 296, note 5), and his speech at Pontinia on 18 December 1935: 'That war which we have begun on African soil…is the war of the poor, of the disinherited, of the proletariat. Against us is ranged the front of conservatism, of selfishness, of hypocrisy' (quoted in the *Survey* for 1935, ii. 312).

[25] Preamble to the Tripartite Pact of 27 September 1940 (*I.M.T. Nuremberg*, xxxi. 56; *N.C.A.* v. 356).

[26] Mussolini to Ribbentrop in Rome, 28 October 1938 (Ciano: *Europa*, p. 378; Eng. version, pp. 245–6). [Ed. These references concern Galeazzo Ciano, *L'Europa verso la catastrofe: 184 colloqui verbalizzati da Galeazzo Ciano* (Milan: Mondadori, 1948); and *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, ed. Malcolm Muggeridge, trans. Stuart Hood (London: Odhams Press, 1948).]

[27] Cf. *Survey* for 1937, i, 46–7.

[28] See Mussolini's remarks on being told that a German had described him as 'our Gauleiter of Italy', in Ciano: *Diario* (*1939–43*), 13 October 1941 [Ed. Ciano: *Diario (1939–43)* stands for Galeazzo Ciano: *Diario 1939 (–1943)*, 2 vols., 4th edn (Milan, Rizzoli, 1947); *Ciano's Diary 1939–1943*, ed. Malcolm Muggeridge (London: Heinemann, 1947) here and in subsequent references.]; cf. affidavit by Halder, 22 November 1945 (*N.C.A.* viii. 644); Rauschning; *Hitler Speaks*, p. 128. 'The aim of our struggle must be to create a unified Europe. The Germans alone can really organize Europe. There is practically no other leading power left. In this connection the Fuehrer re-emphasized how happy we can be that there are no Japanese on the European continent. Even though the Italians today give us many a headache and create difficulties, we must nevertheless consider ourselves lucky that they cannot be serious competitors in the future organization of Europe. If the Japanese were settled on the European continent the situation would be quite different. Today we are practically the only power on

The seventh Great Power, the Soviet Union, stood apart from these groups. It was the greatest victim of the First World War. The peace that had been imposed upon it by Germany at Brest-Litovsk was incomparably more severe than the peace subsequently imposed upon Germany by the Western Powers, and in the final settlement after the war Russia lost a greater proportion of her territory than any other European state except Hungary. Russia was the first revolutionary nation, repudiating all the traditions of the West, since the French Revolution;[29] and she was the original proletarian nation, feared, despoiled, and segregated by other Powers. Thus there were affinities between Russia and the Anti-Comintern Powers, and it was not inconsistent that as soon as the Anti-Comintern Powers bound themselves together in the Tripartite Pact of 1940 there should be negotiations for the adhesion to that Pact of the Soviet Union.[30] Like the Anti-Comintern Powers, Russia had an ambivalent attitude towards Western Civilization whose earliest convert she was, having entered the comity of nations as a Great Power two centuries before Japan, and a generation before Prussia rose to that rank. Like Italy, Russia had a tradition of political and cultural dependence upon Germany: the Russo-German partnership had always been an uneasy one, but it had been the principal theme of Eastern European history since the passing of the Ottoman ascendancy at the end of the seventeenth century.[31] Heir to the Byzantine tradition, Russia possessed a sense of messianic vocation as world-leader and supplanter of the decadent West; but it was the Western doctrine of Marxism that

the European mainland with a capacity for leadership' (Joseph Goebbels, *The Goebbels Diaries*, tr. and ed. Louis Paul Lochner (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1948), pp. 279–80).

[29] '…it is permissible to suggest that the deepest significance of the bolshevik revolution will in future be found, not in the changes which it introduced in Russia and elsewhere, but in its successful repudiation of the rule of law among the nations' (H. A. Smith: 'The Anarchy of Power', *Cambridge Journal*, January 1948, p. 215).

[30] See draft agreement between the Powers of the Tripartite Pact and the Soviet Union, prepared during Molotov's visit to Berlin in November 1940 (*Nazi-Soviet Relations*, pp. 355–8). [Ed. *Nazi–Soviet Relations* stands for US Department of State: *Nazi–Soviet Relations 1939–1941: Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office*, ed. R. J. Sontag and J. S. Beddie. Dept. of State Publication 3023 (Washington, U.S.G.P.O., 1948) here and in subsequent references.] During his conference with Stalin in the Kremlin on the night of 23–24 August 1939, Ribbentrop 'remarked jokingly that Herr Stalin was surely less frightened by the Anti-Comintern Pact than the City of London and the small British merchants. What the German people thought of this matter is evident from a joke which had originated with the Berliners, well known for their wit and humor, and which had been going the rounds for several months, namely, "Stalin will yet join the Anti-Comintern Pact"' (ibid. p. 75).

[31] 'While in literature, the arts, and fashion France became, until the close of the eighteenth century, the predominant influence or the main intermediary, in other fields German influence was, and remained, more important. This was due to four reasons: the proximity of the German lands, the original partiality of Peter to German ways, the long series of Romanov marriages with the German courts, beginning with Peter's children, and above all the consequences of his acquisition of Livonia and Estonia and his virtual protectorate of Courland, with their predominant German upper class' (B. H. Sumner: *Survey of Russian History* (London: Duckworth, 1944), pp. 340–1). Russia and Austria had a common interest in the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, though this later developed into rivalry in the Balkans; Russia and Prussia had a common interest in the partitioning of Poland. The earliest Russo-Austrian alliance was in 1697; the earliest Russo-Prussian alliance was in 1762, and this inaugurated an *entente* that lasted virtually unbroken to 1914.

inspired her political and economic revolution in the twentieth century, paradoxically cutting her off from the West at the same time as it illustrated her involvement in it.

Nevertheless, there were also deep divisions between Russia and the Anti-Comintern Powers. United in their sense of international proletarianism and in their adoption of totalitarian government, they professed hostile ideologies. The renovation of the world desired by Russia was incomparably more profound than that desired by the Anti-Comintern Powers. They aimed primarily at horizontal conquest, the redistribution of territories that had often been redistributed before; she aimed primarily at vertical conquest, at the extension of her power through an irrevocable social transformation.[32] Besides, their territorial interests conflicted. The inclusion of Russia in the Tripartite Pact was to prove impossible because there cannot be co-operation between expanding Powers of similar strength when their spheres of aggression overlap.[33] The Nazi programme of conquest, moreover, was ultimately directed against Russia. In the modern balance of power Russia and Britain had a certain tradition of co-operation against the strongest Power on the Continent; and since the end of the nineteenth century Russia, France, and Britain had shown a tendency to co-operate against Germany.

The public argument between these three groupings of Great Powers, in the press, over the wireless, and on the platform, giving contradictory interpretations of the crisis in which they were involved, had gone on ever since the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the German defeat in 1918, and with heightened intensity since 1933. The essential affirmations of the controversy might be presented in the form of a conventional three-cornered dialogue, in which the Western Powers sought to justify the maintenance of the existing international system, the Axis Powers asserted the necessity of a redistribution of the world, and the Soviet Union contradicted both by declaring the inevitability and desirability of world revolution.[34]

Western Powers. 'It is true that the present arrangement of the world has some of the characteristics of a hegemony of the Anglo-Saxon and French nations. It is

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[32] Borkenau has pointed out that Mussolini claimed that the twentieth century would be the century of Fascism, and Hitler claimed that the Third Reich would last a thousand years; but that these claims imply the idea of an end. 'Communism admits of no such idea of an end. It is in no need of statements about duration' (Franz Borkenau: *The Totalitarian Enemy* (London: Faber and Faber, 1940), p. 233).

[33] *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, pp. 217–59; Beloff, ii. 348–54. [Ed. Beloff stands for Max Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia 1929–1941*, 2 vols. (London: Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1947–9) here and in subsequent references.]

[34] The spokesmen for the Western Powers were Anglo-Saxon rather than French, not only because of the Anglo-Saxon preponderance among the Western Powers, but also because the Anglo-Saxons possessed the combination of moral self-analysis verging upon guilty conscience and of moral self-justification verging upon hypocrisy which carried the Western argument to its deepest levels. Similarly the spokesmen for the Anti-Comintern Powers were the Axis Powers strictly speaking, since it was they rather than Japan who elaborated the Fascist case. Though the controversy was in principle world-wide, in fact it was still a European debate.

also true that the establishment of their great empires and spheres of interest in the extra-European world was largely brought about by aggressions which, on the whole, few people now seek to defend morally. However, we have now embarked on the endeavour to turn the former anarchy of international relations into a reign of law and order and a reasonable measure of justice, such as has already been achieved on the whole in the national life of the more advanced countries of the world today. The League of Nations provides a basis for approximating towards a higher concept of civilization and an unprecedented degree of world co-operation.'

Axis Powers. 'Is it difficult for you to understand that for us the League of Nations is simply part of the Versailles Treaty? that it is an expression of the predominance you achieved at the end of the World War? We suspected from the outset that the League was to be only a coalition of the rich nations against the proletarian nations.[35] And our suspicion has been confirmed by the consistent neglect of that part of the League Covenant which provides for revision of treaties, and the employment of those parts that are concerned with the maintenance of the established order, as in the attempt to strangle Italy by sanctions.'

Western Powers. 'It is true that the League is part of the Versailles Settlement. But we believe that the Versailles Settlement is far from being unjust. You yourselves pay lip-service to the principle of national self-determination. The Versailles Settlement has reorganized Europe on that principle with a much higher degree of honesty, reasonableness, disinterestedness, and success than might have been expected, and certainly in a manner never before attempted by any general European treaty.'[36]

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[35] This interpretation of the League was put forward by Mussolini in the speech of 23 March 1919 at Milan which marked the birth of Fascism: 'If the League of Nations is to be a solemn "put-up job" in the interests of the rich nations against the proletarian nations for fixing and perpetuating as far as possible the existing balance of world power, let us keep a good eye on it' (*Scritti e discorsi*, i. 374–5). [Ed. *Scritti e discorsi* stands for *Scritti e discorsi di Benito Mussolini*, Edizione definitiva (Milano: Ulrico Hoepli, 1934–) here and in subsequent references.] The word here translated as 'put-up job' is *fregata*, which echoes the motto of the Fascist Squadristi *Me ne frego*—an expression of defiance that, conversely, Mussolini commended in his *Enciclopedia* article of 1932 (Michael Oakeshott: *The Social and Political Doctrines of Contemporary Europe* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1939), p. 171). [Ed.: *Me ne frego* means 'I don't care.' Italian soldiers in World War I used this phrase to express their bravado and indifference to the danger of dying in combat. Mussolini and his followers adopted the phrase as a Fascist motto.] For other references by Mussolini to Italy as a proletarian nation, see above, p. 101, note 24.

[36] 'Cannot we recognize that the settlement of 1919 was an immense advance on any similar settlement made in Europe in the past? In broad outline, it represents a peace of reason and justice, and the whole fabric of the continent depends on its maintenance' (Sir James Headlam-Morley: *Studies in Diplomatic History* (London, Metheun, 1930), p. 185). 'It was a very remarkable treaty. It fulfilled our acknowledged war aims with a degree of perfection that no other European settlement to which we had ever set our hand could equal' (R. B. McCallum: *Public Opinion and the Last Peace* (London, Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 22).

Axis Powers. 'A treaty brutally dictated to the defeated Powers; which severed or excluded more than 10 million Germans from their fatherland; which partitioned Hungary so that a third of the Hungarian nation passed under alien rule. A treaty which ignored or violated the promises made to Italy during the war. A treaty, anyway, which is obsolete. Have you sufficiently recognized the fact that two of us were your allies in the war, but have long ago ceased to accept the authority of the Versailles Settlement? Twenty years have passed since 1919, and you seek, by appealing to age-yellowed archives, to arrest the outward march, the dynamic growth of the young and virile nations. What solution have you to offer to these practical and imperative problems—the desire for reunion of 80 million Germans and their demand for the return of their stolen colonies, the need for expansion of Italy and Japan with their soaring birth-rates and their inadequate resources?'

Soviet Union. 'Neither the Western Powers nor yourselves have the answer to that question, nor the solutions for those problems. They are economic problems which cannot be solved within the limits of the system of production which you all alike exist to maintain. The most important thing about the First World War was not that it produced a new division of the world between the imperialist Powers, for that division (as your argument itself shows) was inherently unstable, and is now being challenged by the Fascist states for the sake of a new division of the world that would not be less unstable. Such is the predatory nature, such is the inner contradiction of imperialism. But during the First World War the imperialist crust was broken at its weakest point by the international revolutionary working-class movement, and there was established in Russia the first proletarian state. From then on there were two camps in the world, a capitalist camp originally led by Britain and America and a socialist camp led by the Soviet Union.[37] If the rise of Fascism has since seemed to confuse this alinement, it is only the supreme example of the conflicts and antagonisms that are generated by capitalism in extreme decay. Fascism is the open terrorist dictatorship established against the rising revolt of the working class by the most aggressive, chauvinist, and reactionary elements of finance-capitalism; and it is at the same time the

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[37] 'Two dominant and mutually antagonist poles of attraction have come into existence, so that, the world over, sympathies are diverging towards one pole or the other: the sympathies of the bourgeois governments tending towards the British-American pole, and the sympathies of the workers of the West and of the revolutionists of the East tending towards the Soviet Union pole. Britain-America is attractive in virtue of its wealth, for in this quarter loans are obtainable. The Soviet Union is attractive in virtue of its revolutionary experience, in virtue of the experience gained in the struggle for the liberation of the workers from the yoke of capitalism and for the liberation of the oppressed nations from imperialist oppression. You see why there is a trend of the sympathies of the workers of Europe and of the revolutionists of the East towards our country. You know what a stay in Russia means to a worker from central or western Europe, or to a revolutionist from one of the oppressed countries; you know how such pilgrims come to us in crowds, and you know how keen is the sympathy towards our country felt by trusty revolutionists all over the world' (J. Stalin: Political report of the Central Committee to the Fourteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 18 December 1925, in *Leninism* (London, Allen & Unwin, 1938), pp. 369–70, where, however, the date is wrongly given as May 1925).

highest expression of the preparation for a new imperialist war to redivide the spoils of the world. Thus it is that the hopes of all progressive mankind are fixed on the Soviet Union, where Socialism holds power, and the economic system which produces this anarchy of possessors and pursuers has over one-sixth of the earth been for ever transcended.'

Axis Powers. 'We who have had practical experience of the revolutions, disturbances, and bloody uprisings produced by Bolshevism in our own countries, and who have successfully undertaken the duty of stamping it out, know best how to answer the pretensions of international Marxism. Whatever its philosophical claims, Bolshevism breeds anarchy. Soviet Russia is the exponent of an international political system which promotes world unrest with the declared aim of world revolution. For the natural and living solidarity of the nation and of the state, Marxism tries to substitute an international solidarity of the proletariat, and pursues that end by disseminating strife, bloodshed, and violence. For spiritual and cultural values, for heroism and leadership, for the creative work of great men and gifted races, it offers the negative and inhuman doctrine of historical materialism, by which men would be only the by-products of economic forces. Thus Marxism is a solvent of all the beliefs and ties we hold most sacred, of our whole human order in state and society. Far from being a higher stage of social development, Communism is the starting-point, the most primitive form of existence: it means a retrogression in every aspect of culture and the subversion of our faith, our morals, and our whole conception of civilization.[38] We who understand this are the bulwark of European discipline and civilization against the enemy of mankind, and by taking upon ourselves the struggle against Bolshevism we are undertaking a truly European mission, which sooner or later the Western Powers will be compelled to recognize.'

Western Powers. 'We must say that your talk of the menace of Bolshevism and your crusade against it seem to us to be disingenuous. We were ready to believe in the danger of Communism until your immoderate insistence on it (together with your other activities) made us begin to think that we might be faced by more immediate dangers. We suspect that the Anti-Comintern Pact may be a good piece of propaganda, serving to conceal your designs against us. From our point of view the similarities between yourselves and Russia are not less striking than

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[38] 'That a British leader-writer refuses to recognize this signifies about as much as if in the fifteenth century a humanist in Vienna should have refused to admit the intention of Mohammedanism to extend its influence in Europe and should have objected that this would be to tear the world asunder—to divide it into East and West', Hitler, speech at Nuremberg, 14 September 1936 (*Speeches* (Baynes), i. 675–6). [Ed. Hitler: *Speeches* (Baynes) or *Speeches* (Baynes) stands for Adolf Hitler: *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler, April 1922–August 1939*, ed. by Norman Baynes (London: Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1942) here and in subsequent references.]

the contrasts. You and she are all alike totalitarian states, copying one another's methods and profiting from one another's existence in a dialectic of interdependent hostility. You are all equally far from democracy as we understand it and value it; and this indeed underlies the lack of confidence we have generally felt about the possibility of successful co-operation with Russia.[39] But, however that may be, we do not think it useful to enter into argument about the ideological interpretation of our international tensions.[40] Our approach is empirical, and we have been hoping to build a law-abiding society in which we could all make our contribution to the common good of mankind according to our several lights. That is why our immediate controversy is with you, the Axis Powers. We are ready to admit considerable truth in what you have said about your economic problems, and latterly in particular we have gone far to meet you. We are ready to discuss the revision of treaties and the redistribution of the resources of the globe—or at least, the question of your easier access to them. But it is impossible to start discussions unless you honestly accept the principle of negotiation and repudiate the principle of force. So long as we live in expectation of acts of aggression and *faits accomplis* from you there can be no confidence between us, and it is impossible for the normal machinery of diplomatic intercourse to be effective. It is our view that the system of international law and order which we now possess, based on the Versailles Settlement and inadequate in many respects as it is, is as precious as it is fragile, and that to respect it and seek its gradual modification is a much surer road towards justice than are acts of violence which endanger our common interests and destroy the foundations of orderliness upon which alone justice can be built.'[41]

Axis Powers. 'But it has been our experience that we have never obtained what we believe to be justice by the normal machinery of diplomatic intercourse, as you call it, by conferences, in a word by waiting for you. We have obtained it by the process of being strong enough to take it for ourselves. (Sometimes you have then

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[39] 'I must confess to the most profound distrust of Russia. I have no belief whatever in her ability to maintain an effective offensive, even if she wanted to. And I distrust her motives, which seem to me to have little connection with our ideas of liberty, and to be concerned only with getting every one else by the ears. Moreover, she is both hated and suspected by many of the smaller States, notably by Poland, Roumania, and Finland', Chamberlain, letter to his sister of 26 March 1939 (Keith Feiling: *The Life of Neville Chamberlain* (London: Macmillan, 1947), p. 403). 'I can't believe that she had the same aims and objects as we have, or any sympathy with democracy as such. She is afraid of Germany and Japan, and would be delighted to see other people fight them' (ibid. p. 408).

[40] 'Let us…win an ever larger body of opinion to reject those dangerous doctrines which would have us divide the world into dictatorship of the Right and Left. This country will have none of either. Nor will it align its foreign policy with any group of states because they support the one or the other', Eden, speech at Bradford, 14 December 1936 (quoted in the *Survey* for 1937, ii. 159).

[41] 'The first task of government is to create order by preponderant power. The second task is to create justice' (Reinhold Niebuhr: *Discerning the Signs of the Times* (London, S.C.M., 1946). p. 46. Cf. the same author's *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* (London, Nisbet, 1945), p. 123; J. L. Brierly: *The Outlook for International Law* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1944), pp. 73–4; Sir Alfred Zimmern: *Spiritual Values and World Affairs* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1939), pp. 112–13).

called conferences to pronounce a verbal condemnation of our act, which has satisfied you without bothering us; of recent years, however, as we have grown stronger, you have shown greater readiness to excuse and condone our acts—a development that we welcome.) And we believe that this procedure, of relying upon our own strength to defend our interests, is as a matter of fact far more normal than what you call "the normal machinery of diplomatic intercourse". Indeed we have the feeling that throughout this argument we are talking about *facts*, about the forces that govern history and make the real stuff of politics, while you are talking about *theories*, about legal abstractions and moral utopias. We are realists, and perhaps we understand the nature of international relations more clearly than you do.[42] Man's existence is subject to the law of eternal struggle; men, by a natural law, always rule where they are stronger. We have not made this law, nor are we the first to act on it;[43] we see it existing, and you yourselves have supplied the precedent. You cannot expect to arrest the process of history at the point at which you happen to be on top; at least you cannot expect less favoured nations to share your hope. It is plain to us that liberal democracy is exhausted and decadent, and that all the vital movements of the present century are anti-liberal.[44] We believe that the process by which you—English, French, and Americans alike—built your empires at the expense of the Spanish world-empire or of the Habsburg Monarchy in Europe is likely to be repeated in the present century in favour of new and dynamic Powers like ourselves. The only question

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[42] This was a theme of Mussolini's first speech in the Chamber on foreign policy, on 16 February 1923: 'I see the world as it actually is: that is, a world of unchained egoisms. If the world was a shining Arcadia, it would perhaps be nice to frisk among nymphs and shepherds; but I see nothing of that sort, and moreover when the great banners of the great principles are raised, I see, behind these more or less venerable trappings, interests that are seeking to assert themselves in the world' (*Scritti e discorsi*, iii. 61). For a sophisticated version of this critique of international politics see E. H. Carr: *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939* (London, Macmillan, 1939); cf. also 2nd revised edition of 1946. [Ed.: Wight's review of the second edition of Carr's book is included in this volume of Wight's works: *International Relations and Political Philosophy*.]

[43] Thuc. v. 105. It may be noted that this famous phrase which Thucydides puts in the mouth of the Athenian envoys to Melos is probably *more* than the Athenians actually said, an inspired evocation of their principles rather than a record of their words (cf. Werner Jaeger: *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, translated from the second German edition by Gilbert Highet, vol. i (Oxford, Blackwell, 1939), pp. 388, 398–9). When attributed to the Axis Powers, on the other hand, it appears a good deal *less*—that is to say much more temperate and more restrained—than the statements which Axis leaders were accustomed to make. The *loci classici* in Fascist writings for the doctrine that politics is nothing but a struggle for power are in Mussolini's *Enciclopedia* article (Oakeshott: *Social and Political Doctrines of Contemporary Europe*, pp. 170–1), and in *Mein Kampf*, pp. 148–9, 267, 317, 386, 571, 769, 773. [Ed. Hitler: *Mein Kampf*; tr. Murphy or simply *Mein Kampf* stands for Adolf Hitler: *Mein Kampf*, 2 vols. in 1, 305th–306th ed. (Munich, NSDAP, 1938); trans. James Murphy, 2 vols. in 1 (London, Hurst and Blackett, 1939) here and in subsequent references.]

[44] '…all the political experiences of the contemporary world are anti-Liberal, and it is supremely ridiculous to wish on that account to class them outside of history; as if history were a hunting ground reserved to Liberalism and its professors, as if Liberalism were the definitive and no longer surpassable message of civilisation…It is to be expected that this century may be that of authority, a century of the "Right", a Fascist century', Mussolini's *Enciclopedia* article (Oakeshott, *The Social and Political Doctrines of Contemporary Europe*, pp. 174–5).

that remains is whether you are ready to co-operate with the onward march of history, in which case we shall be ready to give consideration to your legitimate interests, or whether, by a selfish and useless obstruction, you will bring about a head-on collision between us which we should be glad to avoid.'

Soviet Union. 'When you identify "the process of history" with the sterile struggles of imperialism, it becomes necessary once again to assert a secure and scientific interpretation of that process. It is true that the hegemony of the Western Powers is not the culmination of history: it represents only the highest stage capable of being reached by the bourgeois order. The disruption of that order is historically inevitable, because it breaks on its own contradictions and because out of those very contradictions the forces of the future grow in strength. But Fascism, aggressive socially as well as internationally, and seeking to reduce the working class, above all in Russia, once again to slavery, follows a policy which can divert the path to the ultimate world socialist organization through an epoch of immense destruction and human suffering. That is why the Soviet Union, which came into existence in the struggle of the working class against the First World War, and whose earliest action was the famous decree calling for immediate peace without annexations and without indemnities,[45] has consistently fought to avert the menace of a new imperialist war. That is why, in these last years, the Soviet Union has entered the League of Nations and put itself at the head of those elements within imperialism which are against immediate war, and thus carries on its historic role in actively leading the struggle for peace of the peoples of all countries.'

Western Powers. 'Though we naturally do not agree with the terms in which you state your case, we acknowledge some degree of force in what you say. Indeed we confess that, in certain moods, the Marxist analysis of recent history has seemed cogent to us, and made us wish to believe that what divides us from you is a disagreement about means rather than an incompatibility of ends.[46] But more

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[45] Decree of Peace, 8 November 1917 (*Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy*, selected and edited by Jane Degras (London, Oxford University Press for Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1951), i. 1–3).

[46] 'Ma conviction d'aujourd'hui n'est-elle pas du reste comparable à la *foi*…Simplement mon être est tendu vers un souhait, vers un but. Toutes mes pensées, même involontairement, s'y ramènent. Dans l'abominable détresse du monde actuel, le plan de la nouvelle Russie me paraît aujourd'hui le salut. Il n'est rien qui m'en persuade! Les arguments misérables de ses ennemis, loin de me convaincre, m'indignent. Et, s'il fallait ma vie pour assurer le succès de 1'U.R.S.S., je la donnerais aussitôt…comme ont fait, comme feront tant d'autres, et me confondant avec eux' (André Gide: *Journal*, 23 avril 1932 (Paris, N.R.F., Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1940), p. 1126). [Ed.: 'Is my conviction today not furthermore comparable to *faith*?…To put it simply my being is inclined toward a wish, toward a purpose. All my thoughts, even involuntarily, lead there. In the abominable distress of the present world, the plan of the new Russia seems today to offer salvation. Nothing can persuade me otherwise. The miserable arguments of its enemies, far from convincing me, provoke my indignation. And if it required my life to ensure the success of the U.S.S.R., I would give it at once…as have done, as will do, many others, merging with them.'] 'I am not a Communist, though perhaps I might be one if I was a

important for our immediate purpose, we are happy to recognize that you, like us, are anxious above all for peace. This leads us to hope that, if the Axis Powers insist on pursuing their objectives by other than peaceful means, it may be possible to co-operate with you in the preservation of our common security. For we must make one thing clear to the Axis Powers without more ado: that if their final appeal is to force, we shall meet them with force. It is true that, since 1914, aversion to war as a means of policy has become one of our accepted principles; and so great indeed is our reluctance to consider it that sometimes optimism may have swayed our judgement, and encouraged us to speak as if we did not think war possible.[47] If this be an illusion (and that will be shown by what you, the Axis

younger and braver man, for in Communism I can see hope. It does many things which I think evil, but I know that it intends good' (E. M. Forster: address delivered at the Congrès International des Écrivains at Paris, 21 June 1935, in *Abinger Harvest* (London, Arnold, pocket edition, 1940), p. 63 ; cf. pp. 73–4). 'I speak as one who came slowly, even painfully, to Marxism from the Fabian tradition. I accepted Marx as the central clue because without his methods the events of the post-war years, especially since 1933, became a maze without a central clue. With Marx, especially as seen through the eyes of Lenin, that maze becomes an intelligible pattern. More, with Marx, one gains the power of prediction which it is essential for the socialist to have if he is to be able to control the destiny of the movement' (H. J. Laski's review of John Strachey's *Theory and Practice of Socialism* in *Left Book News*, November 1936).

[47] See speech by Sir Samuel Hoare (then Home Secretary) at the annual meeting of the Chelsea Conservative Association, 10 March 1939: 'Since the beginning of the year, he said, there had been a notable change in public opinion. Confidence, almost suffocated in the late autumn by defeatism, had returned, hope had taken the place of fear, moral and physical robustness had overcome hysteria and hesitation.…Suppose that political confidence could be restored to Europe, suppose that there was a five-year plan, immensely greater than any five-year plan that this or that particular country had attempted in recent times, and that for a space of five years there were neither wars nor rumours of wars; suppose that the peoples of Europe were able to free themselves from a nightmare that haunted them and from an expenditure upon armaments that beggared them, could they not then devote the almost incredible inventions and discoveries of the time to the creation of a golden age in which poverty could be reduced to insignificance and the standard of living raised to heights never before attained? "Here, indeed, is the greatest opportunity that has ever been offered to the leaders of the world. Five men in Europe, the three dictators and the Prime Ministers of England and France, if they worked with a singleness of purpose and a unity of action to this end, might in an incredibly short space of time transform the whole history of the world. These five men working together in Europe, and blessed in their efforts by the President of the U.S.A., might make themselves the eternal benefactors of the human race. Our own Prime Minister has shown his determination to work heart and soul to such an end. I cannot believe that the other leaders of Europe will not join him in the high endeavour upon which he is engaged" ' (*The Times*, 11 March 1939; cf. John W. Wheeler-Bennett: *Munich: Prologue to Tragedy* (London: Macmillan and Co Ltd, 1948), pp. 328–30).

' "No one can foretell what may happen", Borah said, interrupting Hull. "But my feeling and belief is that we are not going to have a war. Germany isn't ready for it." "I wish the Senator would come down to my office and read the cables", Hull answered, with a sort of sad patience. "I'm sure he would come to the conclusion that there's far more danger of war than he thinks." "So far as the reports in your Department are concerned, I wouldn't be bound by them", countered Borah firmly. "I have my own sources of information which I have provided for myself, and on several occasions I've found them more reliable than the State Department" ' (Alsop and Kintner: *American White Paper*, pp. 63–64, relating the conference on the revision of the Neutrality Law between Roosevelt, Hull, and leaders of the Senate on 18 July 1939; cf. *New York Times*, 20 July 1939).

The London newspaper which congratulated itself on the world's largest daily sale had on 19 October 1938 carried the following headline on its front page: 'The *Daily Express* declares that Britain will not be involved in a European war this year or next year either' (cf. the issues for 14 and 17 October). On 2 January 1939 it contained a New Year's article by George Malcolm Thomson, beginning thus: 'There will be no great war in Europe in 1939. There is nothing in our present situation

Powers, decide to do) it may be creditable to our hearts rather than our heads, but we cannot think it dishonourable. Nevertheless, do not be mistaken. In the last analysis you will find us defending our interests and fulfilling our obligations as stubbornly as yourselves. We feel it necessary to say this so that you may make no mistake about it.'

Axis Powers. 'We are glad to have an admission from your own mouths of your Marxist foible. We have always thought that the decadence of liberal democracy was in nothing more clearly shown than in its inherent drift towards Communism. As for your declarations of contingent defiance, they are the common form of diplomacy, and we shall know what value to give them. We have noted that as our power has increased your resolution appears to have faltered; and it has been natural for us to entertain the idea that you may after all be prepared to acquiesce in the establishment of a more just order in the world.'

Western Powers. 'You are making another mistake, more far-reaching than the first, if you assume that our readiness in recent years to go to such lengths to seek an accommodation with you has been altogether inspired by material weakness. It is at this point, thanks to the frankness with which you have been speaking, that our fundamental differences are laid bare. You spoke just now as if the forces which you claim to represent are the only "facts" in history; but we believe that morality and the conscience of mankind are equally facts that must be taken into account. We believe that civilization consists, not in the mere assertion of vitality, impulse, and will, but in their control; not in the exhibition and accumulation of force, but in disciplining it to serve settled habits of persuasion and law, and so reducing as far as possible the need for its use.[48] Thus our dealings with you in

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which affords any ground to suppose that an upheaval will, or must, come. Nothing is here today that we have not experienced over and over again in our history—at moments when we stood on the threshold of an era of peace.' After the German seizure of Prague, the oracle became more mysterious. On 20 March 1939 there was a box on the front page declaring: 'No War Now', and the leading article said: 'We believe that there will not be any further manœuvres in Europe likely to involve us in an armed conflict.' On 23 March there was a front-page box saying: 'Peace through Strength. The *Daily Express* declares that there will be no European war now.' This was inexplicit enough to be proved correct.

[48] 'Civilisation is nothing else than the attempt to reduce force to being the *ultima ratio*' (Jose Ortega y Gasset: *The Revolt of the Masses* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc, 1932), p. 82). 'Anyone can be a barbarian; it requires a terrible effort to be or remain a civilized man. Civilization, in one of its most important aspects, is a method of regulating the relations between the individual and his fellow-men, between individuals and the community. The control or sublimation of instincts is always an essential part of it, and the more complicated the life of a community or the more "advanced" the civilization, the more complicated, incessant and severe becomes the control of instincts which is demanded from the individual. The immediate satisfaction of the simple and primitive instincts is characteristic of those forms of society which are the antithesis of civilization and which we may call barbarism' (Leonard Woolf: *Barbarians at the Gate* (London, Gollancz, 1939), p. 83). These quotations echo the famous definition of Baudelaire, 'Théorie de la vraie civilisation. Elle n'est pas dans le gaz, ni dans le vapeur, ni dans les tables tournantes. Elle est dans la diminution des traces du péché originel' (*Journaux intimes*, lxxxi. [Ed.: 'Theory of true civilization. It is not in gas, nor in steam engines, nor in

these two decades have been grounded upon the premiss that another war would be an immeasurable disaster for all of us, and that the test of civilization is its ability to avert such a catastrophe.'[49]

Soviet Union. 'The point at which you say "your fundamental differences are laid bare" appears, in an objective view, to be the point at which your fundamental similarities to the Fascist states are revealed. Your sentiments are formally irreproachable; it is when they are compared with your practice that their value becomes apparent. Your readiness to seek an accommodation with the Fascist Powers, your efforts to avoid another war, have been entirely at the expense of other states, not of your own interests. Your policy of non-intervention has sacrificed to the aggressors successively China, Abyssinia, Spain, Austria, and now Czechoslovakia. The Soviet Union has reason to know this, since it alone has striven to enforce the policy of collective security on which you congratulate yourselves. During the Italo-Ethiopian War it was only the Soviet Union who took a firm and honest stand against imperialist aggression; since then only the Soviet Union has striven to obtain collective action against German aggressions. You have abandoned the policy of collective security for a policy of non-intervention, whereby you seek only to defend yourselves, and make no discrimination between the aggressors and their victims. It is not for the Soviet Union to moralize upon this, for the policy of non-intervention simply shows that in practice bourgeois politicians acknowledge no human morality at all. It is only necessary to point out that such a policy of cynical self-interest, while it is all that can be expected from bourgeois states, is based upon a fundamental miscalculation and will inevitably accelerate the imperialist war which it pretends to avert.'

Axis Powers. 'We have no concern with this quarrel between the supporters of the Geneva institution, except that it confirms our belief in the Geneva institution's futility. But we decisively repudiate the assumption which underlies the arguments of the Western Powers, that they are still as ever the guardians and interpreters of civilization. This conscious assumption of effortless superiority is all the more offensive in that it has become obsolete and hypocritical.[50] You who remind

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séance tables. It is in the diminution of the traces of original sin.' Charles Baudelaire, *Journaux intimes, Fusées, Mon coeur mis à nu. Portrait de l'auteur par lui-même* (Paris: Les Variétés Littéraires, 1919), p. 87.]

[49] 'It is a true saying that to keep this country at peace is a great contribution to the peace of Europe, and whatever may be said about "Peace at any price", if the right honourable gentleman [Lloyd George] puts it "Peace at almost any price", I shall scarcely quarrel with him', Eden in the House of Commons, 25 June 1937, House of Commons Debates, 5th ser., vol. 325, col. 1614 (quoted in the *Survey* for 1937, i. 50 and ii. 152, note 2).

[50] 'There is only one thing that we want and that applies particularly to our relations with England. It would be a good thing if in Great Britain people would gradually drop certain airs which they have inherited from the Versailles epoch. We cannot tolerate any longer the tutelage of governesses!', Hitler, speech at Saarbrücken, 9 October 1938 (*Speeches* (Baynes), ii. 1536). 'The Western Democracies were dominated by the desire to rule the world and would not regard Germany and Italy as in their class.

us of the sanctity of international obligations broke your assurances to Germany after the Armistice of 1918. You who exhort us to settle international problems by peaceful discussion have solved no decisive international problem in that way through the League of Nations, and the greatest of you has refused to join the League. You who condemn our struggle for living space (a struggle which in the European field has been successfully carried on without resort to arms) possess vast empty territories, with illimitable fertility and mineral resources, and a density of population that is inconsiderable compared with ours. You who attribute all the unrest in the world to us ignore your own continuing record of violence, bloodshed, and oppression in Ireland, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, India, and Latin America.'

Western Powers. 'It is the weakness of open diplomacy, which we invented and you have perverted,[51] that it reduces diplomatic intercourse to a competition of simultaneous gramophone programmes in unrelated languages. We have honestly sought to give weight to your views and to meet your reasonable demands, but our divided conscience about the lengths to which we have gone is likely in the long run to be forgotten and overlaid by anger at the realization that you have made no attempt to meet us.'

Soviet Union. 'You are wrong: open diplomacy was inaugurated not by Wilson but by the Soviet Government, with the publication of the imperialist secret treaties immediately after the October Revolution.[52] But the forms of diplomacy are less important than the forces of politics, and understanding is to be inferred from facts rather than from arguments. Why have the Western Powers abandoned their professions of collective security and adopted a policy of non-intervention? Because in the last resort all capitalist states, whether aggressive or non-aggressive, have a common fear of the working-class movement throughout the world, and a common hostility to the U.S.S.R. From the first establishment of Mussolini in

This psychological element of contempt was perhaps the worst thing about the whole business', conversation between Hitler and Ciano, 13 August 1939 (*I.M.T. Nuremberg*, iii, 230; cf. *N.C.A.* viii. 527 (077-TC); *Documents* (R.I.I.A.) 1939–46, i. 183).

[51] 'I certainly believe that it is not feasible to make such a statement to the head of any foreign State, but rather that such statements should preferably be made to the whole world, in accordance with the demand made at the time by President Wilson for the abolition of secret diplomacy. Hitherto I was not only always prepared to do this, but, as I have already said, I have done it only too often', Hitler, Reichstag speech of 28 April 1939 (*Speeches* (Baynes), ii. 1646; cf. p. 1316).

[52] 'The Government abolishes secret diplomacy and on its part expresses the firm intention to conduct all negotiations absolutely openly before the entire people; it will at once begin to publish in full the secret treaties concluded or confirmed by the Government of landowners and capitalists from February to 25 October [7 November] 1917', Decree of Peace, 8 November 1917 (Degras, ed.: *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy*, i. 2). 'The Russian representatives [at Brest-Litovsk] have insisted very justly, very wisely, and in the true spirit of modern democracy, that the conferences they have been holding with Teutonic and Turkish statesmen should be held within open, not closed, doors, and all the world has been audience, as was desired', Wilson, Fourteen Points speech of 8 January 1918 (*H.P.C.* i. 432). Cf. Vladimir Petrovich Potemkin: *Histoire de la diplomatie* (Paris, Librarie de Médicis, Éditions Politiques, Économiques et Sociales, 1946), ii. 326, 391.

Italy and of Hitler in Germany the governments of the Western states have consistently courted Fascism, for the governments of the Western states represent the same social forces which in Italy and Germany brought Fascism into being. Thus the first diplomatic repercussion of the Nazi Revolution in Germany was the project for a Four-Power Pact of Italy, Germany, France, and England, which by excluding the Soviet Union was implicitly directed against her. Since then the Western policy of non-intervention has in fact been a policy of conniving at and encouraging aggression. Behind the readiness of the Western Powers to sacrifice small and weak states to the greed of the Fascist Powers lies the hope of directing the Fascist Powers against the U.S.S.R. The policy of the Four-Power Pact and the policy of non-intervention together culminated in the Munich Conference, when the four European capitalist Powers met together, to arrange the partition of Czechoslovakia and again deliberately excluded the Soviet Union.[53] The lesson of these facts is inescapable. The Soviet Union is well able to draw the lesson and to defend its own interests, which are the interests of humanity at large, by every means that the current diplomatic and political situation may offer.'[54]

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[53] 'The plans for a Western grouping against the U.S.S.R. had perhaps never been nearer fruition than they were at Munich. And in the ten or eleven months which followed Munich Mr. Chamberlain and his immediate entourage must have regarded both the aggressive activities of Hitler and the pressure of his own public opinion, which forced him into the negotiations with the U.S.S.R. …right up to the signature of the non-aggression pact in August between Germany and the U.S.S.R. as something quite temporary, and must have believed that once these difficulties that had arisen between the Munich Allies were smoothed out there would be the full possibility of armed advance, that is of Hitler's expected advance, into the U.S.S.R. This would have been an admirable spectacle for Britain and France, a fight between the capitalist friend they feared and the Socialist enemy they hated' (D. N. Pritt: *Must the War Spread?* (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1940), p. 61; cf. the same author's *Light on Moscow* (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1939), pp. 52–3).

'If we see that Germany is winning we ought to help Russia and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany and that way let them kill as many as possible, although I don't want to see Hitler victorious under any circumstances. Neither of them think anything of their pledged word', Senator Harry Truman of Missouri on 23 June 1941 (*New York Times*, 24 June 1941). 'There are people in high places who declare that they hope the Russian and German armies will exterminate each other, and while this is taking place we, the British Commonwealth of Nations, will so develop our Air Force and other armed forces that, if Russia and Germany do destroy each other, we shall have the dominating power in Europe. That point of view has been expressed quite recently by a Cabinet Minister—a member of the present Government—a gentleman who holds a very important position—none other than the Minister for Aircraft Production, Colonel Moore-Brabazon' (Jack Tanner, president of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, at a meeting of the Trades Union Congress at Edinburgh on 2 September 1941 (*The Times*, 3 September 1941); referring to an extempore speech by Moore-Brabazon at a private meeting in Manchester on 31 July 1941). These two utterances were quoted by Molotov in his speech at Moscow on the thirtieth anniversary of the October Revolution, 6 November 1947 (*Moscow News*, 7 November 1947).

[54] 'We never had any orientation towards Germany, nor have we any orientation towards Poland and France. Our orientation in the past and our orientation at the present time is towards the U.S.S.R., and towards the U.S.S.R. alone. And if the interests of the U.S.S.R. demand *rapprochement* with one country or another which is not interested in disturbing peace, we take this step without hesitation' (Joseph Stalin, report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B), 26 January 1934 in *Problems of Leninism,* Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1945, p. 467); *Survey* for 1934, p. 384. 'It is our duty to think of the interests of the Soviet people, the interests of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—all the more because we are firmly convinced that the interests of the U.S.S.R. coincide with the fundamental interests of the peoples of other countries', Molotov, speech to the Supreme

This was the state of the argument between the Great Powers on 15 March 1939. At that time the balance of power appeared extremely fluid owing to the imbecility of Western policy, the arbitrariness and caprice of German, the inscrutability of Russian. Great Power relationships fell into an equilateral triangle; and it was possible for different observers to convince themselves that destiny would be fulfilled by the alliance of the Western Powers with Russia to encircle Germany, or of Russia with Germany to overbalance the Western Powers, or of the Western Powers with the Fascist Powers against the interests of Russia. Each of these combinations had its historical precedents, so that the Germans could point to the Franco-Soviet Pact[55] and to Russian policy as a member of the League of Nations; the Western Powers could point to the German-Soviet alliance originating with the Treaty of Rapallo;[56] the Russians could point to the programme of *Mein Kampf*,[57] the Munich Conference, the Four-Power Pact,[58] the Allied intervention in Russia of 1918–20, and the Allied use of German troops under the armistice of 1918 to prevent a Bolshevik invasion of the Baltic States.[59] Each of these combinations had its arguments from interest. And two of them were to be dramatically fulfilled before three years had passed.

The third combination—the possibility of an alinement of the Western Powers with the Axis at the expense of Russia—was never so substantial as the other two, for its main foundation was Marxist doctrine. There were two determining factors in any calculation of the balance of power. Firstly, the Axis was setting the pace. The Axis alone was expansionist and aggressive; the Western Powers and Russia alike were on the defensive. The most extreme Soviet interpretations of the common purpose of the capitalist imperialist Powers recognized the distinction between the non-aggressive democratic states and the Fascist states,[60] and official Soviet policy, represented by Litvinov at Geneva and Maisky in London, had for five years been based on the assumption of a common interest between the Soviet Union and the non-aggressive democratic states in the preservation of peace.[61] Conversely, the most hostile Western interpretation of Russian policy saw a danger of Communist expansion and the promotion of unrest abroad rather than of Russian territorial aggrandizement.[62] Indeed, it was at that time the characteristic

Soviet, 31 August 1939 (*Soviet Peace Policy*, four speeches by V. Molotov (London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1941), p. 14).

[55] *Survey* for 1935, i. 84-seqq.

[56] *Survey* for 1920–3, pp. 30–1; *Survey* for 1927, pp. 301–15; *Survey* for 1930, pp. 125–7.

[57] See Martin Wight, "Germany," in Arnold Toynbee and Frank T. Ashton-Gwatkin, eds., *The World in March 1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 337.

[58] Beloff, ii. 164, note; i. 90–1.

[59] Armistice Convention of 11 November 1918, article xii (*H.P.C.* i. 463–4 and 345–6).

[60] Cf. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, pp. 601–2.

[61] Cf. Maisky's speech in London of 15 March 1939, quoted in Beloff, ii. 229.

[62] Cf. F. A. Voigt: *Unto Caesar* (London, Constable, 1938), pp. 259–62. The process of Western enlightenment about Russian territorial ambitions was yet to come. Like the process of enlightenment about German policy it passed through two stages. The Russian share in the partition of Poland in

mistake of those who most feared Russia as a revolutionary Power most to exaggerate her military weakness.

Secondly, the principal conflict of interests between the Great Powers on 15 March 1939 was the conflict between the Western Powers and the Axis. The German conquest of Czechoslovakia was a defeat primarily for France, for it was France and not Russia that had been predominant in Eastern Europe since 1919. It put the Great Power status of France, not of Russia, in immediate danger.[63] The conflicts of interest between the Western Powers or the Axis Powers on the one side and Russia on the other side were as yet potential. The conflict between Germany and Russia was at one remove from the existing situation, the conflict between the Western Powers and Russia was at several removes.

But if the main conflict was between the Axis and the Western Powers, it followed that the third party, Russia, held the balance of power. From September 1938 to August 1939 the central question of world politics was which way Russia would go, and thus in the six months after the German seizure of Prague the Anglo-Russian negotiations became 'the tragic core of diplomatic history'.[64] And since the immediate bearing of German aggression was against Western rather than Russian interests, Germany had an immediate advantage to offer Russia which the Western Powers lacked—exclusion from the coming war. The Western Powers were soliciting a defensive alliance, Germany asked only neutrality. 'What could England offer Russia?' said the German Foreign Ministry official Schnurre to the chief of the Soviet trade mission in Berlin in July 1939.

September 1939 corresponded to the German annexations of Austria and the Sudetenland, causing disquiet which might still be met by the specious arguments of irredentism. The Russian attack on Finland in November 1939 corresponded to the German occupation of Prague on 15 March 1939, finally dispelling illusions (though there was only a partial comparison between the two events, since the Russian motive was primarily one of strategic defence; cf. Beloff, ii. 304–5). It was the latent Russian tendency towards aggrandizement, more clearly seen by the Western governments than by their peoples, that underlay the failure of the Western Powers and Russia to come to an agreement in the summer of 1939 about assistance to the states bordering Russia in the event of German aggression.

[63] See Martin Wight, "Eastern Europe," in Arnold Toynbee and Frank T. Ashton-Gwatkin, eds., *The World in March 1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), pp. 276–7. Churchill, with his clear vision of the balance of power, saw that Britain's position also as a Great Power was at stake after Munich. 'The question which we have to vote upon, in my opinion, is little less than this: Are we going to make a supreme additional effort to remain a great Power, or are we going to slide away into what seem to be easier, softer, less strenuous, less harassing courses, with all the tremendous renunciations which that decision implies?', speech in House of Commons, 17 November 1938 (House of Commons Debates, 5th ser., vol. 341, col. 1145). Cf. his speech in the Munich debate of 5 October 1938: '…few things could be more fatal to our remaining chances of survival as a great Power than that this country should be torn in twain upon this deadly issue of foreign policy at a moment when, whoever the Ministers may be, united effort can alone make us safe' (ibid. vol. 339, coll. 371–2).

[64] L. B. Namier: *Diplomatic Prelude 1938-1939* (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd, 1948), p. 143. 'If ever there was a chance of avoiding a second world war, that chance lay in a defensive alliance between the Western Powers and Soviet Russia' (Namier: 'The Russo-German Treaty of 1939', *The Listener*, 1 September 1949, p. 355; cf. '1939: How War Came', by the same author in ibid., 11 March 1948, p. 429). 'But how improvidently foolish we should be when dangers are so great, to put needless barriers in the way of the general association of the great Russian mass with the resistance to an act of Nazi aggression', Churchill, speech at Manchester, 9 May 1938 (*The Times*, 10 May 1938); cf. speech in the House of Commons, 13 April 1939 (House of Commons Debates, 5th ser., vol. 346, coll. 34–5).

At best, participation in a European war and the hostility of Germany, but not a single desirable end for Russia. What could we offer, on the other hand? Neutrality and staying out of a possible European conflict and, if Moscow wished, a German-Russian understanding on mutual interests which, just as in former times, would work out to the advantage of both countries.[65]

Here the various factors were summed up: that Germany was setting the pace, that her immediate conflict of interests was with the Western Powers, that Russia held the balance, and that Germany could offer her the supreme advantage of exemption from immediate war. The Western Powers could not outbid Germany unless they could convince Russia that the defensive alliance with them would prevent war altogether. This was the old theory of collective security; the record of the Western Powers had made it improbable that Russia should any longer accept it.

The Russian disengagement from the Western Powers and withdrawal into a position of diplomatic freedom had begun immediately after Munich.[66] On 10 March 1939 Stalin addressed the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. He declared that the Munich period of appeasement was already ended. (It was the day after the Czech Cabinet had dismissed Tiso from the government of Slovakia, the day before Bürckel and Seyss-Inquart intervened at Bratislava to order Sidor to proclaim Slovak independence.)[67] He described the Fascist Powers as a military bloc of aggressors, but interpreted German designs on the Ukraine as a 'hullabaloo raised by the British, French and American press', and said that the Soviet Union wanted to strengthen business relations with all countries. (This might be a gesture towards Germany.) He described the Western Powers as non-aggressive and democratic, but denounced their policy of non-intervention, and said that the Soviet Union would not be drawn into conflicts by warmongers who were accustomed to have others pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them. (This might be a warning to the Western Powers.)[68] The speech was closely studied in Germany at the time and considered as encouraging;[69] and five months later, when the German-Russian Pact had been signed and Ribbentrop was drinking toasts with the Soviet chiefs in the Kremlin, Molotov 'raised his

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[65] Memorandum by Schnurre of 27 July 1939 (*Nazi-Soviet Relations*, p. 34).

[66] 'The earliest definite sign of a reconciliation between Germany and Soviet Russia, following the estrangement of 1932 and subsequently, occurred in the autumn of 1938, when the two Governments formally agreed to reduce to tolerable proportions the attacks against each current in the public press of the other' (De Witt C. Poole: 'Light on Nazi Foreign Policy', *Foreign Affairs*, October 1946, p. 141).

[67] See *Survey* for 1938, iii, part I, sections x (*b*) and xi (*a*).

[68] Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, pp. 603, 605–6.

[69] *New York Times*, 12 March 1939; *Temps*, 15 March 1939; Beloff, ii. 226–7. 'The Germans saw a second and clearer sign when, in the spring of 1939, Stalin in a public address asserted that even violent contradiction in outlook and governmental forms need not constitute an obstacle to practical co-operation between two states having common interest in concrete matters, and Moscow let Britain know informally (the Germans said) that this utterance was spoken with Germany particularly in mind' (De Witt C. Poole, 'Light on Nazi Foreign Policy'.) But the version of Stalin's speech in the translation of the eleventh edition of *Problems of Leninism* contains no such passage.

glass to Stalin, remarking that it had been Stalin who—through his speech of March of this year, which had been well understood in Germany—had brought about the reversal in political relations'.[70] This became the official legend about the speech for Soviet politicians praising the German-Soviet Pact and for discredited German politicians trying to exculpate themselves by inculpating Russia.[71] But it was an *ex post facto* interpretation which exaggerated Stalin's gesture towards Germany, for the speech could equally well have been cited to prove his statesmanship if events had gone the other way and Russia had alined herself with the Western Powers. In fact the speech was cautious and non-committal; it emphasized Russia's detachment, and said that she was prepared to negotiate with either side.[72] On 15 March 1939 the positive movement towards Germany can scarcely be said to have begun; in so far as these things can be estimated, the pendulum was at the middle point of its swing; and, just as Germany then possessed her maximum freedom of action as aggressor, so Russia enjoyed perhaps her maximum freedom as holder of the balance of power.

This fluid threefold arrangement of power not only made it uncertain on what alinements the coming war would be fought. It also showed, though few saw it at the time, that those alinements would be temporary and precarious. The victors in the war, whoever they were, would be only an incongruous *ad hoc* combination of Powers. If the Axis were to defeat the Western Powers with the co-operation or the benevolent neutrality of Russia, the Axis and Russia would not be likely thereafter to set up an international organization for the harmonious future ordering of the world. Alternatively if Germany with the tacit encouragement of the Western Powers were to conquer Russia, the turn of the Western Powers would follow. Even if the Axis Powers by their unaided strength were to defeat successively both the Western Powers and Russia, partitioning the world between themselves, it would soon become clear that the Axis was a fortuitous coalition for predatory purposes, and Germany and Japan would probably proceed to a further struggle for ultimate mastery. And if the Western Powers in alliance with Russia were to defeat the Axis, the future co-operation of such ill-assorted and suspicious partners could only be assumed by those who ignored the gulf between the Byzantino-Marxist ideology of the Soviet Union and the liberalism of the West.

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[70] *Nazi-Soviet Relations*, p. 76. When Ribbentrop on the same occasion remarked that Hitler had interpreted the speech as expressing a wish for better relations with Germany, Stalin replied briefly: 'That was the intention' (Gaus's affidavit, *I.M.T. Nuremberg*, xl. 297).

[71] Cf. Molotov's speech to the Supreme Soviet, 31 August 1939 (*Soviet Peace Policy*, p. 16); cf. *Documents* (R.I.I.A.) for 1939–46, i. 437; see also Ribbentrop's evidence (*I.M.T. Nuremberg* x. 267) and Seidl's plea for the defence (ibid. xix. 366).

[72] See Isaac Deutscher: *Stalin: A Political Biography* (London, Oxford University Press, 1949), pp. 429–30. Namier (*Diplomatic Prelude*, pp. 286–7; *Europe in Decay: A Study in Disintegration, 1936–1940*, London, Macmillan, 1950, p. 260) minimizes the significance of the speech; cf. Max Beloff: 'Professor Namier and the Prelude to War', *Fortnightly*, April 1950, p. 237. A. Rossi (*Deux ans d'alliance germano-soviétique* (Paris, Fayard, 1949), pp. 19–21) exaggerates it.

7

Kaplan's *System and Process*

Positivist theorists condemned the old philosophical speculation about politics, e.g., the doctrines of natural law or the just war, as being either tautologous or platitudinous.* It is amusing to see the new political literature, aiming at "the universal language of science,"[1] producing new edifices of tautology and platitude. Every third sentence in Kaplan is elaborating simple and obvious truths, in the impressive special language of his theory. For example: "Since non-member national actors and universal actors have integrative roles in the system, the stability of the system is dependent upon their having capabilities which, although not equal to the capabilities of either of the blocs, nevertheless are sufficient to influence a contest between the blocs."[2] Translated into the traditional language of a Nicolson or Zimmern or Carr,[3] this might be: "Since Small Powers and international organizations can play a conciliatory role between the two Super-Powers, international stability depends upon their being able to play a conciliatory role." However, civilised intercourse depends on tautologies, and all the great human truths we live by are platitudes.

I suggest the following comments: each is a starting-point for argument:

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* [Ed.] Wight gave this title to this note, which he dated December 1967. He appears to have composed the note in response to questions raised in a discussion with Frank Field. In Wight's somewhat telegraphic words: 'Are human sciences of same kind as physical sciences, i.e. cumulative progress? Power of prediction? Aim to clarify policy or action. Imaginary systems: predict their working if they did exist. Not capable of refutation or confirmation by experiment or observation. Predict "characteristic or modal behaviour"'. The phrase at the end refers to Morton Kaplan's statement that 'The theory of international politics normally cannot be expected to predict individual actions because the interaction problem is too complex, and because there are too many free parameters. It can be expected, however, to predict characteristic or modal behavior within a particular kind of international system.' Morton A. Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1957), pp. xvii–xviii.

[1] Kaplan, *System and Process*, p. 25.   [2] Ibid., p. 40.

[3] [Ed.] Sir Harold Nicolson (1886–1968), a British diplomat and politician, wrote several books about international politics, including *The Congress of Vienna: A Study in Allied Unity: 1812–1822* (1946). Sir Alfred Zimmern (1879–1957), a British classicist and historian, is perhaps best known today for his book *The League of Nations and the Rule of Law 1918–1935* (1936). E. H. Carr (1892–1982), a British historian and diplomat, wrote the often-cited study, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (1939). Wight's review of *The Twenty Years' Crisis* is included in this collection of works by Wight, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, pp. 315–316.

1. His historical limitedness. Only a small range of historical reference (admitted on p. 52). His models chosen because they "seem the most representative."[4] Of what? In fact they are all preliminary to or extrapolations of the Cold War. So far from being a set of timeless propositions, true of all ages (such as Aron I think succeeds in giving),[5] it is a *livre de circonstance*. Note how with the later models, he slides from the present tense into the future: "the hierarchical system *will be*…"[6]

2. Trivialisation. This seems to me the unintentional effect of games theory when applied to the awful issues of peace and war, survival and destruction. The rules of conduct are replaced by the rules of a game, and the desperate seriousness of politics is subtly falsified. Is this unfair?

3. Dehumanisation. The analytical jargon atomises and disintegrates reality: input, feedback, informational factors, capability factors, etc., are as screens between the observer and political experience, comparable to the "paper tigers" and "imperialist conspiracies" of another mode of explanation. These are two kinds of scholasticism, the elaboration of intellectual systems for their own sake beyond the necessary control of the reality they began by trying to explain or describe. It leads to hypostatisation of the system: you note how "ultrastable systems '*search*' for stable patterns of behavior."[7] There is a behaviouristic assumption, especially notable in Appendix 1.

4. Objectivity becomes moral neutrality. The moral content of political discussion is first drained off, and then added again to the stew in pinches of recognition as "parameters" or "values." Contrast the "classic philosophic standards" mentioned on pp. 23–24.

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[4] Kaplan, *System and Process*, p. 21.
[5] [Ed.] See Wight's review of Raymond Aron's *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations,* 'Tract for the Nuclear Age', *The Observer*, 23 April 1967. This review is reproduced in this collection of works by Wight, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, pp. 327–329.
[6] Kaplan, *System and Process*, p. 48; italics added by Wight.
[7] Ibid., p. 7; italics added by Wight.

8

Is There a Philosophy of Statesmanship?

At first sight the statesmen we have discussed may seem to have little in common and to be chosen too exclusively from that part of the world which traditionally formed Burke's community of nations: the United States was already included within this area by the end of the eighteenth century.* Even this limited field we have not covered adequately. There is neither a Russian nor a German statesman on our list, to mention the two most obvious omissions—though Khrushchev, Adenauer or Brandt would appear to have been ideal subjects for study. As for those outside the area of "the Western World", Lord Malvern was brought up in England; Soekarno was educated both by the Dutch and the Americans. Nasser was raised in a system based on, and heavily influenced by, European educational ideas, which would appear to have only the Chinese completely uninfluenced by the traditional concepts of European philosophy and European ideas of statecraft, although even they, in so far as they are Marxists, belong to the European revolutionary tradition. Our choice is heavily weighted in favour of the West. This general homogeneity may, of course, enable us to reach some tidy conclusions but are these really valid outside the Western world? As we have ignored the U.S.S.R., India and South America, to mention only the most obvious omissions, and as Nasser and Lord Malvern must stand for the whole of Africa our image of the world would appear to be one seen through a distorting mirror. I propose therefore to pose certain questions and make some attempt to answer them in my efforts to weave from this disparate and by no means comprehensive raw material some kind of recognisable pattern.

Two questions arise. "*Are there such things as types of statesmen?*" and "*Are there, in fact, universal and recurring situations in which statesmen find themselves?*". Do these colour or shape the philosophies of individual statesmen? Statesmen are often divided into two classes, realists, whose basic belief is that politics is the art of the possible and idealists who believe that come what may 'the cause' must prevail. To the realist there is no abstract cause of which he is himself the embodiment. His attitude to politics and to the part he plays himself is perhaps summed up by Lord Salisbury:

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* [Ed.] Wight dated the typescript of this lecture June 1960. The references to Briggs, Demetrakos, Saltell, and Shakow evidently concern students in the seminar.

"I don't understand," he repeated, "what people mean when they talk of the bur-
den of responsibility. I should understand if they spoke of the burden of
decision,—I feel it now, trying to make up my mind whether or no to take a
greatcoat with me. I feel it in exactly the same way, but no more, when I am writ-
ing a despatch upon which peace or war may depend. Its degree depends upon
the materials for decision that are available and not in the least upon the magni-
tude of the results which may follow." Then, after a moment's pause and in a
lower tone, he added, "With the results I have nothing to do."[1]

Is the political philosophy behind this the same as that of Mr. Truman, whom I
would also class as a realist, when he says:

All the time I was President, one event followed another with such rapidity that
I was never able to afford the time for prolonged contemplation. I had to make
sure of the facts. I had to consult people. But to have hesitated when it was
necessary to act might well have meant disaster in many instances.[2]

And again in the same article:

When a crisis came along, such as the one connected with General MacArthur
or the Berlin airlift or the aggression against Korea, I was confronted with far-
reaching decisions. Once I made up my mind, I acted. And I did not worry
about the action I took. If you are going to walk the floor and worry yourself to
death every time you have to make a decision, or if you fail to make up your
mind, then you are not suited for the job.[3]

As types of statesmen the similarity is marked: as types of people there could
scarcely be a greater contrast.

In this class also, the realist statesman, I would class Pope Pius XII, and indeed
every Pope since Pius IX (his case I should have to think about more carefully),
although Popes do not fit easily into a classification designed primarily for secular
statesmen. In theory, of course, they must, by the nature of their office, be ideal-
ists—but as the secular head of the smallest state in the world, and as the spiritual
pastor of a flock, many of whom are compelled to live under the jurisdiction of
those who are indifferent, when they are not actively opposed, to the Roman
Catholic church, the Pope is concerned with survival—the survival of the church

[1] [Ed.] Lady Gwendolen Cecil, *Life of Robert Marquis of Salisbury* (London: Hodder and Stoughton,
1921), Vol. I, p. 119.
[2] Harry S. Truman, "The Power of the President," *Sunday Times*, June 12, 1960, p. 23.
[3] Ibid.

in atheist and secular states—and the politics of survival are, by their nature, real-
ist and empirical.

The same problem, that of survival, would appear to place Lord Malvern in the
realist category, though as Godfrey Huggins he appears to have set off his political
career as an idealist—for apartheid is, in its way, an ideal. By temperament and
training however he is a man capable of facing facts and of realising that the type
of Athenian—or even Platonic—democracy he could envisage as a possible and
desirable reality before the Second World War, had become an outmoded and
impossible unreality once African nationalism began to have real momentum.[4]

The idealists on our list appear to fall into two groups, the nationalists and
internationalists. The first group are the revolutionaries of our day, Soekarno,
Makarios, Nasser, Mao tse-tung, de Gaulle. In comparison with the realists both
their politics and their philosophy appear to be dynamic. Have they in fact a phil-
osophy in common? With the possible exception of Soekarno, whom Mr. Shakow
represented as never having attempted to define his ideas, they *do* appear to have
much in common. Each believes in a Utopia. Each appears to believe in the inev-
itability of his ideas triumphing. All are strongly nationalist, and the Utopia each
appears to see is that of his own nation within a wider context. The Utopia of the
Chinese is a world united in Communism—and, one suspects, led by China,
which has kept to the pure milk of Marxism—not by Russia, which plays with
heresy. The Utopia of Nasser is not merely an independent Egypt but a world in
which Islam would unite in "a cooperation going not beyond the bounds of their
natural loyalty to their own countries, but nonetheless enabling them and their
brothers in faith to wield power wisely and without limit".

As for the leadership through which this is to be brought about—"We alone
[i.e. Egypt], by virtue of our place, can perform the role".[5]

To de Gaulle, Utopia is not merely a France strong and united, but a united
Europe and a united overseas community, the successor to the old French
Empire—in both of which France will play the leading role. To Makarios an
independent Cyprus would appear to be a mere second best—and after
Mr. Demetrakos' exposition of the mind and training of Makarios it would appear
doubtful if Enosis has in fact been abandoned—but rather relegated to the more

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[4] [Ed.] Godfrey Huggins (1883–1971) was Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia from 1933 to
1953, and Prime Minister of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland from 1953 to 1956. Knighted
in 1941, Huggins was elevated in 1955 to the peerage as Viscount Malvern. His racist views, asserting
the superiority of British colonizers over native Africans, were consistent with what Wight character-
ized as the outlook of harsh Realists since Aristotle regarding 'barbarians'—that is, that 'barbarians'
have no rights and may be conquered, exploited, enslaved, exterminated, and segregated. Wight
described 'Nazi racialism' as 'on the border-line between Revolutionism and Realism', and cited
'Afrikaaner policy in South Africa—the policy of apartheid'—as 'representative of Realism towards
barbarians'. Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions,* ed. Gabriele Wight and Brian
Porter (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991), p. 65.

[5] [Ed.] Gamal Abdul Nasser, *Egypt's Liberation: The Philosophy of the Revolution* (Washington, DC:
Public Affairs Press, 1955), pp. 113–114.

distant future. Even Soekarno, in practice, sees Indonesia not merely as the heir to a mediaeval Indonesian Empire, but also as the heir to the alien Dutch empire, incomplete without Western New Guinea. Nkrumah's Utopia of a united West Africa shows the same kind of picture.

All idealist statesmen whose ideals are based on some form of nationalist aspiration seem to have within their philosophies a strong dose of fatalism. Mao sees the renaissance of China in terms of the inevitability of history and de Gaulle's pronunciations appear to be based on much the same conception, robbed of its Communist context. France's greatness stems from her inalienable right to greatness. Nasser's fatalism derives perhaps from his religion, but his belief in fate is active, not passive.

"Fate does not jest and events are not a matter of chance—there is no existence out of nothing"[6] is the statement of a man who regards Fate as an ally, not as an incomprehensible force. Nasser's attitude appears rather a "It *is* the will of God" than as the customary "In s'Allah"—"If God wills".

Among the elements of the philosophy of all these revolutionary leaders is the belief in "the general will" as the source of authority. Each sees himself not only as the leader but as the embodiment of the general will. In Communism this general will is a tenet of faith. The Communist Party and its leaders are the sole interpreters of this will. The people do not know what the will of the nation is: it may indeed be the direct opposite of what they themselves believe that they desire. This theory can be traced back through Lenin and Marx to Robespierre and the Jacobins—and it appears common to all our revolutionary idealists. Mr. Shakow made it clear that Soekarno believed that he was the voice of the Indonesians. If de Gaulle has never actually said "La France, c'est moi", he has left his hearers in no doubt that this is the case. If Nasser has never claimed to speak for Egypt there is no doubt that he believes his party does—cf. the latest explanations of the recent press laws.

> "According to the official statement, public ownership of the press is the only safeguard against deviation from the aims of the revolution and, in fact, the only firm guarantee of genuine freedom of the press".[7]

There are strong indications from time to time that he claims to speak not merely for Egypt but for all the Arabs, if not for all Islam. The powerful Cairo Radio Programme is called "The Voice of the Arabs", not "The Voice of Egypt".

Archbishop Makarios appears to play a variation on this theme. Mr. Demetrakos explained how the Archbishop equated *vox populi* with *vox dei*, but at least one of

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[6]   [Ed.] Nasser, *Egypt's Liberation*, p. 85.
[7]   [Ed.] 'Freedom is Boredom', *The Economist*, May 28, 1960.

his hearers was left wondering whether he subscribed to a further equation, that *vox dei* equalled *vox mea*.

The international idealists, Mr. Saltell's moralists, or Grotians, Anthony Eden and Gilbert Murray, have a different Utopia in view—a Utopia far more clearly discernible between the wars than it is in this post-war world, a Utopia whose embodiment was the League of Nations, an institution far more idealistic than its successor. It seems incredible in 1960 that people could really believe that "the Great War", the old name for the First World War, was really a war to end all wars, but they did, and Eden and Murray, like President Wilson and Lord Robert Cecil, belonged to a generation whose idealists in the twenties believed just that. The League of Nations was built in the faith that it could, and would, prevent war, that all nations would eventually join it, and that it would promote both international order and international justice. Its basic concepts were the equality of nations, the universal rule of law, and the rationality of man. It put its faith in world public opinion—a variant perhaps of the general will—and believed that this would be strong enough to keep peace, largely by the effect of economic sanctions. It saw war as the ultimate sanction whereby the irrational and irresponsible minority would be brought to its senses by the rational responsible majority. This was essentially Murray's position. It didn't work out that way.

This international ideal had two aspects, the legal aspect, embodied in the legal phrase '*pacta sunt servanda*', and the moral aspect, a recognition of the fact that treaties which appeared just when made might in the course of time become unjust in the way they worked out. Provision therefore was made for the legal revision of treaties, with the corollary that treaties must in no case be abrogated unilaterally. To Eden, the return of the Saar to Germany in 1935, which his action in offering British troops to supervise the plebiscite facilitated, was a legal revision of what appeared to be an unjust clause in the Versailles Treaty. Recourse had been made to the proper and legal method of treaty revision. Mr. Saltell points out how consistent his policy was. His attitude to Suez was based on essentially the same philosophy. It was based on treaty rights.

"From the outset, however, there had been in all countries those who were not prepared to see this dispute for what it was, the denial of an international engagement, recently affirmed by the Egyptian Government, and the seizure by force of international property".[8]

Treaties could be changed. They could not be changed by unilateral action, entailing force, by any signatory who felt the treaty was unjust.

It was a belief in the essential rationality of peoples, if not of governments, a belief in the force for good of enlightened public opinion and belief that public opinion could and would become enlightened in the twentieth century as a result

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[8] Eden quoted in *Sunday Times*, January 26, 1960, p. 5.

of the cataclysm through which the nations had passed, which was to prove so illusory in the inter-war period. The equality of nations, a fundamental of the Covenant of the League, disappeared in the Charter of the United Nations, but there remained the rule of law as a possible ideal. Murray never had to face the responsibility of power. Eden had, and it was the idealist in him that brought about his downfall.

This leaves us with Mr. Dulles. Mr. Briggs concluded that in essence he was a hard-headed realist. To me he remains an enigma. As a realist he would appear to have had but a partial view of reality. To him, according to Mr. Briggs' exposition, there was only one main problem in the world—the survival of the democratic way of life, the good way, in face of the threat of Communism, the evil way. He would appear to have had little realisation that African and Asian nationalism might in the long run prove a problem equally important, and that the failure to give sufficient attention to this problem might lose him his struggle with Communism. A realist should have a firm grasp of all the realities with which he is faced. One is left with the impression that to Mr. Dulles the Middle East was never a reality.

Was he then an idealist? In a way I think he was. His picture of the good life in international terms would appear to have as much in common with the Utopians as with the Machiavellians. From Mr. Briggs' account Dulles' Utopia would appear to be a world in which, in the long run, democracy of the European-American type would prevail; in the short run it was a world in which what Toynbee calls "The West" would accept, of their own free will, America as Big Brother. The difference between the position of America in the Western camp and that of Russia in the Communist camp lay, in his belief, in that Russia's predominance depended on fear and force, whilst America's predominance depended on trust and free choice. That Great Britain and France might be prepared to go it alone does not appear seriously to have entered into his calculations. His attitude to nationalism also appears to put him into the idealist rather than the realist category. He doesn't appear ever to have considered that colonialism *could* be anything but a moral wrong. If colonialism was wrong, nationalism was right. Surely it is with the U.S. in mind that Eden complains in his account of Suez:

> "They preferred to look upon it (i.e. the seizure of the canal) as the expression of a nationalist mood in a country recently emancipated, for which, therefore, benevolent allowance must be made."[9]

But the impression is that anti-colonialism was a built-in part of Mr. Dulles, a tenet of faith imbibed in youth which he had never seriously examined. In a way

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[9] Eden, ibid.

the idealist aspect of Mr. Dulles' philosophy appears to have something in common with that of President Soekarno, to have been largely bought ready made, not to be the product of hard thinking, done before he became engulfed in the problems of power. Where his policy failed it would appear possible that it was the result of having failed, before taking office, to think out his political philosophy except in terms of the struggle with Communism for the future of the world.

This brings us to the second of our questions: Are there in fact universal and recurring situations in which statesmen find themselves, and do these shape or colour the philosophies of different types of statesmen?

As there are types of statesmen, so there are types of situation. I propose to discuss two, which one might classify as (1) general situations, and (2) personal situations.

There must be many general situations which recur. I shall take only one example, the situation where a statesman is faced with the choice of peace or war. Do our three types regard war from the same standpoint? On one type of war only would all three groups agree. It is the classical 'just' war defined by Pius XII as a war "necessitated by an obvious and extremely grave injustice that cannot otherwise be repelled". It is in essence the war for survival. But on all other types of war the philosophy of our three classes of statesmen would appear to me to differ.

The moralist asks "Has an agreement been broken?" If not, and provided his country's security is not in question he sees no call to interfere. This was the attitude most statesmen thankfully adopted when China attacked Tibet. If an agreement has been broken, was his country a party to the agreement? If it was, ought he then to resort to war?

To a moralist like Eden the answer is clear. It is the business of all other signatories, in the first instance to protest, in the second to bring to bear all forms of pressure short of war, and in the third to make war. It was his attitude over Abyssinia, over Czechoslovakia and finally over Suez. Gladstone would have given the same answer. In the *Alabama* affair justice must be done and if arbitration could ensure justice then it must be tried. When Russia broke the Black Sea Clauses of the Treaty of Paris in 1870 Gladstone convened the London Conference of all the signatories and insisted that Russia's action must at least be sanctioned by them, and in the London Protocol got a rider added that such unilateral breaking of an international agreement must not occur again. In Egypt in 1880 when no other signatory would abide by its obligations it was Britain's clear duty to intervene alone, much as he genuinely hated to do so.

The realist asks different questions. Is the national interest involved? Do I stand to lose or to gain more by standing on my rights? If I stand to gain appreciably I shall fight, and if I stand to lose appreciably by not fighting, I shall fight. If I stand to lose more by fighting than by other means I shall adopt those other means—as Salisbury did in the Venezuela crisis in 1898: the amount of land involved in the

boundary dispute was not worth the war the U.S. threatened if Britain refused to submit the case to arbitration. It is, in a way, a mere matter of political arithmetic, in the literal sense of those words. The realist does his sum, and having worked out the answer acts accordingly. Wasn't it Franklin D. Roosevelt who once said on intervention in China in the 1930's "What man in his senses spends 30 million dollars to collect a debt of 3 million dollars?". Mr. Truman asked himself this same sort of question. In Korea American interests were involved at two levels. Given the post-war perimeter defence scheme Korea could be considered as within the sphere of American defence interests, but the crucial question was that of collective security. It was the first big challenge to the U.N. President Truman had no doubts that to allow the Communists to get away with the conquest of South Korea would be the beginning of the rot. But when MacArthur wished to change what was, in essence, a defensive and moral war into an aggressive counter-revolutionary war, Truman had no doubts that he must go. It was not in the American national interest to fight a full-scale war with China, with a strong possibility, if that war were prolonged, of having to take on Russia as well. Nor would world order have benefited from such a war. Korea, in his mind, was a limited war for a specific objective. Once this was attained the hot war must cease. The decision over Berlin was, in essence, based on the same line of reasoning.

To the Popes, in their capacity as temporal sovereigns, war has long since ceased to be a rational instrument of policy, but their attitude to war is essentially realist. The questions they ask relate to their position as head of a supra-national religious order. In time of war their flock, split by national loyalties, will perforce fight on different sides. For Popes therefore there is only one realistic policy—to declare neutrality and by strict impartiality to provide no excuse to either side to violate that neutrality. As the head of a spiritual community such a policy will be set forth in moralistic terms, but the philosophy behind it is realist. A church which claims to be universal cannot possibly take sides in an international conflict. To do so would be to compromise its supra-national character. Its concern is to avoid facing its members with a clash of loyalties and to present the independence of the church in all the states involved in conflict. Of necessity it becomes difficult for the student to distinguish the political philosophy of any one Pope from that of the Papacy as such.

The idealist poses to himself one question. Will this particular war promote 'the cause'—in most of the cases we have considered, will it promote the revolution? If the answer is 'Yes', the war will be fought. If the answer is 'No', it will not. If the answer is doubtful, the idealist will buy time and wait on events. People whose essential philosophy includes the inevitability of history can afford to wait. Makarios supported Eoka because he regarded it as a war of liberation, and the most hopeful method of achieving his objective. Nasser fought the first Israeli war in the belief that the time was ripe to sweep Israel into the sea, and in a belief that

the other Arab states would unite to assist. The second Israeli war was not his choice. The Chinese joined in the Korean war because they realised that to keep out would be to lose a geographical area where the revolution had already triumphed. They could not afford to wait. But in Indo-China and in the off-shore islands they hesitate to provoke a war in which they might well at present lose more than they gained. Time, they believe, is on their side. Where the Indian border is concerned, however, the case is different. Time is ripe for advance before communications between India and the remote North East frontier improve to the point where India could effectively resist. By that time intimidation and indoctrination will have done their stuff. Russia since the Revolution gives a classical exposition of the Communist philosophy of war. In 1917 to continue to participate in the First World War would be to ruin the October Revolution as it had already ruined the March Revolution. To promote the *real* cause peace must be bought at any price short of the overthrow of the Communist regime; hence it was right to sign a treaty as patently unjust as that of Brest-Litovsk. In 1939, despite years of preaching that Nazi Germany was the real threat to the revolution it was possible to sign the Soviet-German Pact. The cause of the Revolution could best be promoted by postponing the inevitable war. Stalin was never under the illusion, as Chamberlain apparently was at Munich, that his pact was anything but ephemeral. De Gaulle's attitude to war appears to be the same. The Free French movement was inspired by a belief in the inevitable greatness of France and by a passionate desire for its regeneration: hence the faith that built the Free French army and the Resistance. The Algerian war he inherited. Perhaps next week we shall learn whether de Gaulle's policy in Algeria also stems from his revolutionary philosophy. I suggest that his policy in Algeria is based on a belief that the war there is irrelevant to the main issue—his revolution; hence his patient and devious efforts to end it.

There remains to consider the recurring personal situations in which statesmen find themselves; the most obvious perhaps are the situation of power and responsibility, the situation of aspiring to power, and meanwhile of irresponsibility, and finally the situation of permanent eclipse—what one might telescope into 'IN', 'OUT' and 'RIGHT OUT'. Do these personal situations affect a statesman's political philosophy?

One point appears quite clear. In power all statesmen are realists, governed in fact not by the desirable but by the possible, and the measure of their success is directly proportionate to their grasp of reality. The realist therefore is least exposed to self-contradiction. In or out of office his philosophy remains coherent. Is it because realism contains a strong element of conservatism that a bi-partisan foreign policy is easier when the revolutionaries are in power than when the realists or the moralists form the government? To the realist, a part of reality is the government of the day and this perforce must enter into his calculations of the

possible. Lord Salisbury in opposition made no attempt deliberately to embarrass Mr. Gladstone over South Africa or Egypt and twenty years earlier had been scathing about Disraeli's 'unprincipled' attacks on Palmerston's government in the Schleswig Holstein crisis. To the realist international relations are difficult enough without the government being exposed to criticism which is mere carping.

The moralists too keep a coherent philosophy. In office they serve the law and if they fail to carry the country with them they resign. Out of office they may attack the government of the day for failing to honour its international agreements—as Eden did in the months preceding the Second World War—but even when they enter the class of the 'Right Outs'—theirs not to embarrass wantonly. Eden's Memoirs largely spare Macmillan. They attack Dulles more in terms of failing to honour those agreements which Eden believed they had reached than on personal grounds—or grounds of the incompatibility of Anglo-American interests in the Middle East.

It is the Idealists in whom the apparent contradictions appear, and who find it necessary, as the Russians have done ever since 1918, to re-write history about once in every ten years. But are these contradictions in fact real? That their decisions on particular issues *appear* to lack a coherent philosophy is true, if one bases one's notions of coherence on realist or moralist premises—except for the Right Outs like Charles James Fox or Trotsky who can afford to take a stand verbally and stick to it; but isn't it rather like trying to solve a problem by Euclidean geometry which is stated in terms of non-Euclidean geometry? It is the logical system which is different. Within the premises of their own philosophy the Revolutionaries too have a consistency. The mistake is to expect the Utopians to act as Grotians or as Machiavellians—and to blame them when they fail to do so.

9

The Communist Theory of
International Relations

The most important characteristic of the Communist theory of international relations is that it sharply divides all states—or rather their actual governments—into two categories: the communist (or "socialist") and the non-communist.* In this it stands in contrast to all conceptions of international politics and of international law which treat sovereign states as members of an international society with rights and obligations which do not depend on the theological or social doctrines held by their rulers or their domestic political systems. As a creed claiming universal validity which necessarily classifies people everywhere as sheep or goats according to their attitude to itself, Communism shows resemblances to military religious organizations of the past which have controlled the instruments of state power, to the Jacobin leadership of the French Revolution, and even in some degree to the aggressive phase of British nineteenth-century liberalism of which Lord John Russell was such an arrogant, though often ineffective, exponent.

A conviction of true orthodox belief, a sense of moral superiority and a faith in a historic destiny tend to lead a people and its government into policies of interference in other peoples' affairs which go far beyond national interests as they would be estimated by statesmen relatively free from ideological intolerance, and in so far as such a government is exceptionally powerful its endeavours to put the world right may be a major threat to peace. Even where there is no definite intention of spreading a creed or a system of institutions by force, the classification of a large part of mankind as children of the devil, a present danger to the followers of the true faith, yet destined soon to perish catastrophically by the will of God or inflexible laws of "history," must condition every act of foreign policy of a government consisting of men who hold such a view of the world.

In a state organized on Marxist-Leninist principles the machinery of state power is permanently directed by the Communist party, which has a monopoly of political activity and uses the state power to suppress all opposition to itself. In a regime of this kind not only is the state partisan, but the party attains the character of a state institution, and is recognized as such even internationally; thus when Marshal Bulganin was still Prime Minister of the Soviet Union and

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* [Ed.] Martin Wight presented this paper to the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics in October 1962.

Khrushchev was nothing but First Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, both of them went on state visits together to Britain and other foreign countries and were given equal official honours as representatives of their country. A political realist could no doubt argue that, as Khrushchev was known to be the most powerful man in Russia, it was expedient to receive him as a guest of honour, even if he held no state office; nevertheless from the point of view of diplomatic protocol, and ultimately of the theory of international relations, this was a very important innovation, since it accorded "summit" rank to the leader of a Communist Party as distinct from the state which it controlled. Thus, in form as well as in reality, Communist party organization participates directly in international affairs and, as it were, forces the ideological issue into the forefront as against the conception of a world of states which have relations with one another as states irrespective of their social systems or ideologies.

The desire of Western liberals who deplore the "cold war" is to achieve a relationship with Russia and with other Communist states which would be "normal" in the sense that disputes could be settled as conflicts of national interest in the same way as between non-Communist states. The Russians keep on encouraging this idea by talking about "peaceful co-existence" and efforts for the "relaxation of tension," but as soon as attempts are made to reach firm understandings with Russia, whether on disarmament, Germany, cultural exchanges or other fields of negotiation, Western statesmen and diplomats constantly run into an obstructiveness which turns out in the end to be a claim that the Soviet Union must always have a position of privilege in any agreement. A generation ago Chinese nationalists concentrated their energies on a campaign against "the unequal treaties;" these were the treaties forced on China by the Western powers during the nineteenth century whereby Europeans and Americans in China enjoyed extraterritorial rights, but the Chinese gained no corresponding rights in other countries. This inequality did not appear unjust to Western residents in China and their governments because they regarded China as a backward, semi-barbarous country, whose existing laws and institutions were doomed to disappear, but until they were replaced by Western usages, could not be allowed any authority over the stranger in their midst.

Communists have a basically similar attitude towards countries not under Communist rule; the institutions of the latter are reactionary, corrupt and destined by the inevitable process of history to be superseded by "socialist" ones; Communist states, to whom alone the future belongs, may have to conclude agreements for reasons of expediency with these doomed regimes, but cannot regard them as equals and cannot enter into commitments with them which would bind both sides permanently on a basis of genuine equality. A diplomat with long experience of negotiating with Soviet representatives summed up the situation by saying: "They always go on the principle of 'Heads I win, tails you

lose'; of course, we would all like to have it that way, but the Russians really believe that is how it ought to be."

Reference to the fundamentals of Marxist-Leninist theory shows how natural it is for representatives of a Communist state to have such an attitude. The task of every Communist party in a non-Communist country is the capture of state power by any means which may be expedient, and thereafter its permanent, dictatorial exercise with complete suppression of all political opposition, the power being held for the purpose of carrying out a radical transformation of society first into a "socialist" and then into a "communist" form. Although each national Communist party is supposed to achieve its own revolution, they all are conceived as sections of a single international movement with a common doctrine, a comradely solidarity regardless of frontiers, and a duty to render fraternal support and assistance to one another. Since 1917 one Communist party, and in recent years more than a dozen, have actually held state power in their respective countries, and this has involved them in problems not only of domestic revolutionary action but also of state foreign policy. Between 1917 and 1944 there was only one Communist-governed sovereign state, the Soviet Union, and its state foreign relations were therefore exclusively with non-Communist states; since 1944 there has been a plurality of Communist-governed states and there have therefore been state relations among them as well as with the outside world. Formally there are now four kinds of external relations of governing Communist parties:

(1) with other Communist governing parties,
(2) through Foreign Ministries with other Communist-governed states,
(3) with oppositional Communist parties within non-Communist states, and
(4) through Foreign Ministries with the governments of non-Communist states.

It is clear from the general structure of Communist party-states that (1) and (2) are in substance identical, since the policies of such states are determined by their Communist parties. Nevertheless, a certain distinction between party and state actions is maintained, and serious altercations between parties of different countries can occur without rupture of state diplomatic relations. Thus even at the height of the Stalinist campaign against Titoist heresy, Soviet-Yugoslav diplomatic relations were not broken off. In Khrushchev's recent campaign against the Albanian Communist party, on the other hand, there has been a complete break of state as well as party relations.

With regard to the non-Communist world inter-party and inter-state relations are necessarily separate because the Communist parties in non-Communist countries do not control their governments. But the fact that governing Communist parties maintain close relations with oppositional Communist

parties in non-Communist countries remains, as it has been ever since the foundation of the Comintern in 1919, a most serious obstacle to the establishment of normal state relations between Communist and non-Communist governments. In so far as a governing Communist party gives aid and support to an oppositional Communist party in a non-Communist country, it is in its state diplomatic relations with that country's government carrying on an international intercourse with a regime which it is at the same time trying to destroy.

This dual character of Soviet foreign policy between the wars was formally expressed in the fact that Soviet Communist leaders held concurrently Soviet state offices and key positions in the Comintern. Western politicians and diplomats, however, who for one reason or another were anxious to establish friendly relations with the Soviet Union, were always declaring, particularly after Stalin's proclamation [in 1924] of "Socialism in One Country," that the Comintern was moribund, and their predictions appeared to come true when in 1943 it was formally dissolved by Stalin. But within a couple of years of its demise its leading figures were being installed in power by direct Soviet intervention in countries of Eastern Europe overrun by Russian armies. After the zone of Communist control had thus been extended to the Elbe and the Adriatic, it again became the contention of Soviet publicity that Communist revolution was "not for export," and it is now widely believed in the West that the replacement of Stalin by Khrushchev has ended the era of Soviet promotion of Communist action outside the boundaries of the Soviet bloc.

Yet only two months ago [in July–August 1962] the capital of independent and neutral Finland witnessed a remarkable example of a continuing Soviet will to such intervention which would certainly be repeated elsewhere in Europe if the Soviet Union could exert as much pressure as it can on Finland. On insistent demands from Moscow—which declared that refusal would be considered an unfriendly act—the Finnish Government agreed to allow the Communist-sponsored "World Festival of Youth and Students for Peace and Friendship" to be held in Helsinki. The sequel was what amounted to a ten days occupation of the Finnish capital, with Soviet youth leaders arriving in military uniform, Soviet loud-speaker cars blaring propaganda through the streets and a swarm of Russian "security guards," who, on the pretext of protecting the Festival against "fascist elements," committed acts of violence against both Festival delegates and Finnish citizens which the Finnish police did not dare to restrain.[1]

From this demonstration of current Soviet behaviour on the territory of a weak and unprotected neighbour it is fair to conclude that such "co-existence" would be extended further to the west in support of the Communist cause if there were not factors of military power which impose a check on it. What is here to the

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[1] [Ed.] For background on this event, see Paul E. Sigmund, 'Helsinki: The Last Youth Festival?' *Problems of Communism*, 5 (September–October 1962), pp. 58–62.

point, however, is not that the Soviet Communist party continues to behave in this fashion where it can safely do so, but that its principles constrain it to this course wherever conditions are favourable for it. It is not intervention, but failure to intervene which is in Communist eyes culpable and has to be excused. In his correspondence with Tito in 1948 (subsequently published by the Yugoslavs), Stalin claimed Tito's gratitude for the help given him by the Red Army in his seizure of power in Yugoslavia and added that "unfortunately" it had not been able to do the same for the Communists of France and Italy.[2]

The character of international relations cannot but be affected by a government's support for a revolutionary movement within a country with which it maintains diplomatic intercourse. There is no prospect that the Soviet Union and its satellites or the Chinese People's Republic will abandon such activities, ranging from propaganda to surreptitious supplies of money and arms, as long as they are under Communist party rule. They hold, indeed, that they are fully entitled to appeal to the peoples of the world on behalf of their doctrine and their policies as long as they do not promote them by war; co-existence is to be competitive in the political, economic and cultural fields, and the peoples will in the end choose the system which provides the greater satisfaction for human needs. This sounds fair enough and the West should not shrink from such a challenge.

But the "competition" is entirely a one-way affair. While exploiting all the facilities for publicity, agitation and political intrigue afforded by the democracies, the Communist states themselves in accordance with their basic principles of government deny to their own peoples any chance to hear the other side of the case, whether as regards ideology or particular policies. A rigorous censorship is applied to all media of communication so that the citizens of Communist states can only see or hear what the Party wishes them to see or hear; foreign broadcasts are jammed, undesirable foreign books are excluded, and there is no independent or opposition press by which official versions and comments on events might be criticized. Thus in any political dialogue the West is wide open to Communist propaganda—including its pacifist and neutralist subsidiaries—while the Communist world remains almost completely closed to any counter-argument. In this context it is not true to say that it does not matter for international relations

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[2] [Ed.] 'Even though the French and Italian CPs [Communist Parties] have so far achieved less success than the CPY [Communist Party of Yugoslavia], this is not due to any special qualities of the CPY, but mainly because after the destruction of the Yugoslav partisan headquarters by German paratroopers, at a moment when the people's liberation movement in Yugoslavia was passing through a serious crisis, the Soviet Army came to the aid of the Yugoslav people, crushed the German invader, liberated Belgrade, and in this way created the conditions which were necessary for the CPY to achieve power. Unfortunately the Soviet army did not and could not render such assistance to the French and Italian CPs.' Letter from Central Committee of Communist Party of the Soviet Union to Central Committee of Communist Party of Yugoslavia, 4 May 1948, in *The Soviet–Yugoslav Dispute: Text of the Published Correspondence* (London and New York: Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1948), p. 51.

whether states are liberally or despotically governed. In the days when diplomacy was conducted merely as an activity of kings and their ministers and the peoples had little or no concern with it, censorship and monopoly of publicity could not be important instruments of foreign policy. But in an age of mass electorates and mass propaganda influencing governments through public opinion and elections, it creates a fundamental inequality between two states if the government of the one is exposed to political bombardment in the open while that of the other can shelter behind impenetrable walls.

This inequality affects negotiations with the Soviet Union in many different fields. It has long been a notion dear to Western liberals that, even if a political settlement between Russia and the West is as yet too difficult to achieve, a better understanding between the two worlds can be promoted by cultural exchanges. But these "exchanges" constantly turn out to be a one-way traffic. The Soviet Union is only too pleased to have opportunities to project a favourable image of itself in the West, but it reserves the right to pick and choose what may be shown to its own people. Recently there was an arrangement for television documentaries to be made by a British team in Russia and a Russian team in Britain; the result was that British viewers saw scenes of industrial construction and happy, smiling faces while Russian viewers saw slums on a wet day and a ban-the-bomb demonstration.

In the sphere of disarmament, the campaign for which has been the main stock-in-trade of Soviet propaganda ever since the 'twenties, every scheme has so far foundered on the Soviet refusal to accept any effective system of inspection; the point here is that if there is no guaranteed inspection a totalitarian regime is inherently many times more capable of concealing infractions of an agreement than a democratic one.[3] If the British or American Government were to sign a disarmament accord, it would be extremely difficult to evade it under conditions of impartial law and political freedom, but the extent to which such secrets could be kept in the Soviet Union can be estimated from the fact that the riots in Kazakhstan two years ago in which crowds were mown down by tanks were not

[3] [Ed.] The Soviet Union resisted arms control inspection regimes applying to its own territory until the advent to power of its last leader, Mikhail Gorbachev. In 1986 the Soviet government endorsed the Document of the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, which included no-refusal on-site inspections of specified areas within the zone of application for confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) such as notification requirements. In 1987 Moscow approved the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles. This treaty is widely known as the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, even though it did not directly concern nuclear weapons, but all US and Soviet ground-based ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 and 5500 kilometers, whether armed with nuclear or non-nuclear warheads. The INF Treaty's verification regime established multiple types of on-site inspections. Prior to the INF Treaty, Washington and Moscow relied mainly on national technical means (NTM) of verification such as reconnaissance satellites, and NTM remain important for both capitals. George L. Rueckert, *On-Site Inspection in Theory and Practice: A Primer on Modern Arms Control Regimes* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1998), pp. 2, 12, 24–25.

known in the West until some three months after they had occurred, and then only among specialists in Soviet affairs.[4]

A similar one-sidedness is apparent in the Soviet conception of colonies and dependent territories. Communist theory stands for the liberation and self-determination of all colonial and subject peoples; at the same time it is denied as a matter of principle that there are, or can be, any such peoples within the Communist orbit. All the non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union, including the Baltic States annexed in 1940, are there by their own free will; all the countries where Communist governments were put in power by the Red Army in 1944–45 have voluntarily decided their future. The same system of single-list rigged elections which perpetually and unanimously confirms Communist authority in the Soviet Union can be used to ratify any territorial expansion or political transformation of another country by Soviet arms. But for the non-Communist world the Soviet Union demands democratic free elections, self-determination for all nationalities and non-interference in other countries' internal affairs, so that Western colonial empires may be broken up and revolutions protected against foreign intervention.

Hence the contradiction of Russia loudly demanding democracy for Angola and Rhodesia while refusing free elections for the people of East Germany or denouncing American support for Cuban émigrés while justifying the use of Russian troops to crush the national uprising of Hungary. All this is not simply a matter of clever tactics in international power politics; it corresponds to a genuine Communist view that revolution and counter-revolution cannot have equal rights and that Soviet domination cannot be compared with Western imperialism. Communism is right and must prevail; it is always on the march forward, and though it may for periods of time be held up by the resistance of the old order, it is unthinkable that it should anywhere be forced to retreat where it is once established. There cannot be a common set of rules applicable to the actions of both sides in the Cold War, for such a set of rules implies that there is a moral community of states within which certain conflicts occur, but for Communists there can be no such community; there is only a struggle between entirely incompatible systems which is historically destined to result in the complete destruction of one side by the other.

This outlook has not been modified by the emphasis on the principle of peaceful co-existence since 1956; this is genuine in so far as Soviet leaders have realized the dangers for themselves of nuclear war and are resolved to hold in check the recklessness of those who, whether in China or the Soviet Union itself, press for policies likely to lead to a general war. But the mere absence of war is not the

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[4] [Ed.] For background on social upheavals in Kazakhstan and elsewhere in the Soviet Union, see Vladimir Aleksandrovich Kozlov, *Mass Uprisings in the USSR: Protest and Rebellion in the Post-Stalin Years*, trans. and ed. Elaine McClarnand MacKinnon (London and New York: Routledge, 2015).

same as international co-operation; the fact that a man refrains from shooting his neighbour from fear of the consequences does not mean that he bears goodwill towards him or will abstain from doing him harm in any way he safely can. The fundamental malevolence of Soviet policy towards the West remains the same under Khrushchev as under Stalin, and it arises not from any specific dispute or grievance but from the nature of the creed professed by the organized body of men who govern Russia.

In one respect, however, a new situation has arisen for Communist ideology in world affairs since the death of Stalin. In the days when the Soviet Union was the only state under Communist rule the international Communist movement was as "monolithic" as the political structure of the Soviet Union itself. Communists everywhere were devoted to Russia as the pioneer and standard-bearer of the Revolution; Moscow spoke with one voice, which was the voice of Stalin, and it was everywhere obeyed by Communist parties. Trotskyites and other heretics were expelled from their parties and survived only as insignificant sects. But since Communists have come to power in a number of countries, and especially in one that is more populous, though less developed economically, than Russia, the issue of jurisdiction has demanded a theoretical solution. Who has authority to interpret doctrine and lay down overall policies for all the world's Communists? Is there an infallible Pope in Moscow, or is ultimate authority vested in an Ecumenical Council, or is each national Communist party entitled to decide for itself? And if conflicts of interest arise between Communist states, are they to be negotiated through the ordinary machinery of diplomacy as between bourgeois states or is there to be some international party organization for resolving them?

These questions could hardly arise in Stalin's lifetime because his immense personal power smothered all reference to them. There could be only one true doctrine and correct interpretation; if anyone doubted it, he was automatically exposed as no Communist, but an agent of imperialism. Communist states could not have conflicts of interest like bourgeois states because all such conflicts were effects of capitalism and could not occur among emancipated sections of the working-class, whose interests were by definition harmonious. But since 1953 it has been impossible to conceal the differences of interest and opinion within the Communist camp and the tendency has been for ideological disputes to be correlated with clashes of state interest between governing Communist parties.[5] When Russia compels Poland to provide her with coal at a fraction of the market price, when Albania aligns herself with China against Russia because Peking is more anti-Tito than Moscow, when China has a border dispute with India and Russia supplies India with the most up-to-date military aircraft, the historian can recognize familiar phenomena in the power politics of sovereign states which

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[5] [Ed.] Wight's phrase 'since 1953' refers to the death of Stalin in March 1953.

have occurred since the first beginnings of political organizations among human beings.

Russia can no longer fully control the Communist parties which hold state power in other countries and they have developed their own state interests as sovereign governments. But further, if they should disagree with the Kremlin on doctrine, they can no longer be brought into line as they could when they were merely revolutionary parties without state power. When Trotsky and Bukharin put forward doctrinal views in opposition to Stalin they could be purged from the party, silenced, banished or executed by the internal processes of the Soviet party-state. But how is Moscow now to deal with heretics abroad—with a Tito, a Mao, a Hoxha or a Gomulka? Where Russia still has troops stationed on the territory of the recalcitrant state, as in Poland, strong pressure can be brought to bear to ensure conformity, and it is significant that of the four heretics above mentioned, Gomulka is the one who has gone furthest in submission to Moscow, but even in Poland the Soviet Union has been reluctant to use armed force to coerce a Communist government. (Intervention in Hungary was different because Communist rule had been overthrown.) It has proved impossible to coerce China merely by economic pressure, and even Albania has survived the withdrawal of Soviet economic aid because China has made up for it.

Under these new conditions, although the Kremlin continues to claim that the decisions of Soviet Party Congresses are binding on all Communists everywhere, it has been compelled to acknowledge the supremacy of a world conference of Communist parties as arbitrator in international Communist ideological conflicts. Representatives of Communist parties from eighty countries met in Moscow at the end of 1960 to compose the differences between Russia and China; they found a formula, but the conflict broke out again afterwards over interpretations of the formula.[6] The world conference of parties is in any case only an *ad*

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[6] [Ed.] *Statement of 81 Communist and Workers Parties Meeting in Moscow, USSR, 1960* (New York: New Century Publishers, 1961), available at https://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/sino-soviet-split/other/1960statement.htm The compromise 'formula' to which Wight refers concerning (a) the decisive political significance of the gathering and ideological agreement of the world's Communist parties and (b) the exceptional leadership role of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) may well have been the following passage: 'The experience and results of the meetings of representatives of the Communist Parties held in recent years, particularly the results of the two major meetings—that of November, 1957 and this Meeting [in November, 1960]—show that in present-day conditions such meetings are an effective form of exchanging views and experience, enriching Marxist-Leninist theory by collective effort and elaborating a common attitude in the struggle for common objectives. The Communist and Workers' Parties unanimously declare that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has been, and remains, the universally recognized vanguard of the world Communist movement, being the most experienced and steeled contingent of the international Communist movement. The experience which the CPSU has gained in the struggle for the victory of the working class, in socialist construction and in the full-scale construction of communism, is of fundamental significance for the whole of the world Communist movement. The example of the CPSU and its fraternal solidarity inspire all the Communist Parties in their struggle for peace and socialism, and represent the revolutionary principles of proletarian internationalism applied in practice. The historic decisions of the 20th Congress of the CPSU are not only of great importance for

hoc device; it has no permanent organization of its own, as the old Comintern had, and it has no constitutional executive powers.

It seems that Communist theory has no answer to the question how uniformity of doctrine and policy is to be preserved among a number of Communist parties which are identified with sovereign states. They still tend to stand together in the common hostility towards the non-Communist governing regimes required by Marxist-Leninist principles, but they are far from being a unified political whole. In so far as Communist theory accepts the legitimate existence of sovereign states, it cannot ensure among them the same kind of totalitarian uniformity, unanimity and discipline which are established within each state. But the existence of rival doctrines and clashes between interests which are theoretically harmonious is a scandal to the faithful and destructive of the prestige of the ideology. The only solution would be the formation of a Communist world-state imposing a single authority everywhere and suppressing all individual state sovereignties.[7] This is the logical goal of Marxist-Leninist theory, but the practical difficulties in the way of its achievement are too great to be ignored.

the CPSU and communist construction in the USSR, but have initiated a new stage in the world Communist movement, and have promoted its development on the basis of Marxism-Leninism. All Communist and Workers' Parties contribute to the development of the great theory of Marxism-Leninism. Mutual assistance and support in relations between all the fraternal Marxist-Leninist Parties embody the revolutionary principles of proletarian internationalism applied in practice.'

[7] [Ed.] As a source on this point, Martin Wight recommended Elliot R. Goodman, *The Soviet Design for a World State* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), in his essay, 'An Anatomy of International Thought', in *Four Seminal Thinkers in International Theory: Machiavelli, Grotius, Kant and Mazzini*, ed. Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (London: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 156.

10

The Idea of Just War

Leaving aside the Greeks and Romans, the Just War notion has gone through vast pendulum swings or systole-diastole movements in Western Civilisation:*

1. Medieval Catholicism: emphasis on righteous cause, assertion of orthodoxy against infidels or heretics: confusion with Holy War: Aquinas only began a deconfusion.
2. Gentili:[1] (a) secularisation: religious motive doesn't ensure justice (Religious Wars); and (b) rationalisation: both sides can usually claim justice.
3. Grotius:[2] (a) legalisation, statement in juridical terms: justice in defence, not of orthodoxy, but of legal rights, or punishment of wrongs and injuries suffered; and (b) moderation: *temperamenta belli*: new emphasis on restraint in the methods of war.
4. Vattel:[3] completes the swing towards Realism or Positivism: (a) the justice of the cause is beyond determining; and (b) justice resides in observance of the Laws of War: methods predominate.
5. Age of Positivism, 1763–1918 (J. J. Moser's *Versuch des neuesten Europäischen Völkerrechts*, 1777–1780):[4] (a) every sovereign state has an unfettered right of resort to war; (b) every sovereign state has an unfettered

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  * [Ed.] Martin Wight wrote this note in January 1971.

  [1] [Ed.] Alberico Gentili (1552–1608), an Italian jurist and professor at Oxford University, wrote extensively on public international law.

  [2] [Ed.] Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), a Dutch theologian and political philosopher, is best known as the author of *De jure belli ac pacis* (1625), *On the Law of War and Peace.*

  [3] [Ed.] Emer de Vattel (1714–1767), born a subject of Prussia, became an embassy counsellor for Augustus III, the Elector of Saxony, King of Poland, and Grand Duke of Lithuania. Vattel published his master-work, *Droit des gens ou principes de la loi naturelle appliqués à la conduite et aux affaires des Nations et des Souverains* (*The Law of Nations: Or, Principles of Natural Law Applied to the Conduct and Affairs of Nations and Sovereigns*), in 1758.

  [4] [Ed.] Johann Jacob Moser (1701–1785), sometimes called 'The Father of German Constitutional Law', wrote the study of European international law cited by Wight as representative of legal opinion in the 'age of positivism' from the end of the Seven Years' War to the end of the First World War. Wight described Moser's *Versuch des neuesten Europäischen Völkerrechts* as 'the first great work of positivist jurisprudence … which came as near to codifying *Realpolitik* as any work of international law can do'. Wight, 'Why Is There No International Theory?' in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966, and London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 30. This reference in 'Why Is There No International Theory?' is also available in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, p. 34.

right to remain neutral in others' wars; (c) Laws of War improved constantly: Geneva Conventions.

6. The League Covenant began a swing back to Grotius: (a) the right of resort to war was limited by the Kellogg Pact's outlawry of war (upheld in the Nuremberg Tribunals); and (b) the reintroduction of the notion of a just cause, defined in legal terms: an unjust war = aggression = a violation of the Covenant, while a just war = defense of the Covenant = collective security.

7. Communism reintroduces Holy War: the Soviet Union's Great Patriotic War and the Cold War: justice = advancing revolutionary orthodoxy.

8. Nuclear deterrent strengthens the principle of restraint in the means of warfare: "massive retaliation" replaced by counter-force strategy.[5]

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[5] [Ed.] Wight evidently regarded 'counter-force' nuclear capabilities holding enemy forces at risk as a strategy of restraint in comparison with 'counter-value' or 'anti-city' targeting.

11

The Causes of War

An Historian's View

There are three introductory points to be made: the historian's language, historical judgment, and the fact that it takes two to make a war.*

The Historian's Language

The first concerns the notion of cause in an historian's language. Historians are shy of such large topics as "the causes of war."

These are apt to make the historian say that his concern is with the particular—that he will study the origins of an individual war—and leaves the general enquiry to such people as the sociologist or the international relationist.

This of course is broadly true, but only broadly, not completely: because the most specialised historian brings to his study of his particular war certain categories of explanation which as soon as he reflects about them must be seen to depend upon or be related to comparison with other wars and to involve even an inarticulate theory of war.

The most famous and elaborate of all historical enquiries into the causes of a particular war was that into the origins of the 1914 war which preoccupied the historical profession between the wars and has continued since. Special institutes have been founded for the study of this, special periodicals have been devoted to the subject, and thousands of books published on it—and hundreds of thousands of diplomatic documents.

This enquiry into the antecedents of the 1914 war has produced the most sustained thinking about the causes of war in general that the historical profession has ever done. It clarified the important verbal distinction between "causes of war," a phrase which provides a title for this course of lectures and comes naturally to the non-historian, and "the origins of the war," which historians tend to prefer.

The word "cause" belongs properly to the social sciences, and is borrowed by them from natural sciences or perhaps medicine. If you consult a doctor about a

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* [Ed.] Martin Wight presented this paper at Brighton on 4 November 1966.

stomach-ache, he says, "We must get to the cause of the trouble" and diagnoses an inflamed appendix or gall-stones.

Many of the first generation of historians who studied the origins of the 1914 war supposed they would find a "cause of the trouble" of this kind—Europe's inflamed appendix—and there were many candidates: capitalist imperialism, the structure of alliances and the balance of power, secret diplomacy, competition in armaments, armament manufacturers, and international anarchy.

There were historians who isolated one or another of these factors as the cause *par excellence* of the 1914 war and who extended the operation of the cause back to explain other wars.

"The worst of such general theories is that they will explain almost anything."[1] All these general factors which may be seen as contributing to 1914 were equally the cause of the unparalleled period of peace which preceded 1914. So the question "What factors caused the outbreak of war in 1914?" is transformed into "Why did the factors that had long preserved the peace of Europe fail to do so in 1914?"[2]

Not only has it been difficult to isolate satisfactory general causes of this kind, but the whole conception of causality in history has become a matter of major philosophical controversy ever since Hume asserted that it is impossible to establish that any event has been caused by another: one can only see one event following another, in a relationship of contiguity and succession.[3]

Historians on the whole are apt to avoid this philosophical quagmire, if they even notice it, and to present themselves as empirical people who are concerned to trace and analyse sequences of effects without searching for causes.[4]

This is how they tend to use the word "origins"—a complicated sequence or network of events which is not determinist in character since it includes innumerable decisions or choices by individual men who might have acted differently and therefore bear a measure of moral responsibility for the outcome, but which nevertheless is apt to resemble a web of necessity in which few individual threads or knots stand out distinctively. Moreover, historians do allow themselves to write about causes of war in general. To continue my metaphor, they see in necessitous webs of events a prevailing tone of colour or a kind of pattern; and these general causes are usually described in terms of motive.

Perhaps one could almost define "a cause of war" for a historian as a web of circumstances encouraging the prevalence of a certain motive in statesmen, governments, and nations. "If we ask about the cause of a particular war, the answer

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[1] A. J. P. Taylor, *Englishmen and Others* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1956), p. 120.   [2] *Ibid.*
[3] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. by L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888), Book I, Part III, Section XIV, pp. 155–72.
[4] Arnold Brecht, *Political Theory: The Foundations of Twentieth-Century Political Thought* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1959), p. 88.

we normally find satisfying, and the answer the historian normally gives us, is in terms of a motive inspired by relationships of power."[5]

Historical Judgment

The historian is bound by his own professional kind of Hippocratic Oath to try to be impartial. This does not absolve him, I believe, from the duty of moral judgment, but it prompts him to try to enter into both sides of every case, to understand the moral complexity and ambiguity of almost every historical issue, to put even such horrors as the extermination of the Red Indians and the Tasmanian aborigines, the Slave Trade, and the Nazi and Soviet concentration camps into their historical context.

It means that, though he may hate war in general as much as any sane man does, he will not level easy moral condemnations about particular wars. He will preserve a certain detachment and perspective.

It is not his business quâ historian to solve the world's problems but to promote understanding of man's past and present activities, to be "the reconciling mind that comprehends."[6]

It Takes Two to Make a War

This I hold to be axiomatic. A war begins when one Power offers violence and another replies with counter-violence. It would have been possible, in theory, to avert any war in history if the second Power had chosen not to offer resistance. The results might have been very unpleasant, conquest and occupation, but still the process would not have been one to which we are accustomed to apply the term "war."

There are perhaps more historical examples of avoidance of war by instant capitulation than we might remember. Hitler's peaceful conquests of Austria, Czechoslovakia and Memel from Lithuania come to mind.

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[5] [Ed.] Wight placed this sentence in quotation marks, perhaps because he had previously published it in 'War and International Politics', *The Listener*, 13 October 1955, pp. 584–585. This article in *The Listener* was republished posthumously, with minor modifications, as a chapter entitled 'War' in Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, ed. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978). The sentence quoted appears on p. 138 of *Power Politics*.

[6] [Ed.] Wight was probably alluding to Herbert Butterfield's view that 'the rôle of the technical historian is that of a reconciling mind that seeks to comprehend'. Butterfield, *Christianity and History* (London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd., 1950), p. 92. Wight quoted this statement in his essay 'History and Judgement: Butterfield, Niebuhr and the Technical Historian', *The Frontier: A Christian Commentary on the Common Life*, I(8) (August 1950), p. 310.

But in every great or general war, the Great Powers have violated the neutrality of weaker powers with impunity, marching across their territory or occupying their strategic points. History on the whole has neglected their injured feelings and real sufferings, taking them for granted.

Thus the Allies violated the neutrality of Persia and Greece in the First World War and that of Persia and Portugal (occupying the Azores) in the Second World War.

These small powers chose not to resist and thereby open up a new war-front. They acquiesced, as Denmark acquiesced in German occupation. This has been the wisdom of the weak—prudence, not passive resistance on principle, nor the purgation through suffering of Pétainism.

Thus it has been possible to put forward the view that the cause of war lies in the disposition of states that are attacked to defend themselves. This is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the principle that it takes two to make a war. Grotius quoted Thucydides in this regard: "Peace is broken, not by those who ward off force with force, but by those who first resort to force."[7] This doctrine is the moral common-sense of the Western tradition.

Clausewitz stood it on its head, virtually arguing that the real war-monger or aggressor is the defender:

If we reflect philosophically how war arises, the conception of war does not properly arise with the *offensive*, because this has for its absolute object not so much *combat* as the *taking possession of something*. It [the conception of war] first arises with the *defensive*, for this has combat for its direct object, warding off and combat being obviously one and the same thing. The warding off is directed entirely against the attack, and therefore necessarily presupposes it; but the attack is not directed against the warding off, but upon something else—the *taking possession of something*, and consequently does not presuppose the warding off.[8]

This topsy-turvy philosophy of war became an ingredient of German militarism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, of German self-centeredness and self-pity. There are Germans who still talk as if Germany was attacked by Belgium in August 1914 and by Poland in September 1939.

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[7] [Ed.] This statement by Thucydides was quoted by Grotius in *De Jure Belli ac Pacis Libri Tres, Volume Two: The Translation*, trans. by Francis W. Kelsey (Buffalo, New York: William S. Hein and Co., 1995), p. 814 (Book III, Chapter XX, Section XXVIII). It should be noted that this 1995 edition is a reprint of the 1925 edition (quoted frequently by Wight) published in Oxford by the Clarendon Press. The 1925 edition was given this title because the initial volume, published by the Carnegie Institution of Washington in 1913, consists of a reproduction of the Latin edition of 1646. Wight's translation differs slightly from that in this edition of Grotius.

[8] Karl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. O. J. Matthijs Jolles (Washington, DC: Infantry Journal Press, 1950), p. 339; italics in the original.

The principle that it takes two to make a war can be extended in another way. If we are to understand the cause of war in terms of a prevailing motive, there will be at least two sets of causes, the prevailing motives, for every war, because the attacker and the defender do not have the same motives. (Indeed, no two belligerents have quite the same motives, even when they are allies.) It is the historian's business to try to put the two conflicting motives of the war together to provide a stereoscopic picture, so to speak, of its origins. However fairly we try to understand the origins of a particular war, it is likely to change its character and appearance as we move round and look at it from the standpoint of another belligerent.

With this proviso and warning, we might say that the causes of war, defined by the prevailing motive, fall into three groups. War is the most drastic means of social change, and it is in terms of change that I offer this description of its motives:

(a) to promote liberating change: Freedom
(b) to promote coercive change: Truth Gain Glory
(c) to prevent change: Fear.

War to Promote Liberating Change

Possibly the most common cause of war in modern times—since about 1500—has been to promote change of a kind which posterity approves. By "liberating change" I mean change which has led to greater freedom or self-determination for the victor and his associates, a freedom which the loser in retrospect reluctantly concedes to have been a good thing.

For example, one might consider the Swiss cantons vs the Habsburgs, the War of Dutch Independence against Spain, the War of American Independence or the American Revolutionary War, the Greek War of Independence against Turkey at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the later Balkan Wars in which the Serbians and the Bulgarians freed themselves and their fellow-countrymen from "the unspeakable Turk," and the Easter rising in Dublin against the British.

These emancipatory wars cut across our normal tendency to classify wars as aggressive or defensive and to condemn the aggressive ones. An interesting example is the Italian War of 1859, which was the decisive struggle in the Risorgimento, the freeing of Italy from Austrian predominance and her unification. Cavour and Napoleon III plotted it in cold blood, and Cavour by calculated provocation then goaded Austria into war.

The war of 1859 was unique in modern history: it was the only war which did not spring in part from mutual apprehension…[T]hough the war lacked justification on any basis of international law, no war has been so unanimously

approved by posterity. Over other wars of national liberation—Bismarck's wars, the wars of the Balkan peoples against Turkey, the Czech and South Slav struggles against the Habsburg monarchy—there is still controversy; over the war of 1859 none. The historian cannot be expected to explain this paradox; while himself approving of the war, he can only record that it was incompatible with any known system of international morality.[9]

Cavour allowed or encouraged Garibaldi to sail for the conquest of Sicily and Naples and then contrived unprovoked aggression against the Papal States—as skillful as anything of the kind by Hitler.

Similar again was the motive of the Serbian assassins of Archduke Franz Ferdinand who started the First World War in 1914. The Archduke had deliberately gone, or been sent, to Sarajevo on the Serbian National Day "as a gesture of defiance against Serb nationalism; as a demonstration that Bosnia, though inhabited by Serbs and Croats, was going to remain part of the Austrian empire."[10]

Princip and five other young men were simple-minded idealists, Bosnian Serbs who wanted their national freedom. Their act of assassination brought a great number of consequences which they had not intended and did not foresee, but it also produced the particular emancipation they had wanted.

War has been a mode of emancipation, in modern history, perhaps even more important than revolution. I believe it is true to say that from William Tell, champion of Swiss freedom, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, down to 1900, not a single newcomer to international society has been able to gain admission without asserting its right by war, like the Dutch and the United States and Greece and United Italy and United Germany, or by creeping in as a result of somebody else's war, as Rumania did in 1856, or the new states of Eastern Europe in 1918.

A limiting instance would be the independence of Belgium, achieved in 1830-1831 after a suppressed war between the Belgians and the Dutch and joint intervention by the Great Powers to coerce the Dutch.

Since 1900 there have been the examples of independence peacefully attained by Norway (1905), Iceland (1918), and the Philippines (1946).

But the great majority of newly enfranchised states owe their independence more or less directly to the two World Wars, which compelled the Dutch, the French and the British to dismantle their colonial empires.

Even so, Indian nationalism is sustained by the historical myth of the "struggle for independence" which makes the Civil Disobedience Campaign and nationalist movement a substitute for revolutionary war. Even so, Israel and Indonesia and Vietnam consolidated their independence by war. Tunisia (1954) and

[9] A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848–1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), pp. 111–12.
[10] A. J. P. Taylor, *Englishmen and Others* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1956), p. 121.

Morocco (1955) profited from France's defeat in the Indo-China War. Algeria wrested her independence in an eight years' war.

Elsewhere, "overt resort to violence" has been "no longer necessary, but well-organized nationalist movements and the threat of violence in the background" have been "still useful instruments with which to prod hesitant governments."[11]

It may be a question whether nations which have been given their independence (for the first time in history) by a peaceable transfer of sovereignty will survive as well as the great majority which have won their independence by blood and struggle.

It is not at all clear whether the new African nations, for instance, have found a substitute for the emotional self-confidence, coherence and tenacity represented for older nations by such figures as Robert the Bruce, Joan of Arc, and George Washington, and by such memories as the defeat of the Armada, Bunker Hill, and the Easter Rising.

In this perspective, the historian might be tempted to say that the Vietnamese people will emerge from their present agony with advantages denied to their neighbours.

War to Impose Coercive Change

The main purpose in the previous kind of war was to secure a greater degree of freedom for the belligerent, to impose no more change on others than the acceptance of his emancipation. In this second kind of war, the belligerent aims to impose change irrespective of whether it is acceptable. It is not war for freedom, but war for domination.

This motive for war allows of the widest range of idealism. At one end of the scale are the wars to convert the world to an ideal—the missionary wars, the religious and ideological wars.

European history is unique, so far as I know, among the great cultures of the world, in the recurrence and power of this motive for war. It is of course the result of the Judaic-Christian elements in European civilisation—the burden of a civilisation which has believed itself to be in possession of Absolute Truth.

Three times in modern history the polite regularities of diplomatic and military competitions have been broken up by a volcanic eruption of doctrinal fanaticism: the Religious Wars in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries; the French Revolutionary Wars, the Wars of Jacobinism; and the Totalitarian Wars of the twentieth century.

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[11] Rupert Emerson, *From Empire to Nation: The Rise to Self-Assertion of Asian and African Peoples* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 398.

The French Revolution proclaimed a new universal creed—the Declaration of the Rights, not of Frenchmen, but of Man, knowing no frontiers. It began in a pacific mood, and in May 1790 the National Assembly decreed that the French nation refused to undertake any war of conquest and that it would never employ its forces against the liberties of any people.

In less than two years, the French nation had interpreted this decree to permit it to declare war on Austria (April 1792), and in November 1792 it declared that it would grant fraternity and assistance to all peoples who wished to recover their liberty. This was a declaration of general intervention, a declaration of universal civil war, summed up in the slogan "War to the châteaux, peace to the cottages."[12]

It was logically completed when, in December 1792, the French nation declared "that it will treat as an enemy the people who, refusing or renouncing liberty and equality, would like to maintain, call back or deal with the princes and the privileged classes."[13]

Partly because of hostile intervention by reactionary powers, partly because of the logic of her own new creed, Revolutionary France was launched upon the path of forcing other nations to be free. This is the classic example, the purest and most fascinating example, of the ideological cause of war.

While the French Revolution began in full peace-time, and led to a general war, the Russian Revolution by contrast came as a result of defeat in a general war when the country was exhausted and led to peace.

Nevertheless the invasion of Poland by the Red Army in 1920 was inspired by exuberant confidence in the impending outbreak of revolution in Germany and Western Europe. "The revolution of the proletariat, the downfall of the yoke of capitalism is on the march: it will come in all the countries of the earth."[14]

From these heights, one could group wars of coercive change in a descending order of idealism.

The colonial wars by which the European powers extended the frontiers of international society to enclose the whole world retained traces of idealism. Of crusading flavour, they were largely inspired by a *mission civilisatrice*, a belief that benefits were being spread.

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[12] [Ed.] '*Guerre aux châteaux, paix aux chaumières*'. J. M. Thompson, *The French Revolution* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1943), p. 336.

[13] [Ed.] 'La nation française déclare qu'elle traitera comme ennemi le peuple qui, refusant la liberté et l'égalité, ou y renonçant, voudrait conserver, rappeler ou traiter avec le prince et les castes privilégiées.' This statement is found in the 'Décret par lequel la France proclame la liberté et la souveraineté de tous les peuples chez lesquels elle a porté et portera ses armes', 15 and 17 December 1792, Article 11, in M. D. Dalloz and Armand Dalloz, eds., *Jurisprudence générale: Répertoire méthodique et alphabétique de législation, de doctrine et de jurisprudence* (Paris: Bureau de la Jurisprudence Générale, 1859), vol. 40, p. 844.

[14] Lenin, *Sochineniya*, XXV, p. 371, quoted in Edward Hallett Carr, *The Bolshevik Revolution 1917–1923* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1953), vol. III, p. 212.

Thus Spaniards originally conquered the New World, prompted, it is true, by a lust for gold, but also by the belief that they were liberating Indians from the devilries of paganism (e.g., the Aztec atrocities in worship) and the English followed them in the New World, prompted also by greed for gain, but also by the belief that they were liberating Indians from the devilries of the Spanish Inquisition, despite the early statements of human rights by Spanish theologians. Nobody liberated the Indians from the English. One might also mention the French conquest of Algeria, and the European-Chinese wars of the nineteenth century.

The subsequent wars for dividing the spoils of this imperialist expansion—wars with transparently economic motives, like the Anglo-Dutch wars in the seventeenth century and the Anglo-French wars in the eighteenth century, which Adam Smith ascribed to "the impertinent jealousy of merchants and manufacturers"[15]—these would come at the bottom of the scale.

This motive has virtually ceased to have opportunity in the twentieth century, though it might become operative again in outer space when the circumstances of great power expansion in rivalry and competition might be reproduced.

There are two examples of wars which I would put even lower in a moral scale: those of Louis XIV and Frederick the Great. These were wars of personal and national egotism of a kind that has no parallel before or after.

Nevertheless wars of pure aggrandisement, of naked greed, are fewer in the record than you might think. Hitler's wars and acts of international violence are interesting and ambiguous. The predominant motive of territorial gain, *Lebensraum*, was tinged with revolutionary zeal with the aim of remoulding first the Continent and then mankind in accordance with his creed of biological racialism. I believe the historian falsifies them if he loses sight of their diabolical missionary character.

War to Obstruct or Prevent Change

The motive of the first kind of war was to attain greater freedom; of the second kind of war, to convert, organise or exploit; the motive of the third kind is fear— fear of impending loss of security, loss of freedom, or loss of self-determination—a rational apprehension of future evil.

This motive was given classic expression by Thucydides, when he discussed the causes of the great war between Athens and Sparta at the end of the fifth century BC. He says that he will describe the conflicts of interest between the two great powers

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[15] [Ed.] 'The capricious ambition of kings and ministers has not, during the present and the preceding century, been more fatal to the repose of Europe, than the impertinent jealousy of merchants and manufacturers'. Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Oxford University Press, 1993; first published in 1776), pp. 306–307.

and the reasons each publicly alleged for the outbreak of the war. "The truest explanation however is the one least often advanced. What made war inevitable was the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this aroused in Sparta."[16]

This famous formula has provided the pattern of explanation for many of the greatest wars.

> The fundamental cause of the Franco-German War of 1870 which changed the face of Europe was French fear of the increase of Prussian power since the Austrian war of 1866 and the determination to prevent its further growth. The immediate cause was the Hohenzollern candidature for the Spanish throne.[17]

> There is perhaps no factor which drives a state into war so inexorably as a steady loss of relative power. Sooner or later a desperate now-or-never mood overcomes the calculations of prudence, and the belief that a war may be won to-day, but cannot be won to-morrow, becomes the most convincing of all arguments for an appeal to the sword. It was so with Austria in 1914.[18]

…and with Japan in relation to the U.S. Navy in 1921 and in relation to China in 1931.[19] This is the root cause of all the balance-of-power wars and, an overlapping class, of all preventive wars.

> Even aggressive wars have usually an element of prevention. Napoleon I had some grounds for thinking that Alexander I was preparing to attack him when he invaded Russia in 1812; the Germans had some grounds for feeling 'encircled' when they launched both the First and Second World Wars in the twentieth century; even Bismarck could plausibly, and perhaps convincingly, claim that he was merely getting his blow in first against both Austria and France.[20]

Such was the cause of the Suez War ten years ago [Ed.: that is, in 1956].

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[16] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book I, Chapter 23.

[17] G.P. Gooch, "Foreword," in Georges Bonnin, ed., *Bismarck and the Hohenzollern Candidature for the Spanish Throne: The Documents in the German Diplomatic Archives*, trans. by Isabella M. Massey (London: Chatto and Windus, 1957), p. 9.

[18] G. F. Hudson, *The Far East in World Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), p. 198.

[19] [Ed.] Wight included a reference to page 266 of Hudson: 'The Japanese are haunted by the vision of a new China, united, independent, and reorganized, steadily reducing her rival's temporary lead and finally surpassing her in wealth and power. This fear operates like the old German fear of "encirclement" in reconciling the nation to a chauvinist programme. The Japanese seek to control China's development so that it may bring no injury to the vested interests of Japan economically or politically. If China were to make her own history in complete independence during the next two or three decades, it could hardly fail to be at Japan's expense, for the latter's industrial economy has been built up, in spite of Nature's disfavour, on the basis of a Japanese superiority in state power and technological accomplishment, and would be fatally deranged by a thorough industrialization of China carried out in the fashionable manner of economic nationalism.'

[20] Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848–1918*, p. 112. Cf. p. 166. [Ed.] Wight added a note in parentheses: 'Frederick the Great in 1756'.

And this, of course, is what we fear as the likeliest cause of a Third World War. It is not ideological zeal that might endanger peace between the great powers but some disturbance of the balance of terror. A technological breakthrough, it might be, like the development of an anti-missile missile, or the political and social collapse of some key buffer-region, as it might be Persia or India, or even Hungary again, which might lead one side or the other to seek to consolidate a transient advantage or to redress a balance that was tilting fatally against it. But this is a commonplace.

Conclusion

These then I offer to you as the causes of war, the purposes for which men have gone to war in modern history: to attain freedom, to convert or organise, to avert a threat. Most wars blend elements of the three, or of at least two of them, because in no wars do all the belligerents and least of all the two main sides have the same motives and purposes.

When I look at my classification I am aware of what is left out: the two extreme positions on either flank: wars of necessity and wars by accident.

Wars of necessity. Historians often write in retrospect that a particular war was inevitable and "lay in the logic of history." A determinist explanation of war has sometimes been given by the main actors.

Napoleon said to Metternich in 1810: "I shall have war with Russia for reasons which have nothing to do with human volition, for reasons which derive from the very nature of things."[21]

Bismarck said, in retrospect, that "war with France…lay in the logic of history."[22]

On analysis, the historian is likely to resolve the logic of history into the motive of mutual fear.

Wars by accident. The belief that war can arise by accident seems only possible by concentrating on occasions of war to the neglect of antecedent causes. Mr. Taylor offers a nice example when he says at the end of *The Origins of the Second World War*: "Hitler may have projected great war all along; yet it seems from the record that he became involved in war through launching on 29 August a diplomatic manoeuvre which he ought to have launched on 28 August."[23]

[21] 'J'aurai la guerre avec la Russie pour des raisons auxquelles la volonté humaine est étrangère, parce qu'elles dérivent de la nature même des choses.' Napoleon quoted in Metternich, *Mémoires, documents et écrits divers* (Paris: Plon, 1880), p. 109.
[22] Otto Prince von Bismarck, *Reflections and Reminiscences*, trans. by A. J. Butler (London: Smith, Elder, and Company, 1898), vol. II, p. 41.
[23] A. J. P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War* (New York: Atheneum, 1964), p. 278.

With respect, I don't think he himself really believes that, and his foregoing account of the diplomatic negotiations does not support it. The historian is committed to elucidating the deeper reasons why an accident produces great results. But I don't think he'll say (unless he's a determinist by philosophy) that if *this* accident hadn't happened another accident would have occurred to produce the same result.

It is possible that large causes can be aborted by repeated non-occurrence of suitable occasions. Every crisis surmounted, every occasion of war circumvented, is a war potentially averted, provided always that the means taken to surmount the crisis do not mistakenly feed the deeper causes of war.

Wars for rights. A kind of war I have not dealt with is war to establish legal claims or rights. This was a prevalent kind of war in the Middle Ages when judgment by battle was the ultimate mode of litigation.

It has become vestigial in modern times. First, partly because modern civilisation has been much less legally-minded and more politically-minded than the medieval civilisation and has tended to replace considerations of right by considerations of *raison d'état* or state-interest. Second, partly because medieval disputes about right were mainly (but not wholly) about *dynastic* rights and these have been replaced in modern times by *national* rights.

The assertion of national rights has led to wars of freedom, and to wars of domination.

Yet one might class irredentist war, when one power seeks to redeem and liberate people whom it claims are of the same nationality living under wrongful domination, as the modern counterpart of the war for rights. The Pakistani motive for war over Kashmir is the best contemporary example. The Arab states' motive for refusing to make peace over Palestine is perhaps a more complicated and less clear example.

Just wars. Finally, I haven't said anything about just and unjust wars or whether there are just causes of war as has traditionally been believed. I have tried to avoid the word "aggression" with its inescapable moral overtones. But the question of Just War perhaps belongs to the moral philosopher or moral theologian rather than to the historian who has been asked to talk about the causes of war.

12

Gain, Fear and Glory

Reflections on the Nature of International Politics

The years between the two World Wars saw an intensive intellectual search for the causes of war.* Liberal thinkers explored such factors as secret diplomacy and rigid alliances, the balance of power and competition in armaments, lack of national self-determination and international anarchy. Socialists, with the powerful assistance of Marxist theory, emphasized capitalism and imperialism, the private manufacture of armaments and the exploitation of colonies. Psychologists, digging deeper still, discovered aggression-impulses, death-wishes, and the compensatory reactions of the collective unconscious. Valuable as these enquiries were in themselves, I think it must be admitted that the debate of which they formed a part does not seem to have made a lasting contribution to political theory.

That debate was concerned, not so much to explain the place of war in international politics, as to explain it away. Underlying it as a whole (with the exception, perhaps, of the psychologists' part in it) you may detect two assumptions. The first was that international society is really analogous to domestic society, or is now at last capable of becoming so. Hence the belief that international disputes could be dealt with by encouraging states, like individuals, to have recourse to legal processes instead of to violence; and that, through a system of collective security, war could be assimilated to police action. The second assumption was that war is unnatural, or is now at last capable of being regarded as such.[1] If international society is analogous to domestic society, then war becomes no longer, as it was traditionally regarded, the litigation of sovereigns, but something quite abnormal, as distant and unthinkable a contingency as revolution in a Western

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  * [Ed.] Martin Wight evidently prepared this paper in early 1955, and borrowed from it to prepare his BBC broadcast, 'War and International Politics', published in *The Listener*, 13 October 1955. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad made some minor editorial revisions in *The Listener* version of the paper, and included it in their 1978 edition of Martin Wight's *Power Politics* as a chapter entitled 'War'. This version of the paper is over twice as long as the version in *The Listener*, and has over three times as many notes. At the top of the first page Wight wrote 'full revised version' and signed his name. On another copy of the present text he wrote at the top of the first page 'Gain, Fear and Glory: Reflections on the Nature of International Politics', a title which accords well with the three causes of war set out by Thucydides and Hobbes, the intellectual framework of the paper.

  [1] Cf. A. J. P. Taylor's comment about the years after World War I: "[M]en sought the 'causes of war' as though war were the most unusual, instead of the most regular, of human activities." Taylor, *Rumours of Wars* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1952), p. 256.

parliamentary state. Hence the rather contemptible euphemism whereby we tried to hide from ourselves what the conquests of Manchuria and Ethiopia really were, by calling them "incidents."

These assumptions now seem very much dated. They have no relation to the ideological conflicts of the present time. Since the First World War started these questionings and gave rise to hopes of better things, nothing whatever has happened in the world to suggest that international politics is not to be defined as that region of politics in which, because of the absence of a framework of order upheld by a coercive government, war is necessarily the ultimate method of settling disputes. When President Eisenhower was asked at his press conference the other day to comment on a statement by Admiral Radford that war might start anywhere at any time, he replied philosophically that "there is always the possibility of war," implying that this is inherent in international relationships.[2] I think it is true to say that thirty years ago, twenty years ago, no statesman would have given such an answer.[3] Such has been the change in the assumptions of diplomacy. There has been a corresponding change, as I shall suggest, in the assumptions of that branch of political study which goes by the name of International Relations. But the change has not yet, so to speak, become self-conscious: it is not wholly recognized by students of politics themselves. The task of political philosophy is twofold: both to discover what is and to clarify what ought to be, both to understand and to criticize. For a generation past we have failed to combine the parts; we have been so concerned with what ought to be the place of war in international politics that we have troubled too little to understand what it is. This is perhaps one reason why the fear of war is still with us.

The earliest considered account in political literature of the causes of war is contained in a famous passage that has given rise to much commentary:

> The war began when the Athenians and Peloponnesians broke the Thirty Years Truce…As to the question why they broke the truce, I shall first of all detail their mutual complaints and specific conflicts of interest, so that nobody may ever have occasion to ask how the Greeks became involved in so great a war. But the real reason, though the least often advanced, was I believe the growth of Athenian power, which aroused fear in Sparta and forced her into war.[4]

These sentences of Thucydides have generated a large body of criticism, political as much as historical. The passage purports to explain a particular war; is it an adequate explanation? But Thucydides plainly meant it also as a general statement

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[2] *Manchester Guardian*, 17 March 1955.
[3] [Ed.] It should be recalled that Wight completed this essay in 1955. He is therefore referring to 1925 or 1935.
[4] Thucydides I.23, 5–6.

about the causes of war. What then is his theory of causation? What in particular is the contrast he intends between the two words I have translated as "specific conflicts of interest" and "the real reason"?

It is necessary at the outset to clear our minds about the way we use the word "cause" when speaking of the causes of war. Everybody agrees that the Defenestration of Prague[5] was not the cause of the Thirty Years War nor the Ems telegram[6] the cause of the Franco-Prussian War, that the War of American Independence was not caused by the Boston Tea Party[7] nor the American Civil War caused by Beauregard firing on Fort Sumter.[8] Events of this kind, in relation to the wars they inaugurate, we call "occasions." Britain might have gone to war with Nazi Germany in 1938 on the issue of Czechoslovakia instead of a year later on the issue of Poland. The occasions would have been different, but the cause the same. The United States might have found itself at war with China after the fall of Dien Bien Phu last summer;[9] it might find itself at war this spring over Formosa. The occasions would be different, but the cause the same.

Now, we normally frame a proposition about the causes of war in terms of motive. We say, "The real reason why Britain was forced to go to war in 1939 was that she feared the increasing power of Nazi Germany," or "The real reason why the United States may get involved in war with Communist China is that they are rivals for ascendancy in the Far East." Our explanation is cast in the form of the Thucydidean proposition. It would not be difficult to show that this is the usual way in which diplomatic historians and political theorists speak of the causes of particular wars.[10] Correspondingly, a general theory of the causation of war must describe the political conditions in which the motives that cause particular wars

[5] [Ed.] In the Defenestration of Prague, an incident at the start of the Thirty Years War (1618–1648), Bohemian Protestants accused two Catholic regents of the Habsburg emperor of violating their religious freedom and hurled the regents, with their secretary, from the windows of Prague Castle.

[6] [Ed.] An aide to Prussian King Wilhelm I sent a telegram from Ems, Germany, to Berlin on 13 July 1870 describing an exchange between the king and the French ambassador. Otto von Bismarck, the Minister-President of Prussia, published a version of the telegram that he had edited in a way designed to offend France's national pride and stir up popular anti-French feeling throughout Germany.

[7] [Ed.] On 16 December 1773 a group of British colonists in Boston, Massachusetts, boarded three ships and threw their cargoes of tea into the harbor. They destroyed the tea in this fashion in order to protest the taxes associated with the Tea Act and other British legislation imposed on the colonies. The colonists wished to defend their rights, including the 'no taxation without representation' principle. The British government responded to this destruction of the tea, which became known as the Boston Tea Party, with a series of laws, including a blockade of the port of Boston, that the colonists called the Intolerable Acts.

[8] [Ed.] P. G. T. Beauregard, a general in the army of the newly established Confederate States of America, commanded the Confederate forces at Charleston, South Carolina. When the US troops holding Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor refused to evacuate, the Confederate forces bombarded the fort (12–14 April 1861) to compel them to do so.

[9] [Ed.] The French garrison at Dien Bien Phu fell to the Viet Minh in May 1954.

[10] Cf. Quincy Wright's summary of the causes of the First World War in *A Study of War* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1942), vol. II, pp. 725–8.

are regularly operative. This is the view arrived at by the majority of recent political thinkers who have concerned themselves with the subject. It is only necessary to mention Bertrand Russell, Voigt,[11] Carr and Schwarzenberger[12] in England, Reinhold Niebuhr, Morgenthau and Kennan in America, Raymond Aron and de Jouvenel[13] in France. The consensus of such writers can perhaps be summed up as a recognition of what Professor Butterfield[14] has called "the predicament of Hobbesian fear."[15] This is simply to say that communities of honest and decent men, when they have suffered a long series of mutual injuries, and have a rational apprehension each that its own existence is at stake, and when moreover they live in inescapable juxtaposition, cannot transpose themselves into an attitude of mutual trust. From the Thucydidean fear we have come full circle to the Hobbesian predicament. It might be argued that this is a movement of intellectual fashion, "realists" superseding "idealists," but in my belief it shows political study returning, after a period of vagrancy, to a tradition of thought that is true to experience.

Behind the occasion lies the cause. And behind the cause lie the other factors which have been so intensively examined—institutional, social, economic, and unconscious psychology. It does not matter whether we call these "antecedent causes" or "predisposing factors" or something else, so long as we recognize that it is not them we normally mean when we speak of the causes of war.

But the Thucydidean passage I have quoted raises a second, and still deeper question. In what way do we think of any given war as inevitable? Professor Arnaldo Momigliano made some provocative remarks on this question at the International Federation of Classical Studies at Copenhagen last August.[16] He declared that ancient historians had set an example of superficiality in treating the causes of wars which had been followed universally until a century ago.

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[11]   [Ed.] Frederick Augustus Voigt (1892–1957), a British journalist and author, is today best known for his book *Unto Caesar* (London: Constable, 1938), an incisive analysis of the threats to civilization presented by Communism and National Socialism. Wight quoted *Unto Caesar* in *Power Politics* and *International Theory: The Three Traditions*.

[12]   [Ed.] Georg Schwarzenberger (1908–1991), an emigrant from Germany to Britain in 1934, pursued a sociological approach to international law, and sought to identify power realities underlying and conditioning the application of legal rules. He published three editions of his book *Power Politics* (1941, 1951, and 1964).

[13]   [Ed.] Bertrand de Jouvenel (1903–1987) wrote in many fields, but his best-known works focus on problems of justifying and controlling power, as well as forecasting and the environment. For a lucid and concise overview, see Pierre Hassner, 'Jouvenel, Bertrand de', in David L. Sills (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences: Biographical Supplement*, vol. 18 (New York: The Free Press, 1979), pp. 358–63.

[14]   [Ed.] Herbert Butterfield (1900–1979) was Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University, best known for his book *The Whig Interpretation of History* (1931). He and Wight co-edited *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (1966).

[15]   Herbert Butterfield, *Christianity and History* (London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd., 1950), pp. 89–90.

[16]   [Ed.] That is, in August 1954. Arnaldo Momigliano published this paper, 'Some Observations on Causes of War in Ancient Historiography', in his *Studies in Historiography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), pp. 112–126.

Thucydides wrote the world's masterpiece about the political conduct of a war, but he was notoriously inadequate in his account of how that war started. Even Tacitus was a bore about Roman relations with Parthia. In general, ancient historians and political philosophers were satisfactory in dealing with internal strife, because they believed that the internal affairs of a state could be bettered by improving its constitution and policies; but they were dull and jejune in dealing with the origins of wars, because they believed that wars were inevitable. The belief that wars were not inevitable opened up to modern political thinkers a new approach in their consideration of the causes of war.

If in these remarks Professor Momigliano intended a contrast between ancient political writers, supposedly determinist, and modern political writers, supposedly indeterminist, I venture to disagree. Thucydides used language of extreme economy to describe a political situation combining elements of necessity with elements of freedom. "The growth of Athenian power aroused fear in Sparta and forced her into war"—with equal accuracy you could translate, "she felt bound to go to war."[17] The tension between necessity and freedom is intrinsic in historical experience, and it will always be a matter of enquiry and contemplation for political philosophers. Indeed, the search for "the causes of war" after 1919 was characterized by the loss of this tension. The Treaty of Versailles pinned the responsibility for the Great War on to Germany and the Kaiser, without taking account of the system of necessity within which they were imprisoned. The exploration of the predisposing conditions of war then threw the emphasis the other way, and elaborated a Marxist and Freudian determinism. In practice, as we know, the adherents of both these philosophies are apt to recover the tension at the price of a comforting inconsistency; Communists do not hesitate to say that the cause of international tension is to be found in the aggressive motives of their enemies.

We may ask, why did the murder of the Archduke at Sarajevo start a world war when the murder of Alexander at Marseilles in 1934 did not?[18] Because in the first case the cause of war was present: the Austrian government's fear of Yugoslav nationalism, the Russian government's fear of the Central Powers, etc.; the occasion detonated this cause. In the second case such cause was lacking: the two disputants, Yugoslavia and Hungary, could not go to war without the backing of their Great Power patrons, France and Italy; France and Italy did not fear one another so much as they together feared Germany, and consequently combined to hush up the Yugoslav-Hungarian dispute. Yet we can put the matter in a different light. We can argue that, given the conscious weakness of the Habsburg

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[17] Cf. F. E. Adcock, "Thucydides in Book I," *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1951, vol. LXXI, p. 10.
[18] [Ed.] King Alexander I of Yugoslavia and Louis Barthou, the French Foreign Minister, were assassinated on 9 October 1934 by a Bulgarian marksman who supported the secession of Vardar Macedonia from Yugoslavia.

Monarchy, given its anxieties about Yugoslav nationalism and its desire to prove its *Bündnisfähigkeit* to its German ally, given also the restless assertiveness of German policy, war was bound to happen at some time, even if it had been averted in August 1914. Given the cause, it would have been brought into play on a later occasion if not an earlier. And we can add that a Balkan war was avoided in 1934 only because its potential causes were overshadowed and frustrated, so to speak, by the causes of a greater war.

What then is the formula for this tension between freedom and necessity, this seeming contradiction between tractable occasion and ineluctable cause? Our experience is complex, and it can be faithfully expressed only in a paradox. War is inevitable, for the cause of war is inherent in international politics; but particular wars can be avoided, for the occasions of war can be extinguished.[19]

It is the task of diplomacy to circumvent the occasions of war, and to extend the series of circumvented occasions; to drive the automobile of state along a one-way track, against head-on traffic, past an infinitely recurring series of precipices.[20]

The notion that diplomacy can eradicate the causes of war arose from the popular mood after 1919, and the concessions statesmen have had to make to the illusions of their electorates. Diplomacy can do a little, perhaps, to mitigate the predisposing conditions of war; it can circumvent the occasions of war; but the cause of war is inherent in international politics, and will continue so long as international politics are not transformed into domestic politics. And neither experience nor reflection give any reason to suppose that this can come about except by war itself.

I have suggested that the cause of war in general is to be stated most truly in terms of the Thucydidean fear or the Hobbesian predicament. Let us examine these conceptions more closely. Hobbes does not only propound a predicament; he analyses the causes of war. In the thirteenth chapter of *Leviathan* he argues that men are by nature equal, and that from equality proceeds mutual diffidence. "So that in the nature of man," he continues, "we find three principal causes of quarrel. First, competition; secondly, diffidence; thirdly, glory. The first, maketh men invade for gain; the second, for safety; and the third, for reputation."[21]

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[19] "In reading good history—and I think this is particularly true of history which deals with nego-tiations and foreign affairs—we are haunted by two contradictory impressions. On the one hand, vast consequences are shown to have depended on contingencies which might easily have been handled otherwise; on the other, we are conscious of a kind of fatality—as if beneath events which, severally, seemed well within a statesman's control to direct this way or that, there had run all the time an almost irresistible tendency towards what did happen." Desmond McCarthy in the *Sunday Times*, 4 October 1943, reviewing G. P. Gooch, *Studies in Diplomacy and Statecraft* (London and New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1942). Cf. Viscount Grey of Fallodon, *Twenty-Five Years, 1892–1916* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925), vol. I, p. 325; and Herbert Butterfield, *The Peace Tactics of Napoleon, 1806–1808* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1929), pp. 231–2.

[20] It is also the duty of diplomacy, when war can no longer be avoided, to choose better occasions rather than worse. Though at times this may appear a rule of expediency, I would derive it essentially from moral obligation, whose nature it is beyond the limits of this paper to discuss.

[21] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan or the Matter, Forme and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiasticall and Civil*, ed. by Michael Oakeshott (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1960), Chapter XIII, p. 81.

There is a striking similarity between this and what Thucydides says of the motives of Athenian imperialism: "We have done nothing extraordinary," he makes the Athenians say, "nothing contrary to human nature, in accepting an empire when it was offered to us, and then refusing to give it up; we have obeyed three of the strongest motives — honour, fear and self-interest."[22] When we remember that Hobbes was a student and translator of Thucydides, we may suppose that the parallel is not fortuitous.[23]

Quincy Wright's monumental *Study of War* contains 23 index-references to Hobbes,[24] but nowhere does he discuss or even cite this analysis of the causes of war. Yet it is not without value, and it provides criteria for testing much that we take for granted, the notions of aggressive war, preventive war, just war and collective security. Let us then see where it will lead us. We shall not try to cram so much into Hobbes's compartments that they lose their shape, and we shall remember that every war has at least two belligerents, that each belligerent has complex motives, and that to isolate even a predominant cause is in some measure to simplify the truth.

Gain

1. "Competition," says Hobbes, "maketh men invade for gain." These are the wars whose cause is that, at a certain juncture, a certain man or body of men say to themselves, "Now is the moment when we must take military action to improve our position or to extend our rights," and decide accordingly.

Now, let us confine our gaze to the principal wars of the modern international state-system, which began by being West European and has become world-wide. We may clear the ground to begin with by making a provisional judgment on the wars by which the European Powers expanded beyond the boundaries of Christendom and extended the frontiers of international society. Let us provisionally describe the wars by which this imperialist expansion was carried out as Wars of Gain. And let us include under this description also the wars *between* European Powers for dividing the spoils of this expansion, the resources and the commerce— the Anglo-Dutch Wars in the seventeenth century, the Anglo-French wars in the eighteenth, and the like—wars with a transparently economic motive, which Adam Smith ascribed to "the impertinent jealousy of merchants and manufacturers."[25]

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[22] Thucydides, i. 76, 2. Cf. i. 75, 3.

[23] The point is made by David Grene, *Man in his Pride: A Study in the Political Philosophy of Thucydides and Plato* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950), p. 215, ch. vi, n. 6.

[24] [Ed.] Quincy Wright, *A Study of War* (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1942), vol. II, p. 1506.

[25] [Ed.] 'The capricious ambition of kings and ministers has not, during the present and the preceding century, been more fatal to the repose of Europe, than the impertinent jealousy of merchants and manufacturers.' Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Oxford University Press, 1993; first published in 1776), pp. 306–307.

And in order to simplify our enquiry, let us make another provisional judgment, that all wars waged by a Great Power upon a Small Power are Wars of Gain, as the Spanish-American War, the Anglo-Boer Wars, and the Italo-Ethiopian War.

If we put these on one side, it is difficult to find more than four wars between Great Powers whose motive was gain to the virtual exclusion of fear or any other. The first, appropriately enough, is the action which is taken conventionally as the opening of modern history, the French invasion of Italy in 1494 to seize the crown of Naples. The second is the wars of Louis XIV, regarded as a whole, but particularly the earlier wars down to the Peace of Nimeguen.[26] The third is the assault on Silesia with which Frederick the Great inaugurated his reign.[27] The fourth is Hitler's war in 1939.

But here we become aware of a complexity of motive, lacking in the others. One of the marks that distinguishes the twentieth century from the times of Charles VIII or Louis XIV is social foresight, calculation of the future, "planning"—perhaps a socially morbid development.[28] Statesmen today have to estimate not only the present balance of power, but the balance of power a generation hence; and they examine population trends and the indices of industrial production as Roman consuls scrutinized the livers of geese. Such, certainly, was Hitler. He based his policy on a long-term judgment of his strength in relation to the changing balance of international forces. "Only when one knows," he said, "that one has reached the pinnacle of power, that there is no further upward development, should one attack."[29] He calculated the time at which German war-preparations would reach their highest point in relation to the counter-measures of other Powers, and time would begin to be on their side instead of his. Thus, though his war was as naked a war of conquest as international policies can show, it was tinged also with a degree of apprehension, too slight perhaps to be called fear, but giving it something of a preventive character.

Fear

2. If we now turn from Wars of Gain to Wars of Fear, we shall find the problem rather one of exclusion. "Diffidence," Hobbes wrote, "maketh men invade…for safety." The cause of these wars is that, at a certain juncture, a certain man or body of men say to themselves, "This is the moment when we must take military action to prevent a deterioration of our position or to protect our rights," and decide

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[26] [Ed.] The Treaties of Peace of Nimeguen (today Nijmegen) were concluded in 1678–1679.

[27] [Ed.] Frederick the Great of Prussia conquered most of Silesia from Austria in the First Silesian War (1740–1742) and retained it in the Second Silesian War (1744–1745) and the Third Silesian War (1756–1763). The last was part of the Seven Years' War.

[28] [Ed.] Charles VIII was King of France, 1483–1498. Louis XIV was King of France, 1643–1715.

[29] Speech of 20 February 1933, *Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg, 1945–1946*, Proceedings and Documents in Evidence (Nuremberg: International Military Tribunal, 1947–1949), vol. XXXV, p. 46 (203-D), quoted in Martin Wight, "Germany," in Arnold Toynbee and Frank T. Ashton-Gwatkin, eds., *The World in March 1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 341.

accordingly. It is important to understand that by "fear" in this connection we mean, as Hobbes meant, not some unreasoning emotion, but a rational apprehension of contingent evil.[30]

This is the simple Thucydidean fear, which is the prime motive in international politics; for all Powers at all times are primarily concerned with their security, and most Powers at most times find their security threatened.

It might be possible to group the Wars of Fear in an ascending scale of complexity—complexity both of motives, circumstances and numbers of belligerents. As the simplest instance we could take the resumption of war between France and Britain in 1803 which ended the Peace of Amiens, or the resumption of war between France and Russia in 1812 which ended the Peace of Tilsit. These are the purest examples of wars caused by reciprocal distrust. The cause was so much weightier than the occasion that even when we have determined what provoked the rupture, we are inclined to say that the war was anyway inevitable.[31]

The Crimean War was a simple war of mutual fear so far as Britain and Russia were concerned, but the motives of Napoleon III and the Sardinian government were more complicated.[32]

Then there is a range of cases where the Power that began the war, the "aggressor," as we say, is not in doubt, but its motive was so largely fear that the war falls under the description of preventive. It is fashionable at present to equate preventive war with aggression, a word which ought strictly to have a legal connotation but which in fact we use only to imply moral disapproval. President Eisenhower has recently declared his belief that preventive war is unjustifiable,[33] a view whose classic exposition is in Bismarck's memoirs.[34]

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[30] Cf. John Laird, *Hobbes* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1934), pp. 172–4.

[31] "J'aurai la guerre avec la Russie pour des raisons auxquelles la volonté humaine est étrangère, parce qu'elles dérivent de la nature même des choses." Napoléon quoted in Metternich, *Mémoires, Documents et Écrits Divers*, Quatrième Édition, vol. I (Paris: Plon, 1886), p. 109.

[32] On the tension between freedom and necessity, occasion and cause, in the events leading to the Crimean War, compare two passages in Sir A. W. Ward and G. P. Gooch, eds., *The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, 1783–1919*, vol. II, *1815–1866* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1923): F. J. C. Hearnshaw, "The European Revolution and After, 1848–1854," p. 356, and W. F. Reddaway, "The Crimean War and the French Alliance, 1853–1858," p. 374.

[33] [Ed.] In his press conference of 11 August 1954 President Eisenhower said, 'All of us have heard this term "preventive war" since the earliest days of Hitler. I recall that is about the first time I heard it. In this day and time, if we believe for one second that nuclear fission and fusion, that type of weapon, would be used in such a war—what is a preventive war? I would say a preventive war, if the words mean anything, is to wage some sort of quick police action in order that you might avoid a terrific cataclysm of destruction later. A preventive war, to my mind, is an impossibility today. How could you have one if one of its features would be several cities lying in ruins, several cities where many, many thousands of people would be dead and injured and mangled, the transportation systems destroyed, sanitation implements and systems all gone? That isn't preventive war; that is war. I don't believe there is such a thing; and, frankly, I wouldn't even listen to anyone seriously that came in and talked about such a thing…It seems to me that when, by definition, a term is just ridiculous in itself, there is no use in going any further. There are all sorts of reasons, moral and political and everything else, against this theory, but it is so completely unthinkable in today's conditions that I thought it is no use to go any further.' The full text of the press conference is available at John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, The American Presidency Project, Santa Barbara, California, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=9977.

[34] Bismarck, *Reflections and Reminiscences*, translated by A. J. Butler (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1898), vol. II, pp. 101–102, 192, 249.

We tend to agree with this in present circumstances so emphatically that we overlook how preventive war can have a defensive motive. In December 1740, without warning, Frederick poured his troops into Silesia. In August 1756, without warning, he poured his troops into Saxony. It has been usual to attribute the second war to the same unscrupulous rapacity as the first. Yet in 1756 Frederick knew that Russia was far advanced with a plan to destroy his kingdom, that she had an offensive alliance with Austria, and that Saxony was of the party.[35]

Preventive war as the defence of the weaker side is illustrated also by the military career of Japan. In 1904, Russia had not only violated an agreement for the withdrawal of her troops from Manchuria, but had been steadily reinforcing her military and naval establishment in the Far East for two years before the Japanese torpedo-boats attacked the Russian fleet in Port Arthur. The Japanese attack on China in the 1930s derived ultimately from an anxious awareness that in the long run Japan would be outclassed by a united, reorganized Chinese Power. And the preponderance that Japan saw as potential in China was actual in the United States. "There is perhaps no factor," Mr. Hudson has said, "which drives a state into war so inexorably as a steady loss of relative power. Sooner or later a desperate now-or-never mood overcomes the calculations of prudence, and the belief that a war may be won today, but cannot be won tomorrow, becomes the most convincing of all arguments for an appeal to the sword."[36]

This is an eloquent statement of the Thucydidean fear. It is also, like all political truths, prophetic. It was written five years before Pearl Harbour.

These considerations, as every student of international politics knows, must seriously complicate and even modify the moral judgment we pass on preventive wars. And it is such considerations as these that give their tinge of ambiguity to the motives of Imperial Germany in 1914. Austria went to war then because she was desperately weak; Germany went to war, partly through a characteristic miscalculation that the war would be localized, but chiefly from the belief that she was stronger now than she would be later, when the French army was reorganized and the Russian army properly equipped.

Glory

3. Fear is the predominant motive in international politics, which has justified our equating the Thucydidean fear with the whole Hobbesian predicament. But Hobbes gives a third motive of war. Thucydides describes the third motive of

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[35] See Herbert Butterfield, *The Reconstruction of an Historical Episode: The History of the Enquiry into the Origins of the Seven Years War* (David Murray Lecture at Glasgow, 1951).
[36] G. F. Hudson, *The Far East in World Politics: A Study in Recent History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), p. 198.

Athenian imperialism as honour; Hobbes describes the third cause of quarrel as glory. Honour is the recognition by others of your superiority: it is the motive which, in international politics, we are accustomed to call prestige. Glory, to Hobbes, is the consciousness of your own superiority.[37]

Much of the moral history of Europe might be read into this transposition from the objective to the subjective, for the seventeenth century philosopher was acknowledging a motive whose full potency had not yet been released in the politics of antiquity, the motive of doctrinal conviction. "Glory," he said, "maketh men invade…for reputation," but he adds that he means the use of violence "for trifles, as a word, a smile, a different opinion," and his chief use of the word opinion in a political context is to describe the seditious doctrines that undermine a commonwealth.[38]

This motive of glory points us to a third kind of war, which is not wars of prestige, but wars of doctrine.[39]

This is the kind of war we recognize in the First Crusade or the Wars of Religion, or the French Revolutionary War, when, as Sorel said, "France attacked Europe in order to regenerate it."[40]

Here there is certainly aggression of a kind, there is desire for gain, but the essential motive is distinct. These are wars which occur because, at a certain juncture, a certain man or body of men say to themselves, "Now is the time when we shall take military action to assert our principles and to fulfill our mission."

If we are asked the main change in the character of war since 1789, we may be inclined to answer, its increased destructiveness. Yet it is probably the case that, while the absolute destructiveness of war has increased, its relative destructiveness has grown less. War today perhaps does less damage to society than it did at the time of the Hannibalic War or the Thirty Years War, because the applied science and industrialism which have enhanced the destructiveness of war have increased to an even greater degree the recuperative physical powers of society.

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[37] "Joy, arising from imagination of a man's own power and ability, is that exultation of the mind which is called glorying." Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. by Oakeshott, Chapter VI, p. 35.

[38] On the conception of honour in Hobbes, see Leo Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: Its Basis and Its Genesis*, trans. by Elsa M. Sinclair (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1952), pp. 49–51. Hobbes maintained the distinction between honour and glory with some consistency. The distinction is implicit in Aristotle, who described honour as the goal of political life, but pointed out that men's motive in pursuing honour was to persuade themselves of their own merit. (*Nicomachean Ethics*, i.5, 4–5)

[39] It may be doubted whether prestige is a distinct motive for war. Wars of glory, like those of Louis XIV, have sought prestige as the by-product of territorial gain; a war of prestige like the Sardinian part in the Crimean War had an ulterior revolutionary motive.

[40] "La France attaque l'Europe pour la régénérer." Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française,* tome II, *La chute de la royauté* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit et Cie., 1903), p. 435. J. M. Thompson describes the motive of the French in 1792 in terms which illustrate exactly the Hobbesian "glory": "It was not the [Austrian] Emperor's attitude towards the obligations of an out-of-date treaty, but the suspicion that he despised a National Assembly, and disdained a national army, which finally drove the deputies into war." Thompson, *The French Revolution* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1943), p. 261.

Earlier history does not parallel the economic recovery of France after 1871, or of Central Europe and especially Germany after each World War. If qualitative change is more important than quantitative, it would be truer to say that the great change in war since 1789 is its increasingly revolutionary character, its becoming an instrument or vehicle of consciously revolutionary forces.

And if we are asked the main trend in international relations since 1789, we may be inclined to answer, the rise of the national state, the growth of international cooperation, the groping towards an international legislature. The mental standpoint of such an answer remains that of the national state, which is indeed the inarticulate presupposition of all our political thinking. If we discard it and consciously adopt a cosmopolitan standpoint, we may find it more instructive to answer our question by saying that since 1789 international society has been in a condition of stasis. Stasis, I need not remind you, is that useful Greek word for which there is no English equivalent, to mean strife within communities as distinct from strife between them: civil discord, class-war. Thucydides gives the classical description of it in Greek politics. Plato, in one of the less satisfactory passages of the *Republic*, contrasts it with inter-state war. Its supreme English analyst is Burke.

Stasis appears in the international community when, in several states, bodies of men acquire loyalties which attach them more to bodies of men in other states than to their own fellow-subjects or fellow-citizens; when, in Koestler's phrase, "horizontal" forces shake and distort "the vertical structures of competing national egotisms;"[41] when, in Burke's language, "a revolution of doctrine" has this effect, "to introduce other interests into all countries than those which arose from their locality and natural circumstances."[42]

Stasis in the international community culminates when the horizontal doctrine acquires a territorial foothold. This may be only a minor state, as Geneva was to the Calvinist Reformers, or Piedmont to the Italian nationalists; it may be a Great Power, as France was for the Jacobins, as Prussia was for German nationalism, and as Russia is for Communists. Experience suggests that the territorially-incorporated horizontal doctrine either conquers its field of appeal within a couple of generations, or loses its effervescence and becomes transformed into an ordinary state. But the example of Roman Catholicism shows both how tenaciously a horizontal doctrine will cling to its territorial foothold—the Vatican City state, an anomaly in international law, reappearing over fifty years after

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[41] [Ed.] Arthur Koestler, *The Yogi and the Commissar and Other Essays* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1945), p. 107. The passage quoted is found on p. 101 of the version published by the Macmillan Company in New York in 1945.

[42] Edmund Burke, *Thoughts on French Affairs*, 1791, in *The Works of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke*, with a Biographical and Critical Introduction by Henry Rogers (London: Samuel Holdsworth, 1842), vol. I, p. 564.

the Papal States had disappeared[43]—and also how long it can continue to exert disturbing horizontal influences attested by witnesses so various as Bismarck, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Strickland[44] and the judges of Cardinal Mindszenty.[45] I have called such doctrines "horizontal" to avoid the ambiguities of the word "international." The members of the society of states have never all been national states, and from the standpoint of international politics (which means the politics of the society of states) nationalism itself has been one of the most disruptive international doctrines, an international revolutionary movement. Before Marx's International there was Mazzini's and it was vastly more successful. Not only did it set Italy in a turmoil; its ideal "was the federal organisation of European democracy under one sole direction; so that any nation arising in insurrection should at once find the others ready to assist it."[46]

Both the motive and the character of war are changed by international stasis. It makes doctrine a prevalent motive. When the Bolsheviks threw back Pilsudski's invasion in July 1920,[47] they decided, after controversy among themselves, in which Trotsky (and Stalin) counseled caution against Lenin, to continue their advance across the Curzon Line into Poland proper. At that hour, in an enthusiastic confidence of imminent European revolution, the Red Army became the army of the Third International. Perhaps this is the purest example of doctrinal war that modern history offers. It showed what Burke described as "a sect aiming at universal empire."[48]

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[43] [Ed.] In 1870 the pope lost control of the remainder of the Papal States, Lazio (including Rome), and became the 'prisoner of the Vatican' until 1929, when the Italian government led by Benito Mussolini concluded the Lateran pacts with the Holy See.

[44] [Ed.] Lord Strickland (1861–1940), a British and Maltese politician, served as Prime Minister of Malta in 1927–1932 and clashed with the local Catholic authorities.

[45] [Ed.] Cardinal József Mindszenty (1892–1975) was the Primate, or leader, of the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary from 1945 to 1973. The Communist government of Hungary imprisoned him on charges of conspiracy and treason from 1948 to 1956. He was released from prison during the Hungarian Uprising of 1956. When Soviet forces invaded the country later that year to reinstate the Communist government, Mindszenty sought political asylum in the US Embassy in Budapest; and he lived in this embassy for the next fifteen years, until 1971, when the Communist government allowed him to leave the country. When Wight was writing this essay in 1954–1955, the Communist government's treatment of Mindszenty had given him the stature of a political martyr and great moral influence.

[46] Joseph Mazzini, *Life and Writings* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1891), vol. III, p. 35.

[47] [Ed.] Józef Piłsudski (1867–1935), Poland's Chief of State in 1918–1922, contributed decisively to his country's regaining and retaining its independence after World War I. In April–June 1920 Piłsudski conducted an offensive intended to establish an independent Ukraine as part of a federation of states free from Moscow's control from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. The Soviet offensive that began in July 1920 ended in a defeat for the Red Army in the Battle of Warsaw in August 1920, but the Red Army nonetheless controlled most of Ukraine. The 1921 Treaty of Riga between Poland, Soviet Russia, and Soviet Ukraine contributed to the failure of Piłsudski's federation design, but it also confirmed Poland's independence and blocked Lenin's plans to export Communist revolution to the West by force.

[48] Edmund Burke, *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, 1796, Letter II: "On the Genius and Character of the French Revolution as It Regards Other Nations," in *The Works of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke*, with a Biographical and Critical Introduction by Henry Rogers (London: Samuel Holdsworth, 1842), vol. II, p. 306.

But every war in Europe since 1815 has included some irredentist purpose, asserted some horizontal right against some vertical legitimacy, and has therefore had a doctrinal tinge; even the Crimean War, of which this is least true, was given an indirectly revolutionary purpose by Cavour's intervention in it. Mr. Taylor has emphasized the paradox that the war of 1859 was purely aggressive, having no motive of fear on the part of France and Sardinia at all, and yet has been unanimously approved by posterity.[49]

This is because we have not revised our approval of the doctrine of Italian nationalism. It is the misfortune of President Syngman Rhee that he pursues his aims within the context of an unfavourable balance of power,[50] so that the United States will not play his Napoleon III, though his doctrine is the same as that of Cavour.

International stasis changes the character of war in two ways. It smudges the distinction between war and peace, and it approximates war to revolution. The distinction between war and peace is the foundation of civilized life, and its observance is a diplomatic convention based on common political assumptions and common moral standards. Stasis destroys the community of standards and assumptions. The horizontal doctrine repudiates the old international morality and the old international law; in Burke's phrase, it makes "a schism with the whole universe."[51]

As Camus has penetratingly observed, the horizontal doctrine sets out to build a universal city, but by the logic of history and doctrine the universal city becomes transformed into the empire whose principle is, "Beyond the confines of the empire there is no salvation."[52]

Since 1918, more effort has been spent than ever before on delimiting the theoretical borderline between war and peace, and on defining those acts which transgress the border, while in practice, the borderline has become more blurred than at any time since the French Wars of Religion. We have become accustomed, since 1945, to circumstances in which ships are sunk and planes are shot down without warning, peaceable citizens are kidnapped by foreign agents and disappear, traitors flee from one side to the other bringing secrets and receiving political asylum, and diplomatic intercourse is replaced by propaganda. Before 1939, though the name "cold war" was not yet coined, this was the condition of Europe

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[49] A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848–1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. 112.

[50] [Ed.] Syngman Rhee (1875–1965) was the first president of the Republic of Korea (South Korea), in office from 1948 to 1960. Rhee's doctrine was 'the same as that of Cavour' in Italy in that he was seeking the unity of a nation divided by external powers.

[51] Edmund Burke, *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, 1796, "Letter I: On the Overtures of Peace," in *The Works of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke*, with a Biographical and Critical Introduction by Henry Rogers (London: Samuel Holdsworth, 1842), vol. II, p. 299.

[52] Albert Camus, *The Rebel,* trans. by Anthony Bower (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1953), p. 208.

from the assassination of Dollfuss[53] onwards, and the condition of Eastern Asia from the Mukden incident[54] onwards. Still earlier, at Brest-Litovsk, Trotsky had declared "No war, no peace" to the astonished Germans;[55] and this would be no untrue description of the relations between half the states of Europe for much of the period between 1848 and 1870.

And international stasis assimilates war to revolution. The American War of Independence and the French Revolutionary Wars were general wars which began with a revolution; the Franco-Prussian and Russo-Japanese Wars led to revolutions on the defeated side; the World Wars began as general wars and ended each in a blaze of revolutions, national and social. This blending of war with revolution, this indistinctness of war from peace, produces a whole range of ambiguous military activities: intervention from abroad to suppress a revolution, like Nicholas I's reconquest of Hungary for the Habsburgs in 1849,[56] or the putting down of the Boxer Rebellion;[57] intervention in a civil war, like the intervention of the Allies in the Russian Civil War and of the Axis Powers in the Spanish Civil War; filibustering like Garibaldi's Sicilian expedition, and the Jameson Raid;[58] paramilitary activity such as that of T. E. Lawrence and Orde Wingate; and irregular

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[53] [Ed.] Engelbert Dollfuss, the Chancellor and de facto dictator of Austria, was assassinated on 25 July 1934 by Austrian Nazis who sought to take over the government and collaborate with Nazi Germany.

[54] [Ed.] On 18 September 1931, near Mukden, China, explosives were detonated by the tracks of the South Manchuria Railway, which was under lease to Japan according to the terms of the Treaty of Portsmouth that ended the 1904–1905 Russo-Japanese War. The Japanese accused the Chinese of attacking the railway and made this attack a pretext for conquering Manchuria and establishing a puppet state known as Manchukuo. The preponderant view among historians is that Japanese soldiers attacked the railway in order to provide a justification for war and conquest.

[55] [Ed.] Leon Trotsky, then the Bolshevik People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs and the head of the Russian delegation at the negotiations with the Central Powers (the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Kingdom of Bulgaria, the German Empire, and the Ottoman Empire) at Brest-Litovsk, made his famous declaration on 10 February 1918. Trotsky thereby withdrew Soviet Russia from the negotiations and asserted an end to the hostilities. In response, German and Austro-Hungarian forces promptly took the Baltic states, Belarus, and most of Ukraine. The Bolshevik government then chose on 3 March 1918 to sign the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, its final terms much harsher than those which Trotsky had rejected.

[56] [Ed.] 'In 1849 the Austrian government accepted the offer by the Tsar Nicholas I of help in repressing the Hungarian revolution; the Russians reconquered Hungary without asking any reward and restored Austria to its status of great power, "the greatest service", as Bismarck afterwards said, "that a sovereign of a great power has ever done to a neighbour".' Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, ed. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978), pp. 193–194. For the quotation from Bismarck, Wight cited the Iron Chancellor's *Reflections and Reminiscences*, trans. A. J. Butler (London: Smith, Elder, and Company, 1898), vol. I, p. 236. According to this translation, 'It has assuredly hardly happened twice in the history of the European states that a sovereign of a Great Power has done such service to a neighbour as the Emperor Nicholas did to the Austrian monarchy.'

[57] [Ed.] The Eight-Nation Alliance consisting of Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States defeated the Boxer movement against foreign imperialists in northern China in 1899–1901.

[58] [Ed.] The Jameson raid was an unsuccessful (and still controversial) attempt in 1895–1896 by a British colonial official, Leander Starr Jameson, to provoke an insurrection by British expatriate workers in the Transvaal.

warfare of every kind, from Andreas Hofer and the Cossacks who hunted the retreating French across Europe in 1813 to the Maquis and the partisans in the Second World War. Everybody knows that Engels described insurrection as "an art quite as much as war or any other" and gave the classic statement of its principles.[59] It is not so often remembered that Mazzini, that illustrious figure, the Gandhi of nineteenth century liberalism, wrote a series of "Rules for the Conduct of Guerrilla Bands."[60]

Doctrinal warfare inevitably encourages warfare of counter-doctrine. It raises the question whether it is best met by a policy of containment, whose aim is security and whose motive fear, or a policy of liberation—liberation from the ascendancy of the doctrine—whose motive is counter-revolutionary. Today there is a pretty massive consensus in the Western world in favour of containment. This implies that we believe no war today can be just save a war forced upon us by desperate necessity in self-defence.

The just war was a noble concept, which arose in feudal Europe, and was brought to fullest flower by the Spanish Jesuits, and left its fruit to Grotius, and was finally discredited by Louis XIV in the attempt to dissemble his wars of conquest;[61] we now agree that a just war is necessarily a war of fear. What then is collective security, which we are apt to appeal to in the same breath as containment? I am not sure that we have thought out all its implications. Collective security in Korea was containment carried out by a coalition whose motive was rational apprehension of future evil. Of the seventeen Powers that sent contingents to the United Nations force in Korea,[62] eleven felt a direct threat from the Communist Powers, whether by possessing a common frontier or a common ocean, or by having a large Communist Party or a Communist insurrection within their own borders. This collective security was simply a war of fear.

The collective security we dreamed of in the thirties was something different, not only because there then seemed a chance, which today does not exist, of mobilizing a preponderance of strength, a majority of Great Powers, against an unsupported malefactor, but also because of a different motive. That collective security had a doctrinal tinge. The war we wanted against Mussolini, the war

[59] Friedrich Engels, *Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution* (New York: International Publishers, 1933), p. 100.

[60] Mazzini, *Life and Writings*, vol. I, pp. 369–78. The international aspects of the revolutionary theory of the nineteenth century is one of the unworked fields where political and military studies converge. Mazzini's guerrillas were notably less effective than Gandhi's campaigns of passive resistance; do military studies extend to the consideration of non-violence employed as a political weapon?

[61] Cf. Camille-Georges Picavet, *La diplomatie française au temps de Louis XIV (1661–1715): Institutions, Moeurs et Coutumes* (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1930), p. 171.

[62] [Ed.] The seventeen countries that sent troops to fight under the United Nations Command were Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Philippines, South Africa, South Korea (Republic of Korea), Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In addition, Denmark, India, Italy, Norway, and Sweden supplied medical support. For background, see https://www.usfk.mil/About/United-Nations-Command/.

inspired and purified by the moral censure and punitive purpose of the fifty sanc-
tionist states,[63] was not this a doctrinal war, a war of principle? If we had courage-
ously followed out all the implications of that war which was never fought, did it
not launch a horizontal doctrine against the aggressor, did it not evoke stasis in
Italy, did it not entail revolution there, the overthrow of the dictator, the transfer
of power to people we approved of?[64]

Collective security in practice is either doctrinal warfare, and then both our
moral scruples and our physical fears reject it, as they did when we acquiesced in
a conclusion to the Korean War that simply restored the *status quo ante*; or it is a
containment-alliance for local holding actions, which differs in kind rather than
degree from the association of Powers imagined by the founders of the League, an
association based on common principles, and possessing an overwhelming
superiority of strength, whose police action would progressively assert the rule of
law in the world.

Since the French Revolution most wars of gain have been dressed up for
respectability as wars of doctrine, and wars of doctrine have become strongly
tainted with lust for gain. But the motive which we now bear as our burden is the
motive of fear. It has sometimes been argued that since 1945 international cir-
cumstances have fundamentally changed, that the increase in destructiveness
provided by nuclear weapons has brought war to the point of the dialectical leap
from quantitative to qualitative difference, that our fear can now be transferred
altogether from the potential enemy to war itself, that the Hobbesian predicament
has been transcended. I believe this is an adaptation of old illusions, a hope that if
political difficulties have not disappeared through a process of social evolution
they can be got rid of by a technological conjuring-trick. It is a view that ought to
be dispelled by a moment's reflection. All political decision is a choosing of evils;
this is supremely true of the decision to engage in a war of fear. And the majority
of people in every Western country today fear nuclear warfare less than they fear
the consequences of not employing it in certain circumstances against the
Communist Powers.[65]

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[63] [Ed.] As Wight noted in another work, Mussolini boasted that his country was under 'siege by
the fifty sanctionist states' in the League of Nations opposed to Italy's invasion of Ethiopia in 'an
attempt to put Italy's great-power status beyond further question by the prestige of having defied a
coalition of the world'. Wight, *Power Politics*, ed. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad (London: Leicester
University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978), p. 47. The sanctions by fifty
League of Nations states led to mass public support in Italy for Mussolini's occupation of Ethiopia.
This 'may have been his moment of greatest popularity'. Denis Mack Smith, *Mussolini* (New York:
Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), p. 202.

[64] [Ed.] In Wight's judgement, 'in the Abyssinian War of 1935–6 collective security, though theor-
etically impossible, came in historical fact very close to fulfilment'. Wight, "The Balance of Power and
International Order," in Alan James (ed.), *The Bases of International Order: Essays in Honour of
C. A. W. Manning* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 110.

[65] Cf. *Statement on Defence 1955*, Cmd. 9391 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, February
1955), pp. 7–8, paragraph 24: "In the last resort, most of us must feel that determination to face the
threat of physical devastation, even on the immense scale which must now be foreseen, is manifestly

But if such a view as that I have mentioned must be accounted too optimistic, perhaps other views may be too pessimistic. If the nature of international politics has not radically changed, perhaps the nature of war has not radically changed either. There is a deep psychological connection between the utopianism which says "War has become so horrible that it has abolished itself" and the apocalypticism which says "War has become so horrible that it can destroy the entire human race." Here the layman is wise not to speculate: scientists themselves are not agreed on the consequences of a war fought with nuclear weapons; and it is not beyond doubt whether in another general war, nuclear weapons would be indiscriminately used. In some historical situations prudent men take short views. What is certain is that the change in the methods of war has not weakened the motives of war.

It has been traditionally held that the highest aim of political study is to enunciate generalizations, to establish truths, to make diagnoses, which will remain enlightening and significant in all circumstances. We should think of the human situation as a cube, or dice. One of its faces is uppermost and in full view; two of its faces we see obliquely and less clearly; two others we cannot see unless we move our standpoint; the last we cannot see unless the dice itself moves. Thus it is that Plato does not cease to be vivifying while our political discourse moves on levels less exalted than the introducing of the life of virtue in the teeth of the evil society, nor do the great theorists of the natural law, from Cicero to Kant, become otiose when we are engaged in a Baconian confutation of idols. When we are considering the place of war in international politics, the face of the dice is uppermost on which is inscribed the Thucydidean fear, the Hobbesian predicament.

The aim of foreign policy remains, what it has always been, to preserve the balance of power. The difficulties of foreign policy arise because the balance of power can never be stabilized in our own favour. Wisdom in foreign policy consists in recognising this as the inescapable condition of foreign politics. Duty in foreign policy consists in the intelligent refinement of the motive of fear. Morality in foreign policy consists in cultivating magnanimity, justice, patience, long-suffering, so that these may enrich the political judgment. War is inevitable, but particular wars can be avoided. The ultimate advantage of extending political studies to include war, the most intractable of public human activities, is in reminding us that political arrangements are not, after all, the most important part of human life, and so establishing the only premises on which political activity itself can be beneficially pursued.

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preferable to an attitude of subservience to militant Communism, with the national and individual humiliation that this would inevitably bring." I am not concerned here to argue whether this is right or wrong, but that no useful political conclusion can be derived from a failure to recognize that it is the case.

13

Correspondence about war in *The Listener*, October–November 1955

Letter to the Editor, *The Listener*, 27 October 1955*

War and Society

Sir,—Mr. Martin Wight says (*The Listener*, October 13):

'The aim of foreign policy remains what it has always been, to preserve the balance of power'. This definition omits what, to most of us, has always been the basic purpose of foreign policy: to preserve and enhance the security, prosperity, and welfare of this country. Mr. Wight, having propounded this misleading and incomplete definition, goes on:

> The difficulties of foreign policy arise because the balance of power can never be stabilised in our own favour. Wisdom in foreign policy consists in recognising this as the inescapable condition of international politics. Duty in foreign policy consists in the intelligent refinement of the motive of fear.

Did Neville Chamberlain then show wisdom and do his duty? Mr. Wight has supplied—with shocking persuasiveness and plausibility and a massive display of learning—the very grammar of appeasement. As a piece of academic virtuosity it might be forgiven; in an epoch in which a whole new vast wave of appeasement is imminent it cannot be regarded lightly.

Yours, etc., London, S. W. 1
John Connell

Letter to the Editor, *The Listener*, 3 November 1955

War and Society

Sir,—I am puzzled that Mr. Connell should have found in my broadcast 'the very grammar of appeasement', which is a language I have never learned. Mr. Connell's definition of the aim of foreign policy is included in my own. The balance of power has traditionally been regarded as the object of sound policy, precisely

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because it is the condition of the independence and liberties of states. Appeasement is condemned, precisely on the grounds that it neglected the balance of power in pursuit of illusory moral aims like satisfying Hitler's just demands.

If there is disagreement between Mr. Connell and myself it lies not in principle but in judgement of fact; for my view of western diplomacy at the moment does not lead me to believe that 'a whole new vast wave of appeasement is imminent'.

Yours, etc., London, W. C. 2
Martin Wight

14

On the Abolition of War

Observations on a Memorandum by Walter Millis

My central criticism of this paper is that 'the war system' never comes clearly into focus.* If we are to discuss abolishing war from international society, it is necessary to agree about the function war has fulfilled in international society, because it will probably be necessary to provide that this function be performed by some other means. 'The war system' is described in this paper wholly in negative, apocalyptically negative terms. It is illustrated, almost exclusively, by the Axis Powers' use of war for aggressive nationalistic interest [in the 1930s]. But it takes two sides to make a war. Resistance to the Axis Powers was as much part of the war system as aggression by the Axis Powers. It was, in theory, open to the American government and people to take a practical step towards 'abolishing the war system' by capitulating to Japan immediately after Pearl Harbour. But the American government and people chose instead to perpetuate the war system by offering resistance. It appears to be the consensus of mankind […] that the United States deserved well of the human race by so choosing.

I have four main criticisms of your memorandum. Firstly it ignores the positive or constructive functions of war in international society, which might be summarised thus:

(i) To effect desirable change. Cavour's aggressive war against Austria in 1859 and Garibaldi's conquest of Sicily and Naples have been generally approved by posterity.[1] Some who have no love of imperialism would include the Mexican War, or the British Conquest of the Sudan, in this class. And there is one kind of desirable change that has been so important in international history that it deserves separate mention:

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* [Ed.] Martin Wight prepared this paper in 1959 in response to a request for comments by Walter Millis, an American journalist and historian (1899–1968). This paper was first published, together with an introduction by Roger Morgan entitled 'Martin Wight and the Abolition of War', in Harry Bauer and Elisabetta Brighi (eds), *International Relations at LSE: A History of 75 Years* (London: Millennium Publishing Group, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2003), pp. 51–60. The notes provided by Morgan are indicated with his name.

[1] [Ed.] Wight discusses this point in greater detail in his essay 'The Causes of War: An Historian's View', which is included in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*.

(ii) To establish independence. I think it would be true to say that, from the Revolt of the Netherlands[2] down to 1900, not a single newcomer to international society has been able to gain admission without asserting its right by war, like the United States, or creeping in as a result of somebody else's war, like Rumania in 1856 or the new states of Eastern Europe in 1918. The limiting instance would be Belgian independence, achieved after a suppressed war between the Dutch and Belgians and joint intervention by the Powers to coerce the Dutch.[3] Since 1900 there have been the examples of independence peacefully attained by Norway, Iceland and the Philippines, but the great majority of newly enfranchised states owe their independence more or less directly to the two World Wars. Tunisia and Morocco profited from France's defeat in the Indo-China war, as Guinea profited from France's inability to suppress the Algerian Revolt. Perhaps Ghana alone offers an example of peaceful attainment of independence among the Afro-Asians.

(iii) To preserve independence. Is it to be denied that the battle of Bannockburn,[4] and the career of Joan of Arc, and the resistance of the Montenegrins to Ottoman conquest, and of the Spaniards against Napoleon, and the resistance of the Greeks to Mussolini's invasion, and of the Finns to Stalin in the Winter War show one side of the war system? Given a multiplicity of sovereign states lacking a political superior, their readiness to go to war is the ultimate guarantee of their continued independence. In this sense, the war system has been the implicit guarantee of Swiss or Swedish neutrality since 1815. That is to say, the general recognition that either of these countries would fight like blazes against any direct violation of its neutrality has made even a Hitler reckon that the costs of conquering them would outweigh the advantages. […] The preserving of independence could be regarded as an illustration of the war system's positive function in blocking *undesirable* change. Another illustration of this function would be:

(iv) To preserve the balance of power. All this means, in its old and proper sense, is joint action by the majority of states to preserve their common freedom ('the liberties of Europe,' etc.) against an attempt to establish a universal monarchy. The succession of grand alliances, from Queen Elizabeth plus Henry IV plus the Dutch down to Roosevelt plus Churchill

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[2] [Ed.] The Revolt of the Netherlands (1568–1648) is also known as the Eighty Years' War and the Dutch War of Independence.

[3] [Ed.] At the London Conference of 1830, five great powers—Austria, Britain, France, Prussia, and Russia—recognized Belgium's secession from the Netherlands and guaranteed Belgium's independence. The Dutch did not recognize Belgium's independence until 1839.

[4] [Ed.] The Battle of Bannockburn (1314) was a noteworthy victory in Scotland's struggle for independence from England.

plus Stalin, show the war system functioning to maintain the life of international society, against the succession of threats to transform it into an ecumenical despotism.

I assume that it is not necessary to meet the sophistry of the argument that, since every war has two sides, there can be no agreement on what is 'desirable' or 'undesirable' in international politics. This was the silly-clever scepticism that undermined the Versailles Settlement by asserting that there is no such thing as justice and that all you ever have is the relationship of victors and vanquished, top-dogs and bottom-dogs. I assume that there is broad agreement among intelligent men that it was not a pity that Spain did not succeed in crushing the Dutch rebels, that it was not desirable that Turkey should continue to misgovern the Balkan peoples in the 19th century, and that it was a good thing that Louis XIV did not win the War of the Spanish Succession, and that Hitler did not win the Second World War.

If it were the core of your argument that the state-system regulated by the balance of power has now become obsolete because of nuclear weapons, like John H. Herz in his latest book,[5] I would not join issue with you, or at least the argument would be on different ground. But your unqualified condemnation of the war system is retrospective, and this is why I have wanted to assert its positive and constructive function. Of course war is morally detestable, politically wasteful and inefficient as a means of regulating international life. There is nothing new in recognising this. Erasmus was saying so in 1515.[6] There is no sense in which war became 'obsolete' in 1916 in which it had not always been 'obsolete,' i.e., provoking humane and sensitive men to ask what the hell was the good of it. Most great wars seem to have reached a middle point where the original issues have become blurred or forgotten and the struggle carries on by a malignant momentum of its own. The Thirty Years War did after the Peace of Prague in 1635, the Spanish Succession War did after Britain extended her war aims in 1707. Yet it is very questionable whether the peace offers of the winter of 1916–1917 marked such a point in the First World War. None of the original issues of the War had then been decided. Germany was not prepared to retrocede Alsace-Lorraine; not even the German Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg was ready to relinquish control over Belgium. I can only record disagreement with the statement that 'even the victors were to gain nothing for their peoples or their regimes comparable to what they paid for the last two terrible years of the war'. [...] Would Poles,

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[5] [Morgan] John H. Herz, *International Politics in the Atomic Age* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959). [Ed.] Wight reviewed this book in the *American Political Science Review*, 54(4) (December 1960), p. 1057.

[6] [Morgan] Desiderius Erasmus, 'Dulce Bellum Inexpertis' (1515). A translation can be found in *The 'Adages' of Erasmus: A Study with Translations*, ed. Margaret Mann Phillips (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964).

Czechs, Yugoslavs, Transylvanian Rumanians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, Finns agree with it? It was precisely in the last two years of the War that the military empires of Eastern Europe fell to pieces and the subjugated peoples found their national freedom. What did Britain get out of the War? The German colonies, control of the Middle East, the sinking of the German fleet. Only the first of these was in their grasp by 1916. It was in the last two years that the Ottoman Empire was destroyed and the Arabs were liberated. A negotiated peace in 1916 would have left the German navy intact, an abiding menace to the British—and the Americans.

   This brings me to my second main criticism. Not only does the part played by power in international politics seem to me to be underrated in this paper, but the intractability of international conflicts as well. Let me give three examples.

   (i) 'Once the great military organisations and armaments are removed, there would be nothing left for them to fight about'. The biggest international blood-letting since 1945, apart from the Korean War, was the massacres that attended the partition of the British Raj into India and Pakistan. Fear of its reoccurrence is, of course, a principal explanation for India's Kashmir policy. Neither of these emergent states had great military organisations or armaments. Could it be seriously contended that Israel and Egypt would have nothing left to fight about, i.e., that their mutual hatred would be eliminated, by their being disarmed? Indeed, it seems possible that total disarmament might make an energetic and socially advanced state like Israel seem *more* rather than less dangerous in the eyes of its backward neighbours, since the resources released from armaments would go into building up its economic and industrial strength. In other words, it is not armaments that cause war, but human passions and conflicting interests.[7]

   (ii) The illustration of Latin America seems to me to leave out the essential point: Latin America has a policeman and nurse-maid in the shape of the

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   [7] [Ed.] In some circumstances, however, steps in an arms competition can deepen distrust and intensify antagonistic interactions deriving from fear, pride, ambition, and other 'human passions and conflicting interests'. The various factors influencing the force posture choices of political-military rivals can include doctrine, interpretations of historical experiences, threat assessments, and internal disputes over investment priorities. These factors can be comparatively autonomous in certain respects and interactive in others as adversaries strive to deter aggression or coercion, intimidate competitors, and enhance their preparedness for war. The Spartans, Thucydides noted, feared Athenian ships and fortifications. See, among other sources, Colin S. Gray, 'The Urge to Compete: Rationales for Arms Racing', *World Politics*, 26(2) (January 1974), pp. 207–233; Andrew W. Marshall, 'Arms Competitions: The Status of Analysis', in Uwe Nerlich (ed.), *The Western Panacea: Constraining Soviet Power through Negotiation*, vol. 2 of *Soviet Power and Western Negotiating Policies* (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1983), pp. 3–19; and Joseph Maiolo, *Cry Havoc: How the Arms Race Drove the World to War, 1931–1941* (New York: Basic Books/Perseus Books Group, 2010). Wight analysed aspects of competitive armament in the chapter entitled 'The Arms Race' in his book *Power Politics*, ed. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978), pp. 239–257.

United States. (Not always effective, either: the efforts of the U.S.A. and the League of Nations, sometimes combined and sometimes conflicting, to stop the Chaco War [1932–1935], are instructive.) There are other examples in international history of a kind of sub-system, or pocket, with a localised international society and a localised balance of power. The Arab world today; Italy under the Spanish and Austrian ascendancies. Moreover, the Latin American countries are at a low level of political integration and economic development, and this makes their pressure upon one another's frontiers less than the average of international society as a whole.

(iii) I don't know any British student of international affairs or recent history who agrees with your criticism of Article X of the Covenant, or with the explanation of how the Allies failed after 1919.[8] It was not the Allies' 'whole system of military dominance' that was at fault, but the inadequacy of the system, or to be more precise, the lack of intelligence with which it was maintained and applied. This is why Churchill called the Second World War 'the unnecessary war'.[9] To say that 'their exclusive preoccupation with military force *incited* the totalitarian challenge' seems to me the reverse of the truth. Stimson, Simon, Chamberlain go down in history as having been too little concerned with military force.[10] The Japanese went ahead in Manchuria, and the Germans in Europe, only after having sounded out the chances of military resistance and assured themselves that none was forthcoming. But this is a well-worn debate, and there is no need to rehearse it at length.

My third main criticism concerns a more general point of principle. It is a common fallacy in political discussion to suppose that desirable results can be obtained without paying the price. It is a kind of neglect of the laws of historical causation, taking two complementary forms. Either one is so aghast at the price exacted that one neglects to observe that the goods have after all

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[8] [Morgan] The controversial Article X of the League of Nations Covenant reads 'The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve…the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members…'. Millis was clearly arguing that this explicit commitment to the totality of the territorial settlement agreed at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, and the obstinacy of the victorious Allies in enforcing it by 'military dominance', were direct causes of the aggression by the totalitarian powers in the 1930s.

[9] [Ed.] Churchill called World War II 'The Unnecessary War' and added, 'There never was a war more easy to stop than that which has just wrecked what was left of the world from the previous struggle.' Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. I, *The Gathering Storm* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948), p. iv.

[10] [Ed.] Henry L. Stimson was US Secretary of State in 1929–1933 and US Secretary of War in 1940–1945. Sir John Simon was Britain's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1931–1935 and Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1937–1940. Neville Chamberlain was Britain's Prime Minister in 1937–1940.

been delivered. Or one is so keen on the goods to be delivered that one overlooks that a price is to be paid.

'Could any sane man, standing in 1945 amid the vast ruins of Berlin or Hamburg, of Tokyo or Hiroshima, conclude that the deliberate organisation of major war was any longer a rational or even possible means of conducting the relations of states?' I submit that a sane man would have humbly reflected, first of all, that this destruction was the result of 'the deliberate organisation of major war' by the United States and Britain. And he would have reflected upon the purpose of it. And he would have humbly concluded, I think, that this was the price to be paid that the chimneys of Auschwitz should smoke no more and the Japanese should not be in occupation of California. History, it seems to me, is not a fun-fair offering give-away prizes and free drinks to men of goodwill. It appears to offer difficult choices. At that time it offered peace, at the price of letting Hitler and Tojo rearrange the world, or the curbing of Axis barbarism, at the price of the Second World War.

Fourthly, a theoretical study of how international society might be expected to work given the hypothesis of general disarmament would be interesting and valuable. But I venture to suggest that it would be interesting and valuable in proportion as it does not assume that disarmament will solve most of the world's other problems as well. What your paper calls 'the war system' has dominated international society only because there was no better institution to dominate it.

In other words, I am with those who believe that stable order is a priority needed in international affairs to effect peaceful change, and therefore I see the function war has performed in preventing undesirable change as more essential than its function in bringing desirable change. The provision for and balance between these two functions seems to me the core of any theoretical attempt to abolish war.

The alternative to war in some form is government in some form; anarchy has at no time and in no place been resolved without the establishment of a monopoly of power. It is fairly safe to predict that this would be the result of a Third World War, provided a sufficient degree of social organisation survived. The predominant remaining Power will almost certainly establish a monopoly of atomic weapons, as William H. McNeill argued in his *Past and Future* several years ago.[11]

The past year has brought a dim hope that this might come about, without war, by concert between America and Russia to prevent the growing threat to their joint atomic monopoly. It seems to me chimerical to suppose that 'disarmament' can mean anything except reduction plus concentration of certain kinds of armament in the hands of an 'international' authority. If such an authority were simply an American-Russian diarchy in disguise (and it is very difficult to see what else it

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[11] [Morgan] William H. McNeill, *Past and Future* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954).

could possibly be), it would be necessary to temper one's theoretical approval of it by sober consideration of (a) the intrinsic instability of diarchy, which raises the classical problems of divided sovereignty,[12] and (b) its disagreeableness from the point of view of those who are subjected to it against their will, of whom in the present instance France and China afford obvious examples.

Your picture of a world from which war has been abolished by agreement seems on the whole pastorally anarchic and self-regulating, and I cannot believe in it. But the need for government, i.e., controlled central power, obtrudes itself when you say that 'new forms of international consultation and control' might be necessary, and when the likelihood is envisaged that certain troublesome small states might need to be coerced by 'the combined pressure of the great states'.

I should like to see the need for international government moved into the centre of the picture. Once there, everything else falls into place around it; without it, everything else continues to drift uncoordinated. The *general* theoretical problem is: 'What is the minimum change in international politics to set up an effective "international" authority capable of preventing private war and according protection to states? And what exactly is the word "international" going to mean in this context?' The *particular form* in which this question presents itself at the present moment is this: 'What is the minimum change to secure that the control of atomic and nuclear weapons is monopolized by a single "world" authority? And what is the least unpleasant and burdensome form that this single "world" authority can be expected to take?'[13]

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[12] [Ed.] See the chapter entitled 'Triangles and Duels' in Martin Wight, *Systems of States*, ed. Hedley Bull (London: Leicester University Press, in association with the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1977), pp. 174–200.

[13] [Morgan] After the last sentence Martin Wight added this concluding thought: 'In other words extrapolate the Baruch Plan into contemporary conditions, and adapt accordingly.' The Baruch Plan was a U.S. initiative proposed in mid-1946 to outlaw nuclear weapons and to internationalise global stocks of fissile material for use in peaceful nuclear programmes.

15

International Legitimacy

International legitimacy is an elusive and nebulous notion, on the frontiers of morality and law.*,** It may be briefly described as moral acceptability. Acceptability to whom?—to the remainder of international society. South Africa under apartheid provides a good example of a state whose legitimacy is doubtful. There is no question that the regime in South Africa is legal. The steps by which it has grown up have made no breach in constitutional law. But it is condemned by a consensus of international opinion, expressed in a number of resolutions by both the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity, and leading to the withdrawal of South Africa from the Commonwealth. Like the unspeakable Turk in the latter part of the nineteenth century, South Africa is a pariah state. It is not immediately to the point that she is a very prosperous pariah.

Let us define international legitimacy as the collective judgment of international society about rightful membership of the family of nations; how sovereignty may be transferred; how state succession should be regulated, when large states break up into smaller, or several states combine into one. It concerns the presuppositions of the region of discourse that international lawyers seek to reduce to juridical system when they write about the recognition of states. It is the answer given by each generation to the fundamental, ever-present question, what are the principles (if any) on which international society is founded?

We must admit that the collective judgment of international society is more often seen in collective acquiescence than in collective action. But the traditional method of collective judgment has been action, perhaps intervention, by some or all of the Great Powers. The Partition of Poland was, in one aspect, a stripping of its legitimacy from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth by the contiguous Great Powers on the grounds of its incurable misgovernment and disorders; and though reprobated at the time in France and Great Britain, it was quickly accepted as irreversible.[1] The interventions and mooted interventions of the Powers in the

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  * [Ed.] Wight published this journal article in *International Relations*, IV(1) (May 1972), pp. 1–28. The chapter in his posthumous book *Systems of States* with this title is much shorter than this article, which has over twice as many notes as the book chapter.

  ** Wight, M. 'International Legitimacy', *International Relations*, 4(1), pp. 1–28. Copyright ©1972 by the Author. Reprinted by permission of SAGE Publications Ltd.

  [1] Gentz, a severe critic of the Partition, could write in 1806: "It is in every sense of the word concluded; its results have passed into the province of right and order, into the constitution of Europe, as it is recognized, prescribed, and established by treaties, into that system which has been consecrated

Ottoman Empire in the later nineteenth century, and in China at the time of the Boxer Rebellion, were expressions of the doubtful legitimacy accorded to those two states at the time. (We might draw the provisional conclusion that it is only Powers that are too weak to defend themselves whose legitimacy is likely to be called into question). The League of Nations was little concerned with issues of legitimacy, being occupied primarily with security and disarmament; but legitimacy has been the dominant theme of debate in the United Nations.

Until the French Revolution, the rule of international legitimacy was dynastic, being concerned chiefly with the status and claims of rulers. From then on, dynasticism was superseded by a popular principle, concerned with the claims and consent of the governed. The sovereignty of the individual prince passed into the sovereignty of the people he ruled. Allegiance gave way to rights.

The dynastic principle, in the form of hereditary monarchy, was the chief legacy that modern international society inherited from medieval feudal society. Dynasticism was itself an international system. The dynasties were collectively the European ruling class, and inter-married regularly to maintain their social primacy. The dynastic principle gave rise to a dynastic idiom of international politics. Alliances were consolidated by dynastic marriages. Reversals of alliance were marked by matrimonial disengagements. Territorial aggrandisement was justified by dynastic claims. Foreign revolutions were fomented by cultivating dynastic pretenders. Such was the mode of politics down to the 1770's, when Joseph II launched his project to partition Bavaria under a bogus dynastic claim, and Pugachev impersonated the murdered Peter III, perhaps each the last example of its kind. (Despite Catherine the Great's misgivings, Pugachev's Revolt was not instigated from abroad, and therefore was not an international event, but it was in part a colonial rebellion by the non-Russian peoples of the Volga and the Urals.) Dynastic marriages to cement a political alliance, however, survived into the age of nationalism, at least until the match between Prince Jerome Napoleon and the unfortunate but pious Clotilde of Savoy in 1859.

In the dynastic period, an attempt was made to introduce a superior rule of legitimacy: religious. The Counter-Reformation tried to restore the assumption of Catholic orthodoxy which had underlain dynastic Europe until the Reformation. Thus Pius V deposed Queen Elizabeth as a heretic, and Sixtus V declared Henry of Navarre incapable on the same grounds of succeeding to the crown of France. Henry's vindication of his hereditary right marked the decisive victory of the dynastic rule of legitimacy over the religious.

After a century or more of calm, new doctrines blew up to stir the stagnant waters of legitimacy. "It must always have been discoverable by persons of

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by the public sanction of nations", *Fragments upon the Present State of the Political Balance of Europe*, ch. ii (see eds. M. G. Forsyth, H. M. A. Keens-Soper, P. Savigear, *The Theory of International Relations* (Allen & Unwin, 1970), p. 289).

reflection", Burke said in 1791, "but it is now obvious to the world, that a theory concerning government may become as much a cause of fanaticism as a *dogma* in religion".[2] Religion had been succeeded by ideology, or secular religion: the democratic ideology of the American and French Revolutions, the nationalist and socialist ideologies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. None of these succeeded in remoulding international society entirely according to its own rules, but the popular principle of legitimacy which replaced the dynastic was a distillation of their several doctrines. Here is an important difference between the dynastic and popular rules. The dynastic rule was rooted in custom. (At times it showed a tendency to engender an ideology of international monarchism, but this never had much vitality.) The popular rule, on the other hand, was the direct product of the democratic ideology that exploded at the end of the eighteenth century, and was refined, simplified, revivified by nationalism and socialism. This has made both its advocacy more passionate, and its operation more unstable, than was the case with its predecessor.

Because dynasticism was rooted in custom, it was closely bound up with the principle of prescription. Indeed, it might almost be said that prescription, not dynasticism, provided the original rule of legitimacy. The earliest books on the law of nations and diplomatic theory have no sections on the society of states, the subjects of international law, or recognition. All this could be taken for granted. The society of states needed neither definition nor explanation. It was what it was, and everybody knew its members.

Prescription consecrated other kinds of state besides dynastic. Medieval Christendom contained a number of Powers, apart from the Papacy and the Empire at its summit, which had an elective not a hereditary constitution. Some of these, when they had disentangled themselves from the cobwebs of feudal suzerainty, assumed the status of sovereign republics. Pre-eminent were Venice and the United Provinces of the Low Countries. These were sometimes classed in eighteenth century diplomatic works as the Great Republics, and they received royal honours, though their representatives ranked after the representatives of kings. At a lower level came Genoa and the Swiss Confederation.[3]

Burke, who stood on the frontier between the dynastic and popular epochs, who saw the promise of broader freedom in the American Revolution and the danger of tyranny and social destruction in the French, who valued the strength that prescriptive right gives to society, but also knew its limits, is a perspicacious commentator on matters of international legitimacy. But when he lamented the passing of the international society of the Ancient Regime, he adduced the extraordinary argument that prescription guaranteed not only the membership of

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[2] *An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*, 1791 (*Works*, ed. Henry Rogers, 2 vols, 1842, i. 530).
[3] J. Rousset, *Mémoires sur le rang et préséance entre les souverains de l'Europe* (Amsterdam, 1746), chaps. xxv–xxvi, xxxvii–xxxviii.

international society, but also the form in which its members presented themselves within it. No member, he said, had an unrestricted right to revolutionise itself.

> "The government of that kingdom", he wrote of France, when it was already a Republic, in 1793, "is fundamentally monarchical. The publick law of Europe has never recognised it in any other form of government. The potentates of Europe have by that law, a right, an interest, and a duty to know with what government they are to treat, and what they are to admit into the federative society, or in other words, into the diplomatick republick of Europe. This right is clear and indisputable."[4]

So far from clear was it, that the argument had no foundation in Vattel, Burke's principal authority on diplomatic law.[5] But Burke's principle found a curious posthumous embodiment in the constitutional law of the ex-British Commonwealth, under which a member-state adopting a republican constitution needed the consent of the other members to remain in the Commonwealth.[6] It was by deciding not to seek this consent that South Africa, newly republican, withdrew from the Commonwealth in 1961.

Prescription is an ambiguous principle. It embodies partly a statement of right. Grotius has a cautious chapter on usucaption, the principle of Roman law by which a thing long used becomes the property of the possessor against a known former owner. "The reason for the introduction of this right", says Pufendorf, "was partly that a man who neglected for a long time to reclaim a thing was considered to have abandoned it,…and partly because the interests of peace and quiet required that possessions should finally be put beyond controversy".[7] But prescription embodies also a statement of fact, and the fact precedes the right. The fact of possession, provided it is of long enough standing to be regarded as immemorial, gives rise to rights. "Prescription", said Burke, "which through long usage mellows into legality governments that were violent in their commencement".[8] Thus it seems that rights can grow, by lapse of time and some degree of acceptance, out of an original act of violence or injustice. Lurking within prescription, which appears to embody the stability of a customary society, is the principle *ex injuria jus oritur*, out of injustice justice can arise.

The Dutch Revolt illustrated, in the full light of historical self-consciousness, a violent adjustment of a prescriptive right, and posed with embarrassing sharpness

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[4] *Remarks on the Policy of the Allies*, 1793 (*Works*, i. 596).
[5] *Le droit des gens*, book ii, ch. iii, sections 38–9, with special reference to England under Cromwell.
[6] See N. Mansergh, *Documents and Speeches on British Commonwealth Affairs* 1931–1952, ii. 846 ff; *Documents and Speeches on Commonwealth Affairs* 1952–1962, pp. 290 ff.
[7] Grotius, *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, book ii, ch. 4; Pufendorf, *De officio Hominis et Civis Juxta Legem Naturalem*, ch. 12.
[8] *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 1790 (*Works*, i. 443a).

the issue of legitimacy and the rule of admission to international society. By the Act of Abjuration of 1581 the States-General renounced only their allegiance to Philip, not the monarchic principle. "A prince is constituted by God to be ruler of a people, to defend them from oppression and violence, as the shepherd his sheep". If he oppresses them, "then he is no longer a prince but a tyrant, and they may not only disallow his authority, but legally proceed to the choice of another prince for their defence". The Dutch offered their allegiance in turn to Anjou and to Elizabeth; and only the incompetence of Leicester as governor-general in 1586–7 and the duplicity of English policy brought them to accept a formal republicanism which placed sovereignty in the States themselves.

Both Elizabeth and Henry IV had to overcome considerable scruples before entering into alliance with, and so tacitly conferring diplomatic recognition upon, a community whose *legal* standing was the same as that of Ian Smith's regime in Rhodesia after 1965.

But when in 1601 Clement VIII complained to the French ambassador that Henry IV, in spite of having made peace with Spain, continued to grant diplomatic recognition to the Dutch rebels, the ambassador replied:

> "When princes are dealing with a considerable Power, they have not been accustomed to examine whether the potentate who sends them an ambassador is legitimate or not. Without further enquiry into title, they concern themselves only with the power and the possession."

He gave the familiar precedent of the Swiss, and could not refrain from remarking that the Holy See happened at that moment to be treating with an envoy from the Sublime Porte. Ossat's despatch recounting this conversation became a *locus classicus* in French jurisprudence; it duly found its way into Merlin of Douai's capacious *Répertoire* at the time of the Revolution; and it contains the core of the doctrine of recognition in modern international law.[9]

— 2 —

In March 1775 Burke explained to Parliament that a new kind of government had come into existence in the American Colonies. "We thought, Sir, that the utmost which the discontented colonists could do, was to disturb authority; we never dreamed that they could of themselves supply it. But having, for our purposes in this contention, resolved, that none but an obedient assembly should sit; the

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[9] Cardinal Ossat, letter to Villeroy, 23 July 1601 (*Lettres de Cardinal Ossat au roi Henri le Grand*, 1624 ed., pp. 708–9). P. A. Merlin, *Répertoire universel et raisonné de jurisprudence*, s.v. « Ministre Public », sect. ii. § 1 (5th ed., Paris, Roret, 1827, ix, 124). Cf. A. de Wicquefort, *L'Ambassadeur et ses fonctions* (Cologne, Marteau, 1690), book i, section iii, pp. 27–8; Vattel, book iv, ch. 5, section 68.

humours of the people there, finding all passage through the legal channel stopped, with great violence broke out another way. Some provinces have tried their experiment, as we have tried ours; and theirs has succeeded. They have formed a government sufficient for its purposes, without the bustle of a revolution, or the trouble-some formality of an election. Evident necessity, and tacit consent, have done the business in an instant. So well have they done it, that the new institution is infinitely better obeyed than the ancient government ever was in its most fortunate periods. Obedience is what makes government, and not the names by which it is called; not the name of governour, as formerly, or committee, as at present. This new government has originated directly from the people; and was not transmitted through any of the ordinary artificial media of a positive constitution. The evil arising from hence is this: that the colonists having once found the possibility of enjoying the advantages of order in the midst of a struggle for liberty, such struggles will not henceforward seem so terrible to the settled and sober part of mankind as they had appeared before the trial."[10] Burke was so far wrong, that the bustle of a revolution and of a war of independence was after all needed, to refresh the tree of liberty with the blood of patriots and tyrants. But he had seen with penetrating eye the nature of the new popular governments that were in the succeeding century to cast the kingdoms old into another mould.

The floodgates were opened in the following year when the Continental Congress declared (1) that all men are created equal and endowed with certain inalienable rights; (2) that governments are instituted to secure these rights, and derive their just powers from the consent of the governed; (3) that when a form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it; (4) that therefore it may in the course of human events become necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, "and to assume among the Powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them". Henceforward dynastic politics were to give way to popular politics. The imperialism of the French Revolutionaries and Napoleon drove popular politics into the channels of nationality; the rights of men gave way to the rights of nations. Perhaps the earliest recognition of the new principle of legitimacy, a recognition partly inadvertent, may be found in the Convention of 1832, whereby "The Courts of Great Britain, France and Russia, *duly authorised for this purpose by the Greek nation*, offer the hereditary Sovereignty of Greece to the Prince Frederick Otho of Bavaria".[11] The new principle was formally substituted for the old in the peace settlement of 1919, under the name of "national self-determination".

The instrument of the old principle had been dynastic marriage. The corresponding instrument of the new principle was the plebiscite. Invented by the

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[10]   Speech on Conciliation with America, 22 March 1775 (*Works*, i. 189a, slightly abridged).
[11]   Convention of 7 May 1832, art. I (*British and Foreign State Papers*, 1831–1832, p. 35).

French Revolution, perfected as a means of territorial acquisition by Napoleon III and Cavour, the plebiscite came as near as may be to an impartial method of self-determination in the peace settlement of 1919–20. Earlier plebiscites had been used to determine the wishes of historic states or provinces, like Tuscany and Savoy, whose identity and frontiers were not substantially in question. The post-war plebiscites tested the allegiance of ill-defined districts of heterogeneous population which were the debris of the collapsed Central Empires. They were arranged by Allied commissioners, who determined from the best available evidence both the unit within which the vote was to be taken and the method of voting, and they were policed by Allied troops. These plebiscites were at the limit of what is technically feasible in consulting popular wishes. They reached their apogee, fifteen years later, in the Saar plebiscite, the first to be policed by neutral troops. It marked the end of the international reign of law under the League of Nations.

There were several exceptions to the method of plebiscitary self-determination during the peace settlement, on the grounds of a general international interest. Thus Austria was not allowed to join Germany, in order to maintain the balance of power, though that phrase was temporarily in abeyance. But one notable exception to plebiscitary self-determination resulted from the play of local forces. As a consequence of the Greco-Turkish War, which began when the Greeks invaded Smyrna in 1919, the Greek community that had been in Western Anatolia since the time of Homer was put to flight or expelled. Their eviction was confirmed at the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923 by a Greco-Turkish agreement for the compulsory interchange of population.[12] It was an oddity of national conflict that those expelled were dissident only in respect of religion: the "Greeks" were Turkish-speaking Orthodox, the "Turks" were Greek Moslems.

The exception in the first peace settlement of the twentieth century became the norm for the second. After the Second World War, constitutional modes of establishing legitimacy were on the whole no longer employed. It was the more striking, in that the partial Paris Peace Conference of 1946 to a great extent ratified the work of its predecessor by restoring the national boundaries of Europe as they had been established in 1919. But the great contrast was made by the boundaries of Germany. Stalin had already pushed the Polish-German frontier westwards, engulfing the frontier so carefully and painfully delimited in 1919–20 by the plebiscites on the boundaries of East Prussia and Upper Silesia, and the Western Powers had accepted this *de facto*. Instead of plebiscites, there were two activities to mark the difference between the age of Stalin and the age of Woodrow Wilson. One was the expulsion of minorities. The East European countries which had suffered conquest by the Germans now visited retribution on their own German

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[12]   Ed. H. W. V. Temperley, *A History of the Peace Conference*, vi. 110–11.

minorities, and drove them out, so that ten million refugees crowded into prostrate Germany. The second was denazification. In October 1918 President Wilson had proclaimed as a condition of making peace the destruction of arbitrary rule in Germany, by which he meant the imperial and Prussian constitutions. Now, to be legitimised, Germany needed more than this degree of self-determination. She needed to be purged of those Germans who had violated the principles of civilised society. She was occupied by the Allies with the purposes of destroying the Nazi Party, eradicating Nazi institutions, and re-educating the German people in the principles of democracy.

In some other respects, the worse precedents of the Versailles settlement found echoes after 1945. When in 1919 the Germans complained that the resurrected Poland was being given, in the former Prussian provinces of Posen and West Prussia, large German populations as well, they got the reply: "There is imposed upon the Allies a special obligation to use the victory which they have won in order to re-establish the Polish nation in the independence of which it was unjustly deprived more than one hundred years ago…To undo this wrong is the first duty of the Allies."[13]

This line of argument was afterwards developed by Israel, to justify her own aggrandisement as rectifying the wrongs of the past, rather than seeking to establish justice today. When in 1919 the Germans asked for a plebiscite in Alsace-Lorraine, since plebiscites were now the order of the day, the French replied in occult and irrelevant terms: "The question of Alsace-Lorraine is a question of right, and therefore not a French question but a world question."[14] It was with the same argument of indefeasible right, not to be tested by any popular consultation, that Indonesia in 1966 tried to evade her obligation to hold a plebiscite in West Irian. The criteria of legitimacy were changing once again.

— 3 —

In the generation after 1945 a new rule of legitimacy began to be worked out, or rather a modified version of the popular rule, making it simpler in theory and easier in practice. It asserted two rights: territorial integrity, and majority rule.

The rule of territorial integrity had already manifested itself in two cases in the peace settlement following the First World War. One was the successful claim of the new Czechoslovak state to the frontiers of old Bohemia, by which historic, strategic and economic considerations were allowed to prevail over those of nationality. The other was the successful claim of the Turkish National Assembly at Angora in 1921 to the whole of the Anatolian peninsula, as an indivisible political

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[13] H.P.C., ii. 285–6.   [14] Ibid., ii. 167, 280–2.

unit with an Ottoman Moslem majority.[15] The Turks were at first prepared to concede minority rights to the Greek community in Anatolia, if reciprocal rights were granted to Moslem minorities in neighbouring countries:[16] but the fortunes of war led to the expulsion of the Greek community already mentioned, and so to a more drastic assertion of the political integrity of the Turkish homeland.

The right of territorial integrity contains a theoretical paradox, and reverses principles hitherto widely accepted. The paradox appears when we ask the question, "Integrity of what?" The answer is, "Integrity of the state within the frontiers it had at the moment of obtaining independence".

The paradox has a double aspect. First, the right of territorial integrity appeared at a given historical moment, as the result of a revolutionary process of liberation which dissolved preceding rights. The new states came into existence at the expense of pre-existing political units, which could not claim the same right of territorial integrity. The rule of self-determination deprived them of *their* legitimacy. But another principle was adduced to confirm their loss. The European colonial empires were all (with the single brief exception of the Nazi dominion in Eastern Europe) overseas empires, products of the Vasco da Gama epoch. It therefore became a tenet of the anti-colonialist cause that maritime contact was malignant, since it was by sea that the European colonialists arrived. Territorial contiguity had a superior legitimacy.

In the early days of the anti-colonialist campaign, Mr. Hilton Poynton (as he then was) delivered an impressive speech in the Trusteeship Committee of the General Assembly describing five common fallacies about the colonial system. One was the "salt water fallacy", which led people to regard overland expansion as above reproach but to ascribe sinister motives to overseas expansion. He showed that the United States and the USSR had expanded as widely as the United Kingdom, and that if the inhabitants of Fiji were not of the same race as the British, neither were the people of Eastern Siberia of the same race as the Muscovites.[17]

This ploy was used with diminishing effect in subsequent years, until it became almost one of the official marks of a non-self-governing territory, within the meaning of article 73 of the Charter, that it should be held overseas. The legal fiction that Goa and Algeria were integral parts of the national territory was quickly discredited. The salt water fallacy became orthodoxy. The rule of territorial integrity and contiguity swelled into a rule of continental solidarity. This had

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[15]   Turkish National Pact, 28 January 1921, article 1. A. J. Toynbee, *The Western Question in Greece and Turkey* (Constable, 1922), pp. 207–10. Cf. H.P.C., vi. 53–4.

[16]   Turkish National Pact, article 5.

[17]   GAOR [General Assembly Official Records], 2nd Session, Fourth Committee Summary Records, 36th Meeting. 3 October 1947, pp. 30–2. The speech was perhaps too polished and academic a piece of political theory to have had the political effect its quality deserved. The Soviet representative drily replied that "the USSR delegation could not accept any attempt to draw a parallel between colonial possessions and any part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, since the latter had no colonial territories, and since all its citizens enjoy equal rights", *ibid.*, p. 35.

already developed in Latin America; something similar was to be noted in the Arab world[18]; in the case of Africa, Professor Ali Mazrui has described it as a principle of racial sovereignty or continental jurisdiction.[19] Thus, Angola and Mozambique belonged first of all to their African majorities, and if the African majorities should prove uncertain or impotent, they belonged secondly to their African neighbours, as Goa belonged to her Indian neighbour. "Africa is strong enough to drive Portugal from our Continent", said Nyerere.[20] The same principle of continental solidarity was among those used to condemn United States intervention in Vietnam–"intervention in Asia" from across the ocean. In the sphere of legitimacy, if not yet in the sphere of strategy, land power had triumphed over sea power.

The second aspect of the paradox is that the frontiers at the moment of independence, whose integrity was asserted, were in every case themselves the arbitrary result of colonial rule. This part, at least, of the legacy of the bad colonialist past, was accepted uncritically and consecrated. Only in two cases, Vietnam and Algeria, was independence acquired by anything like a war of independence against the colonial Power, so that blood was shed for the frontiers. The revolutionary elites who received the transfer of power in the great majority of these new states, regarded it as their first duty to preserve the territorial identity they inherited, and within its confines to create a nation.

The right of territorial integrity has, first of all, an internal reference. It means that "the struggling unity of new nations" must be helped, or rather, since the word nation has a different meaning in this context from its European sense, being a condition aspired to, not achieved, that each new state must be prevented from disintegrating. The early years of Indonesian independence were occupied with suppressing rebellion or independence movements, encouraged by the Dutch, throughout the archipelago. Burma had to contain the Karens and Shans, India to try to subdue the Nagas, the Sudan to suppress the blacks in the southern regions. The most conspicuous international assertion of the principle of territorial integrity was when in 1960 the Security Council, on the initiative of the African states, declared that nothing must be done to undermine the territorial integrity of the newly independent Congo, which in the crisis of its birth was falling apart.[21] "Our task here today," said the Moroccan delegate in the General

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[18] Cf. David Vital, *The Survival of Small States* (OUP, 1971), pp. 62–3.

[19] Ali Mazrui, *Towards a Pax Africana* (Weidenfeld, 1967), ch. ii and p. 34; *Violence and Thought* (Longmans, 1969), pp. 240–1. I must express my indebtedness to Professor Mazrui's writings, which contain the most suggestive discussion of contemporary principles of legitimacy.

[20] Speech at the OAU Cairo Conference, 20 July 1964 (*Guardian*, 21 July 1964). Continentalism could lead to constitutional fantasies. Nyerere went on: "We are committed to the achievement of a United Africa under a single continental government. We have already surrendered our sovereignty in the name of greater unity. We shall be ready to surrender it again for a bigger unity" (*The Times*, 21 July 1964).

[21] SCOR [Security Council Official Records], 879th Meeting, 21–2 July 1960, para. 130. Resolution 145 (1960), of 22 July 1960.

Assembly during that crisis, "is to lead the attack against these tricks of division and disunity. It is also to resist, in the best way we can, colonialist designs based on the principle of 'divide and rule' or 'disunite in order to hold on'. We refuse to accept balkanization, 'katanganization' and 'mauritanization'."[22] During the Biafran War, Nigeria had much wider international support in her attempt to prevent secession than had the United States in a similar predicament a century earlier. The Organization of African Unity regarded the preservation of Nigerian unity as a common African interest, and only six states (Tanzania, Zambia, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Haiti and France) granted de facto recognition to Biafra.

The two chief examples of a deliberate disregard of the right of territorial integrity were the legacy of British rule. One was the partition of the Indian Empire into two successor-states, by allowing the curious claim of the Muslim community of India to national self-determination. This was accepted by Nehru, but never wholeheartedly by India. It accentuated the firmness with which on all later occasions India asserted her own conception of her territorial integrity. And it led in due course to India's intervention in East Bengal in 1971, which resulted in the decisive violation of the territorial integrity of Pakistan.

The second example was the partition of Palestine. This was also prompted originally by the desire to do justice to two conflicting nations, though neither the British nor the UN in the end carried it into effect, but the warring nations themselves. In Afro-Asian eyes this was "the regrettable dismemberment and occupation of Palestine…by this new phenomenon of foreign colonialism known as international Zionism".[23] The disunity of Vietnam, by contrast, was not designed to satisfy any national claims (though it happened to reflect the old antagonism between Tonkin and Cochin-China). It was the result of the political and military balance between two factions, each claiming to rule the whole country.

But the right of territorial integrity is not confined to internal consolidation. It allows also for expansion. Its most obvious application is to extinguish territorial enclaves. When India forcibly incorporated Hyderabad in 1948, Nehru explained it in these words:

"Hyderabad, situated as it is, cannot conceivably be independent.

India can never agree to it whatever happens and whatever the consequences are to Hyderabad's independence…This is not because of sentimental reasons, but for highly practical reasons of geography and other reasons which would lead to incessant conflict".[24]

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[22] Mr. Boucetta (Morocco), 13 December 1960 (GAOR. Fifteenth Session, 945th Plenary Meeting, paras. 47–8). Morocco, of course, holds the existence of an independent Mauritania to be another example of territorial dismemberment.

[23] Mr. Ben Aboud (Morocco), 14 December 1960 (GAOR, Fifteenth Session, 947th Plenary Meeting, para. 160).

[24] Speech in Indian Parliament. 17 June 1948 (*Select Documents on Asian Affairs*: India 1947–50, ed. S. L. Poplai, (OUP, 1959), vol. i, p. 329). Cf. the language of the *White Paper on Hyderabad*, p. I,

The international status of Hyderabad was dubious, and the Nizam's representative could be persuaded to withdraw after a token appearance before the United Nations. But when the same reasoning was applied to the Portuguese enclaves in India, the new principle of legitimacy and the old came into sharp conflict. In the old terms, the seizure of the Portuguese territories was an act of aggression. In the new terms, it was an act of liberation. It did not matter that India in the time of Vasco da Gama had had no political status, but had been a culture-realm half conquered by Islam. The Portuguese conquest of Goa was now seen as having been itself an act of aggression against this culture-realm, which the Republic of India now represented and could avenge.[25] The Ceylonese delegate in the Security Council stated the case in this way:

> "One can never regard [sic] that a country dismembered or severed because two or more different colonial Powers held portions of it by force loses its identity; the territorial integrity of a country is essential and indivisible. The Indian Union could not have been complete and self-consistent until it finally and irrevocably contained all the territories on the sub-continent which are held by colonial Powers…Nationality is a unifying force. Self-determination is not disintegration".[26]

The right of territorial integrity, when used to justify the extinction of geographically absurd territorial enclaves, appeals as much to our common sense as does Louis XIV's desire to gain possession of the Principality of Orange and the Comtat Venaissin, two historical anomalies whose independent existence beside the Rhone offended the predestined unity of France.[27] But territorial integrity has a yet further usage. It comes to resemble a doctrine of natural frontiers. And like the doctrine of natural frontiers, it is adduced, never to explain the relinquishment of territory, always to justify its acquisition.

The purest example of the claim to territorial integrity within indisputably natural frontiers was that of the Republic of Ireland to all the 32 counties of the island of Eire. The claim was enshrined in the constitution of 1937, though a clause limited the effect of the constitution for the time being to the 26 counties which previously were known as the Irish Free State. The Spanish claim to Gibraltar had a similar geographical cogency. But the notion of natural frontiers

quoted in K. P. Karunakaran, *India in World Affairs*, August 1947–January 1950 (OUP for ICWA, 1952, p. 129).

[25] For the Portuguese refusal to allow the Indian Union of the twentieth century to identify itself with the Hindustan of the sixteenth, see Mr. Garin (Portugal), SCOR, 988th Meeting, 18 December 1961, para. 36.

[26] Mr. Malalasekera, SCOR, 987th Meeting, 18 December 1961, para. 134.

[27] Louis XIV annexed Orange in 1703, after the death without heir of William III, the last Prince of the Nassau dynasty; his legal title was recognised by the Franco-Prussian Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. It was his successor the Constituent Assembly that in 1791 decreed the annexation of Avignon and the Venaissin.

was notably extended when Argentina claimed that the Falkland Islands, which lie 300 miles off the coast of Patagonia, were an "island sector of our territory under foreign control".[28] The Argentine claim to the Falklands depended primarily upon an interpretation of the contested history of the islands between the first French settlement there in 1764 and their final occupation by the British in 1833. But the claim was increasingly supported by the additional arguments of geographical propinquity and geological resemblance to the Argentine mainland. "They are part of our own continental shelf".[29]

In 1954 the Caracas Conference of American states passed a resolution urging "extra-continental", that is to say, non-American, countries having colonies in America, to hasten self-determination for these colonies according to the UN Charter, and thus eliminate colonialism. But it added the proviso that this did not refer to territories the subject of litigation or claim between extra-continental countries and American republics.[30] Thus the Guatemalan claim to British Honduras, the Venezuelan claim to parts of Guyana, and the Argentine claim to the Falklands, were withdrawn from the scope of self-determination. When the Argentine case was being heard before the Special Committee on Decolonisation in 1964, the Uruguayan delegate pronounced that resolution 97 of the Caracas Conference "stated, perhaps for the first time, that the principle of the absolute and unconditional exercise of self-determination might in certain cases yield to another not less important principle, the principle of territorial integrity".[31]

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The majoritarian rule is, in most cases, the simple obverse of the rule of territorial integrity. It formulates the presumption of international society in favour of a state trying to maintain its territorial integrity in the teeth of centrifugal forces, as a presumption *against* minorities seeking to establish a position which will enable them to claim international legitimacy.

The majoritarian principle had a special application with regard to the racialist minority regimes of Southern Africa, where it expressed a fundamental justice. Moreover, in the Third World generally, and in Africa in particular, minorities could be designated pejoratively as "tribes", and tribalism was condemned as subversive of nationalism and obstructive to modernisation.

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[28] Mr. Amadeo: (Argentina), speech in General Assembly, 29 November 1960 (GAOR, 927th Plenary Meeting, p. 1005).

[29] C. M. Bollini Shaw, "The Problem of the Malvinas Islands (Falkland)", *Revue Egyptienne de droit international*, vol. 23 (1967), p. 34.

[30] Resolution 97. See Tenth Inter-American Conference, Caracas, Venezuela, March 1954 (Department of State Publication 5692, 1955), p. 161.

[31] Mr. Velazquez (Uruguay), speech in Special Committee on Decolonisation. 9 September 1964 (A/AC.109/SC.4/SR.26, p. 7).

The majoritarian principle, as it was construed after 1945, marked a break with the past. In the peace treaties of 1919–20, European nationalism had engendered an elaborate system to protect minority rights, a system which like the use of plebiscites reflected the constitutionalism of the age. Although minorities treaties were repudiated with indignity by Great Powers, especially Italy, and were difficult to enforce, they were a notable attempt to refine the new principle of legitimacy and to control its operation.

Such provisions did not survive into the peace settlement of 1946. Their place was taken by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which the General Assembly adopted in 1948. This asserted the rights of individuals, as the irreducible unit of humanity, rather than of national groups or minorities. There was not even the rudimentary machinery for international supervision which the League developed in the minorities treaties. The result was to leave the individual confronting the state.

The consequence for the principle of self-determination may be illustrated by a statement of the Kenya delegate at the Addis Ababa Conference of 1963 which established the Organisation of African Unity. He was speaking of the claims of the Somali minority: "The principle of self-determination…has no relevance where the issue is territorial disintegration…If they do not want to live with us in Kenya, they are perfectly free to leave us and our territory…This is the only way they can legally exercise their right of self-determination".[32] Thus the principle which broke up both the Central Empires of Europe in 1918, and the colonial empires after 1945, was invoked for a contrary effect in the successor states of the colonial empires. "If, then", says Dr. Higgins, "the right of self-determination is the right of the majority within an accepted political unit to exercise power, there can be no such thing as self-determination for the Nagas. The Nagas live within the political unit of India, and do not constitute the majority therein. Their interests are to be safeguarded by Indian obligations on human rights and the protection of minorities".[33] The principle *cujus regio ejus religio* was restored in a secular form. The elite who held state power decided the political allegiance of all within their frontiers; the recusant individual might (if he were fortunate) be permitted to emigrate. Minorities had no rights, or only such rights as majorities cared to concede.

Cyprus makes an exception to this statement. The Turkish minority in Cyprus was perhaps the only one in the world to acquire after 1945 constitutionally

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[32] Quoted in Ali Mazrui, *Towards a Pax Africana* (Weidenfeld, 1967), pp. 13, 12.

[33] Rosalyn Higgins, *The Development of International Law through the Political Organs of the United Nations* (OUP for RIIA, 1963), p. 105. The Indian Constitution of 1949 asserted an impressive series of fundamental rights. Minorities, "whether based on religion or language", have the right to their own educational institutions (art. 30); there are Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, whose social and economic interests the State shall promote with special care (art. 46). Needless to add that none of this created an international obligation.

entrenched rights. A British colony four-fifths Greek, there was no doubt that the rule of self-determination would bring the union of Cyprus with Greece. An informal plebiscite in 1950 confirmed the wishes of the Cypriots. But in 1960 Britain, Greece and Turkey, reaching a temporary accommodation of interests, imposed independence on the reluctant Cypriots, with the Turkish minority entitled to thirty per cent of the posts in the administration. This unstable arrangement, later propped up by a UN peace-keeping force, rested fundamentally on Cyprus' geographical adjacency to Turkey, and Turkey's military preponderance over Greece. Territorial proximity (if not territorial integrity) gave Turkey a hold over the island that defeated self-determination. Thus the national enmity of Greeks and Turks, which had produced in the peace settlement after the First World War an early and exceptional appeal to the rule of territorial integrity, now gave rise after 1945 to a late and exceptional guarantee of minority rights.

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The new principle of legitimacy, embodying territorial integrity and majority dominance, runs counter to two older principles: prescription, which underlay dynastic legitimacy, and self-determination, which was the fullest expression of the popular rule.

Prescription was largely demolished already by popular legitimacy, which asserted a more dogmatic negative than did dynasticism: all that was not popularly based was illegitimate. The moral turning point was the extinction of Polish sovereignty in the 1790s. Here was the first international *injuria* which did not gain assent, from which only a dubious *jus* could arise. The first French Republic welcomed the crime of the Partition as a stick to beat the *tyrans coalisés*, and prevented arguments in favour of the *fait accompli*, like those of Gentz quoted above, from being accepted. The Vienna Congress Treaty of 1815 nominally restored Poland to the family of nations, in the shape of the Congress Kingdom. But the czars were to be hereditary kings of Poland, and the restored kingdom was to be "irrevocably attached by its constitution" to the Russian Empire (art. 1). In 1832 Nicholas I by an organic statute abolished the distinct administration of Poland and absorbed it into Russia. The British government, being rightly more concerned with the Belgian issue, made only a tepid protest on the grounds that the Vienna Treaty had been infringed. Thenceforward Poland sank into a legal twilight resembling that in which the Baltic States lay after Russia had reconquered them from the Germans in 1944. Russia was confident of her rights in having annexed them; foreign Powers were impotent to help them.

But the maxim *cujus contraria memoria non existat* could not take root when the Poles obstinately refused to forget. And in the nineteenth century the rule of prescription was increasingly questioned by international lawyers. "Ausserdem

muss freilich auch den Staaten gesagt sein: hundert Jahre Unrecht ist noch kein Tag Recht", said the learned Heffter in 1844, but refrained like a cautious Prussian official from applying the rule.[34]

A second unforgivable *injuria* was the German annexation of Alsace-Lorraine in 1871. *N'en parlez jamais, y penser toujours*, was a new principle of international relations. The German attitude to the defeat of 1918 and the *Versaillerdiktat* carried the theme further. It culminated in the unprecedented refusal of the Arab states, after 24 years and three wars, to make peace with Israel.[35] Thus the cliché of the politically illiterate and historically ignorant, that "war settles nothing", acquired a limited and temporary measure of truth. War cannot settle issues when it is conceived, not as litigation, but as an episode in a vendetta.

The anti-colonialist campaign after 1945 denied any prescriptive rights to the European overseas empires. The key case was Goa, the oldest European possession in the Third World. Was Portuguese rule in Goa legitimate? Albuquerque had conquered Goa from the Sultan of Bijapur in 1510. The conquest does not seem to have been confirmed by a treaty of cession[36], but the Sultan implicitly recognised it in several later treaties with the Viceroy in Goa. When the International Court of Justice considered the Rights of Passage over Indian Territory Case between Portugal and India, it concluded *inter alia* that the Treaty of Poona of 1779 between Portugal and the Marathas did not confer upon Portugal full sovereignty over the enclaves of Dadra and Nagar-Aveli, but it cast no doubt upon the legality of Portuguese sovereignty over Goa itself.[37] But India had already sought to strip Portugal of her legitimacy through a declaration by the Colombo Powers in 1954 that continued Portuguese rule in Goa "was a violation of fundamental human rights and a threat to the peace of the world". India subsequently argued that since the General Assembly had condemned colonialism and had classified Goa as a non-self-governing territory under Article 73 of the Charter, Portugal was in breach of her United Nations obligations. To clinch the argument, Krishna Menon, as he took his way to the United Nations in 1961 to defend the Indian seizure of Goa, propounded the maxim that "colonialism is

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[34] A. W. Heffter, *Das europäische Völkerrecht der Gegenwart* (Berlin, Schroeder, 1st ed. 1844), section 11, p. 25. ["In addition, the states must of course be told that a hundred years of injustice cannot be turned into a day of justice."]

[35] But it is unwise to speak of anything in international history as unprecedented. After Bannockburn, England recognised Scottish independence by the Treaty of Edinburgh (or Northampton) of 1328. In 1333 Edward III renewed English aggression upon Scotland and implicitly tore up the "extorted" treaty. The two Kingdoms remained in a condition of formal war for nearly two centuries, until the Treaties of London, on Henry VII's initiative, in 1502.

[36] There is none in Judice Biker, *Collecçao de Tratados e concertos de pazes que o Estado da India Portugueza ez com os Reis e Senhores com quem teve relaçoes nas partes da Asia e Africa Oriental desde o principio da conquista até ao fim do seculo XVIII* (Lisbon, Imprensa Nacional, 14 vols, 1881–7), contrary to the impression given by C. H. Alexandrowicz, *An Introduction to the History of the Law of Nations in the East Indies* (Clarendon Press, 1967), pp. 14–5. The earliest treaty with "Bisnagua" in Judice Biker is 19 September 1547 (i. 118–9).

[37] Rights of Passage over Indian Territory Case (Portugal–India), I.C.J. Reports (1960).

permanent aggression".[38] "If the vivisection of India was immoral and illegal *ab initio*," said the Indian delegate, Mr. Jha, in the Security Council, "how can it be moral and legal today?"[39]

> "This is not a question of aggression, this cannot be a question of aggression. If anybody says it is, he is going against the tide of history, he is going against the entire thesis of the United Nations, he is going against the tide of world history and public opinion because colonialism can no longer be tolerated. There is no question that it is illegal and immoral. It was illegal in the beginning, it is illegal and immoral today, and that has got to be recognised."[40]

Prescription thus dissolved in the flood of liberating zeal and revolutionary historicism. Indeed, as Burke said of the French Revolutionaries, "they look on prescription as itself a bar against the possessor and proprietor. They hold an immemorial possession to be no more than a long continued, and therefore an aggravated injustice."[41] And in a recent British study of the principles of international law, Brownlie discusses prescription and concludes that international law no longer has any place for it.[42]

Burke formulated a principle of territorial vicinity. "There is a *Law of Neighbourhood* which does not leave a man perfect master on his own ground. When a neighbour sees a *new erection*, in the nature of a nuisance, set up at his door, he has a right to represent it to the judge; who, on his part, has a right to order the work to be staid; or if established, to be removed. On this head, the parent law [i.e. the Roman law of equity] is express and clear; and has made many wise provisions, which, without destroying, regulate and restrain the right of *ownership*, by the right of vicinage."[43] But Burke adduced the right of vicinage as a defence against innovation, a bulwark of prescription. *Vetustas pro lege semper habetur*. ["Oldness has always been deemed as law."] It has now been turned upside down, and becomes an engine of innovation, to undermine prescription. When a neighbour sees an *old* erection, in the nature of a nuisance, set up at his door—a Portuguese Estado da India, or a Falkland Islands Colony—he has a right, not simply to represent it to the judge, because the World Court is biased in favour of prescriptive abuses, but to remove it himself.

[38] Speech in Bombay, 19 December 1961. (*Hindu*, 20 December 1961). Cf. the speech of Sekou Touré at the Addis Ababa Conference in 1963, as reported in the Hsinhua News Agency, 25 May 1963.
[39] SCOR, 987th Meeting, 18 December 1961, para. 39.
[40] Mr. Jha, SCOR, 987th Meeting, 18 December 1961, para. 61.
[41] *A Letter to a Noble Lord*, 1796 (*Works*, ii. 268b).
[42] Ian Brownlie, *Principles of Public International Law* (Clarendon Press, 1966), pp. 143–9.
[43] *Regicide Peace*, I, 1796 (*Works*, ii. 300).

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If prescription is abolished, self-determination is much qualified by the new principle. The notion of self-determination seems to be more firmly entrenched in the constitution of the United Nations than it was in the League. The League was open to "any fully self-governing State, Dominion or Colony" which could "give effective guarantee of its sincere intention to observe its international obligations." Wilson wished "fully self-governing" to be strictly construed, as a limiting qualification. The United Nations was open "to all peace-loving States which accept the obligations contained in the present Charter", but declared its second purpose to be "To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples." This double (and potentially contradictory) principle was repeated in Art. 55, which introduced the pledges of international economic and social co-operation. The object of the trusteeship system was declared in Art. 76 to be "to promote the…advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories, and their progressive development towards self-government or independence as may be appropriate."

On 16 December 1952 the General Assembly recommended that "the States Members of the United Nations shall uphold the principle of self-determination of all peoples and nations"; and in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples of 12 December 1960 it announced that "all peoples have the right to self-determination."[44] Ian Brownlie observes that "Until recently the majority of Western jurists assumed or asserted that the principle had no legal content, being an ill-defined concept of policy and morality". But now, he argues, self-determination has been established as a principle of the law of the United Nations, and is indeed part of the *jus cogens*, "a peremptory norm of general international law from which no derogation is permitted."[45]

If this view prevails, the popular rule of international legitimacy will have taken a firmer hold in international law than its predecessor did.

But what is a people or nation of whom the right of self-determination is predicated? The provisional European answer, that it is a group whose historical and cultural unity is exhibited primarily in a common language, an answer that was made the basis of the peace settlement of 1919, had little application in the plural societies of the Third World. There, any answer was bound up with the principle of territorial integrity. The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries followed the right of self-determination by declaring that "Any attempt at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the

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[44] Resolution 637 A (VII); Resolution 1514 (XV).
[45] *The Principles of Public International Law*, pp. 483, 417–18. Cf. Higgins, *The Development of International Law through the Political Organs of the United Nations*, pp. 90–106.

territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations."

In the era of the United Nations, the institution of the plebiscite lost ground, when it might have been expected to gain. There were, indeed, some popular consultations. Outer Mongolia, the oldest Soviet satellite, gave a dutiful lead. Stalin made it a condition of Russia's entry into the war against Japan that China should recognise the independence of Outer Mongolia, which had been lost to China for nearly thirty years. A Mongolian plebiscite in 1945 enabled the Nationalist government to do this with a good grace, and Outer Mongolia thus entered at last the family of nations.

France held referenda in her Indian establishment before ceding them to India—Chandernagore in 1949, Pondicherry, Karikal, Mahé and Yanam in 1954. In some uncontentious instances (though with some unexpected results) the UN supervised plebiscites to decide the future of former colonies, as in British Togoland, the British Cameroons, and Western Samoa, or elections as in French Togoland and Ruanda-Urundi. In a more important issue, at the beginning of the international conflict between Indonesia and Malaysia in 1963, the UN investigated and confirmed the elections by which North Borneo and Sarawak had chosen to join the Malaysian Federation. These consultations were designed to make it "as clear as possible to the electorate, covetous neighbours, and to the world at large that the principle of self-determination had been fully complied with."[46]

But Ethiopia managed to swallow Eritrea in 1960 without the wishes of the inhabitants having been ascertained. India from 1947 onwards steadfastly refused to allow the plebiscite in Kashmir called for by Pakistan and the UN. Over Goa, Nehru said in the Indian Parliament in 1955 that his government was not prepared to tolerate the presence of the Portuguese in Goa, even if the Goans wanted them.[47] Indonesia treated with contempt the UN observers who tried to attend "the act of free choice" which in 1969 she reluctantly allowed to be staged in West Irian.[48] When Gibraltar expressed its own self-determination through the referendum of 10 September 1967, conducted under a team of Commonwealth observers, there was a 97 per cent poll, 12,138 votes in favour of retaining links with the United Kingdom against 44 for passing under Spanish sovereignty. (It was suggested that it might be wise to tamper with the voting returns, to contrive a better pro-Franco poll and make the business look less like an East European

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[46] Alan James, *The Politics of Peace-Keeping* (Chatto for ISS, 1969), p. 23.

[47] *Guardian*, 7 September 1955. This was quoted against India in the Security Council by Mr. Garin, the Portuguese delegate, after the Indian seizure of Goa (SCOR, 988th Meeting, 18 December 1961, para. 57).

[48] See Stewart Harris in *The Times*, 8 July 1969. In 1950 the various federated states of the United States of Indonesia were extinguished and absorbed into the Republic of Indonesia without resort to plebiscite, but this probably represented the popular will.

plebiscite.) But the UN Special Committee on Colonialism had already declared that a referendum would violate the Charter, on the grounds that the present residents of Gibraltar were not indigenous to the territory; and the General Assembly ignored the result of the referendum, requesting Britain to "terminate the colonial situation in Gibraltar" by 1st October 1969.

One great theoretical limit to the right of self-determination was that it should not perpetuate a colonial arrangement. Colonial arrangements were, *ex hypothesi*, illegitimate, even "illegal". "Self-determination should not be invoked in order to maintain colonialism",[49] said an Argentine representative in 1954, against the Netherlands claim not to cede West New Guinea to Indonesia on the grounds that the people of West New Guinea needed to be assisted towards self-determination. Argentina, wrote the Argentine ambassador to the U.A.R. regarding the Falkland Islands, "will not agree to having the principle of self-determination vitiated by seeing it applied in order to consolidate situations flowing from colonial anachronisms."[50] Both Argentina in respect of the Falklands, and the Spaniards in respect of Gibraltar, refuse to regard the population of the colony as having any claim to be called indigenous. When the Argentine under-secretary for foreign affairs was asked at a press conference in Buenos Aires what would be the attitude of his country if the United Nations ordered a plebiscite in the Falkland Islands, he replied: "What? With imported inhabitants? This would be the negation of the principles of a plebiscite."[51] If it had been said to him that the great majority of the population of Argentina itself were also imported, he would probably have answered by distinguishing between the free immigration of individuals into an independent country during the nineteenth century, and the movement of population into a territory under the auspices of a remote Colonial Office. As another Argentine representative put it: "the indiscriminate application of the principle of self-determination to territories so thinly populated by nationals of the colonial Power would place the destiny of that territory in the hands of the Power that had installed itself there by force, in violation of the most elementary rules of international law. The fundamental principle of self-determination must not be utilized to grant full sovereignty to an illegal possession under the mantle of protection that would be provided by the United Nations."[52]

The maxim that self-determination must not be invoked in order to maintain colonialism is difficult to expand into a legal or moral principle. Here are two examples of the arguments being carried to extreme lengths. "If we regard

[49] Mr. Cooke (Argentina), GAOR, 9th Session, First Committee, 732nd Meeting, 29 November 1954, para. 45.

[50] C. M. Bollini Shaw, "The Problem of the Malvinas Islands", *Revue Egyptienne de droit international*, vol. 23 (1967), p. 35.

[51] *The Times*. 8 September 1964; J. Halcro Ferguson in *Observer Foreign News Service*, No. 20665, 11 September 1964.

[52] Mr. Ruda (Argentina), Special Committee on Decolonisation, 10 September 1964 (A/AC.109/SC.4/SR.25, pp. 7–8).

self-determination as the exercise of already existing sovereignty", said yet another Argentine representative with regard to the Falkland Islands, "it cannot be recognized in the present case, because what is at issue is not a sovereign state but a colony. Nor can the settlers' right of self-determination be recognized, because they are themselves an integral part of the colonial machinery. Self-determination can be applied to existing sovereignty or nascent independence, but not to the continuation of colonialism. It can be applied, moreover, only when the territory is not in dispute."[53] The speaker here conceived of self-determination as a procedure to confirm a certain historical trend. It does not legitimise the trend, because the trend legitimises itself. Thus the procedure has only one permissible outcome, and is not a free and open procedure. To speak of self-determination as "the exercise of already existing sovereignty" seems tautological; self-determination formerly meant the exercise of the right to attain sovereignty. But the speaker failed to make clear the distinction between "nascent independence", in relation to which self-determination is permissible, and "the continuation of colonialism", in relation to which it is forbidden. In effect, a nascent independence of the Falkland Islands, or of Gibraltar, was ruled out, for the ultimate reason that it would infringe the principle of territorial integrity.

The second example takes the argument further. "Someone raised the question of self-determination", said the Indian delegate in the Security Council when it was discussing Goa in 1961. "How can there be self-determination by an Indian in order to say that he is part of India or self-determination by an African to say that he is an African, or by a Frenchman to say that he would remain a part of France?" The speaker assumed that these were rhetorical questions. "There are instances", he continued, "when the question of self-determination can be appropriately raised in certain contexts. For example when the question of Angola arose, we took the position that that was a question of self-determination. That is one large unit whose self-determination has to be exercised and when it comes, it will be exercised in favour of the independence of Angola. But there can be no self-determination of an Indian against an Indian. That really becomes meaningless. Of course, it is true that the wishes of the people of some state could be ascertained, but there is only one choice for them and that is to be free as part of their great motherland. There is no other basis on which there can be freedom for the people of India nor any other basis on which the people would like their freedom."[54] What is clear from this statement is that there was no freedom for the people concerned *not* to be part of India. Political arguments have their inherent structure and their own affinities, and this Indian statement bore an unfortunate resemblance to Hitler's claim to have saved Austria from the trick plebiscite

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[53] Mr. Zavala Ortiz (Argentina), GAOR, 19th Session, 1292nd Plenary Meeting, 7 December 1964, para. 24.
[54] Mr. Jha (India), SCOR, 988th Meeting, 18 December 1961, para. 84–5.

planned by Schuschnigg and to have established her right of self-determination by incorporating her in Great Germany.[55]

More important than these theoretical limits to the right of self-determination are the practical conditions revealed by the contrast between the Biafran War of 1967–70 and the Bengal War of 1971. Biafra, like Katanga, like the Confederate States of America a hundred years before, was unable to make good its claim to self-determination, because it could not obtain international support against the political unit from which it was trying to secede. Foreign attitudes towards the state whose territorial integrity was threatened might vary from the surly jealousy of Britain and France towards President Lincoln's United States, to the protective policy of the United Nations towards the Congo. What was decisive was the absence of help to the rebels. In the cases of Greece, Belgium and Rumania in the nineteenth century, and of the new Afro-Asian states after 1945, international opinion was in favour of the seceding party, and the Concert of the Powers or its successor the United Nations approved and assisted the disruption of a multinational political unit and the creation of new states. For Bangla Desh in 1971, the decisive circumstance was military intervention by a regional Great Power, partly in order to liberate a neighbouring province from misgovernment and oppression, as Russia in 1877 went to war with Turkey on behalf of the Bulgarians; partly in order to seize an opportunity of destroying the territorial integrity of a hated rival. The Great Powers were divided and international opinion was uncertain, as it had been in 1859–60 over the unification of Italy. On that occasion, the extinction of five sovereignties[56] raised moral scruples similar to the territorial dismemberment of Pakistan (however palliated by subsequent plebiscites or prior elections[57]); local forces supported by interested Great Powers took control of events; and international society lost the capacity for concerted action.

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So far we have been examining the principles of legitimacy that have prevailed in the United Nations, and been promoted chiefly by the anti-colonialist Powers, or the Third World. For a generation they were able to compensate for their political and economic weakness by a moral and rhetorical ascendancy, which dictated the new principles of legitimacy to international society.

They were encouraged and assisted in the early days after the Second World War by the Soviet Union. Russia and the Third World had a good deal of negative

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[55] Cf. Norman Baynes, *Hitler's Speeches*, OUP for RIIA (1942), ii. 1416–36.
[56] The Two Sicilies, Tuscany, Parma, Modena, and (virtually) the Papal States.
[57] The victory of the Awami League in the elections of 1971 was on a programme of self-government for East Bengal, not of secession from Pakistan.

common interest, and Russia promoted the anti-colonialist campaign as a second front against the West in the Cold War. Vyshinsky used to proclaim in the General Assembly that the majority in the United Nations (he meant the American majority) represented only a minority in the world, but that the minority in the United Nations (the Soviet Union and her associates) spoke for the majority in the world. But as the Western empires were progressively dismantled, and colonial independence was established, the interests of the Soviet Union and the Third World diverged.

Yet Communist principles of international legitimacy have more in common with those that we have been discussing than with the popular principle of old Western orthodoxy. Though a right of self-determination has played much part in Communist theory, it is qualified and subordinate to other political ends. As early as 1903 Lenin spoke of "the positive and principal task to further the self-determination of the proletariat in each nationality rather than that of peoples and nations."[58] Twenty years later, and able now to put theory into practice, Stalin elaborated the rule:

> "It should be borne in mind that besides the right of nations to self-determination there is also the right of the working class to consolidate its power, and to this latter right the right of self-determination is subordinate. There are occasions when the right of self-determination conflicts with the other, the higher right— the right of a working class that has assumed power to consolidate its power. In such cases—this must be said bluntly—the right to self-determination cannot and must not serve as an obstacle to the exercise by the working class of its right to dictatorship."[59]

In 1915 Lenin made a prescient observation about the right of self-determination: "The championing of this right, far from encouraging formation of petty states, leads, on the contrary, to the freer, fearless and therefore wider and more universal formation of large governments and federations of states, which are more to the advantage of the masses and are more in keeping with economic developments."[60] This statement foreshadows the harnessing of self-determination to territorial integrity and expansion.

It foreshadows also the most singular piece of expansion, as regards rules of legitimacy, in Soviet history: the incorporation of the Baltic States in the Soviet Union in 1940.

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[58] "The National Question in Our Programme", 15 July 1903 (*Collected Works*, vi. 454).

[59] Reply to discussion on National Factors at Twelfth Congress of R.C.P., 23 April 1923, in Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question* (Lawrence and Wishart, 1936), p. 168. Cf. his *Marxism and the National Question* (1913), ch. vi (*ibid.*, p. 53), and his speech to the third All-Russian Congress of the Soviets, 15 January 1918 (*Works*, iv. 33).

[60] *Socialism and War* (August 1915), ch.i. (*Collected Works*, xxi. 316).

The Baltic States were the only states to disappear altogether from the family of nations as a result of the Second World War. Their extinction is a unique event in twentieth century history. Though the United States and the United Kingdom have refused to grant *de jure* recognition to the change, the international community at large has acquiesced in it. Yet its international legitimisation rests on nothing more than the secret additional protocol to the German-Soviet Treaty of Non-Aggression of 23 August 1939, as modified by the secret supplementary protocol to the German-Soviet Boundary and Friendship Treaty of 28 September 1939.

In the circumstances of 1940 the Soviet Union was morally isolated, and it was not a juncture when the world expected painstaking arguments to justify territorial revision. It was clear both at the time, and in Stalin's later negotiations on the matter with Britain and the United States, that the Soviet claim to the Baltic States rested immediately upon the requirements of strategic security.[61] Stalin arranged bogus elections in the three countries in order to take care of national and proletarian self-determination. But a deeper ground of claim, a more ancient theory of legitimacy, could be dimly discerned in Soviet policy. Molotov's speech to the Supreme Soviet on the 1st August 1940 about the acquisition of Bessarabia, northern Bukovina and the Baltic States, showed the political assumptions of an earlier epoch. He emphasized the increase of territory and population, the shifting of the Soviet frontiers to the Danube and the gaining of ice-free ports on the Baltic, and added: "It should be noted that nineteen-twentieths of this population previously formed part of the population of the USSR, who had been forcibly separated by the western imperialist Powers when Soviet Russia was militarily weak. Now they have been reunited with the Soviet Union."[62] Inaccurate history here revealed the claim to resume former historical frontiers, part of the inheritance of the Tsarist Empire.[63] The claim reappeared at Yalta, when Stalin demanded, as his condition for entering the war against Japan after the defeat of Germany, that "the former rights of Russia violated by the treacherous attack of Japan in 1904 shall be restored."[64]

The Chinese People's Republic also had an imperial inheritance to recover. In Tibet, it reasserted the former Manchu suzerainty. It refused to recognise the

[61] See Sir Llewellyn Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War*, vol. ii (HMSO, 1971), ch. xxvi.

[62] Jane Degras, ed., *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy* (OUP for RIIA, 1951), iii. 465–6.

[63] The Baltic States were never part of the USSR. They declared their independence as an immediate consequence of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, between November 1917 and February 1918. Soviet Russia recognised their independence by separate treaties in 1920.

[64] See W. H. McNeill, *America, Britain, and Russia* (OUP for RIIA, 1953), pp. 544–6. The "former rights" thus reacquired were of two kinds. There were territorial retrocessions by Japan (to which the Kurile Is., never before held by Russia, were added). And there were rights at the expense of China: the commercial port of Dairen, the naval base of Port Arthur, and joint control of the Manchurian railways. Russia restored the latter rights to China by the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Alliance of 1950.

Russian territorial acquisitions of the nineteenth century, and demanded that the Soviet Union should publicly admit the unequal nature of the frontier agreements now in force.[65] Thus the most striking examples of the kind of claim to legitimacy, obsolescent elsewhere, that is based upon historical irredentism, were provided by the two great Communist empires. And in their mutual relationships, the discredited but inescapable principle of prescription could be seen raising its ancient head. In 1963 the Central Committee of the CPSU wrote thus to the Central Committee of the CCP:

> "Naturally, we will not defend the Russian Czars who permitted arbitrariness in laying down the state boundaries with neighbouring countries. We are convinced that you, too, do not intend to defend the Chinese emperors who by force of arms seized not a few territories belonging to others. But while condemning the reactionary actions of the top-strata exploiters who held power in Russia and in China at that time, we cannot disregard the fact that historically-formed boundaries between states now exist. Any attempt to ignore this can become the source of misunderstandings and conflicts".[66]

Ex injuria, provisionally, *jus oritur*.

Legitimacy is not a word in the Marxist vocabulary. The Soviet Union has moved towards a provisional and selective acceptance of the notions prevailing in the system of states at large concerning legitimacy, sovereignty, and international right, and has at the same time powerfully modified them. But there has remained for Soviet doctrine a special test of what might be called legitimacy, which is rule by a Communist party. If we translate Marxist ideas into traditional language, we might say that the socialist camp is more legitimate than the bourgeois camp, because it marks a later stage in the history of the class struggle, and the criterion of legitimacy is to initiate the future.

The Communist states were linked together, when others besides the Soviet Union appeared on the international stage in 1945, not only by diplomatic representation of the conventional kind, but more tightly by the network of fraternal Communist parties. The double hierarchy in Communist states, party as well as governmental, has been compared to the double hierarchy of Church and State in pre-Reformation and Counter-Reformation Europe. But the international relationship it produces has a closer affinity with dynastic ties. The Party resembles a dynasty, and differs from a church, in that its only function is political rule. The revival in a new form of a dynastic system of legitimacy is one source of the archaic and reactionary air that invests Communist international politics.

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[65]   John Gittings, *Survey of the Sino-Soviet Dispute* (OUP for RIIA, 1968), p. 164.
[66]   Letter of 29 November 1963 (*ibid*., pp. 162–3).

The fraternity of Communist parties is in principle an international—not of hereditary monarchies—but of self-perpetuating oligarchies. Like the dynasties before them, they have their own common interest, distinct from but parallel to the interests of the states they represent and govern. The dynasties ruled by divine right; the parties by virtue of being the vanguard of the progressive march of the masses of mankind. In practice, this international oligo-dynasty was controlled, in Stalin's time, by the party of the greatest Power, to which was conceded the leading role. The Cominform, set up in 1947, was only an outward expression of the interdependence between the CPSU and the satellite parties, which did not change when the Cominform was dissolved in 1956.[67] Thereafter the peregrinations of First Secretaries about the capitals of Eastern Europe had a similar function to the meetings of crowned heads in the second half of the nineteenth century.

From the outside, the Communist monolith[68] seemed as threatening as did the Habsburg family network in the days of Charles V, as much a system of revolutionary imperialism as Napoleon's dynastic arrangements. The sixteenth century offered the better parallel, because international dynasticism was then most closely bound up with international religious interests. As the capture of a new state was then marked by a dynastic marriage or by placing a new candidate upon a vacant throne, so now it was marked by installing the party in control of the state's key ministries. Stalin kept rivals to the existing leaders of the national parties in reserve, to be substituted if it suited Soviet interests, thus maintaining a tighter discipline than Charles V when he planned the marriages and disposition of his womenfolk, as tight a discipline as Napoleon when he shuffled and cashiered his brothers and sisters. Philip II, in his conflict with England and France, repudiated the right to rule of Elizabeth and Henry of Navarre. The Soviet Union, in its quarrel with Yugoslavia in 1948, assailed the legitimacy of the Yugoslav CP on the grounds of its deficiency in democracy and in the spirit of class struggle[69]; in its quarrel with Czechoslovakia in 1968, the Soviet Union similarly impugned the legitimacy of the Czechoslovak CP for neglecting the principle of democratic centralism and its responsibilities towards the world communist movement.[70] The Sino-Soviet split had a dynastic prototype in the family tension between Charles V and his brother Ferdinand I and the more serious quarrel between

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[67] Cominform Communist Party members included Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, the USSR, and Yugoslavia (expelled in 1948), together with France, Italy, and the Netherlands. Albania applied in 1947 but did not accede to membership.

[68] The term "monolith" in this connexion was of Soviet not Western origin. See S. Sanakoiev, "The Basis of the Relations between the Socialist Countries", *International Affairs* (Moscow), no. 7 (July 1958), p. 27.

[69] See *The Soviet-Yugoslav Dispute* (RIIA, 1948), pp. 15–6, 41–52.

[70] See P. Windsor and A. Roberts, *Czechoslovakia 1968* (Chatto for ISS, 1969), appendix ii. In this case the accusation was muted, because it was necessary to have the pretence of an invitation from the Czechoslovak CP to the Warsaw Pact Powers to intervene.

Philip II and his cousin Maximilian II, when Philip's resentment that the imperial title had passed from Madrid to the younger branch at Vienna was exacerbated by disapproval of Maximilian's religious heterodoxy and grievance that Maximilian did not give Spain the support she requested against the Dutch rebels.

There is a decisive respect in which the Communist party resembles a church and not a dynasty. Dynasties die out, giving rise to succession questions; or they can be deposed, giving place to republics. The Communist party is, so far, perpetual, and no people over whom it has obtained power has yet been able to get rid of it. But this is compensated for and perhaps partially explained, by the final respect in which the international Communist oligarchy resembles the old dynastic international. Its unity has been steadily undermined by particularist tendencies, and the Communist parties, like the dynasties before them, have drifted towards becoming the vehicles of national interests.

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The change from the dynastic to the popular rule of legitimacy was the result primarily of changing conceptions of justice and right. But it was furthered by a second motive, dislike for the variety and complexity of international society, and a belief that improved rules of legitimacy would lead to a greater uniformity. Kant's prescription that all states should be republican is the classic example.

In the result, a new set of words, like democracy, freedom, and self-determination, has acquired general currency, replacing the older set of words. But the particulars of international society which they describe remain obstinately various.[71]

The reason is twofold. Rules of legitimacy are necessarily very general, and are elastic in proportion to their generality. They can be applied to fit many different and even contradictory circumstances. Moreover, like all political principles, they are guides not masters. There are occasions when it is prudent to subordinate them to overriding interests. "Recognition of the effects of illegality", as Lauterpacht has said, "may be a wise weapon of international policy, or a bitter pill of unavoidable necessity".[72]

The most clearly pronounced negative criterion of international legitimacy at the present time is the principle that conditions brought about by military force or other means of coercion should not be recognised. This derives from the limitations or prohibitions on the use of force in the League Covenant, the

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[71] For a brave argument that the Third World, the Communist world and the West have an equal claim to use the word "democracy", with the Third World being closer to the original meaning, see C. B. Macpherson, *The Real World of Democracy* (Clarendon Press, 1966).

[72] H. Lauterpacht, *Recognition in International Law* (CUP, 1948), p. 430.

Briand-Kellogg Pact and the UN Charter. But the words of Lauterpacht just quoted are wrung from him when he is discussing the British recognition, in 1938, ten years after the Kellogg Pact, of the Italian conquest of Abyssinia. The rapid recognition of the new state of Bangla Desh is another example of the difficulty of a scrupulous application of this negative criterion. It is almost impossible to conceive of a Middle Eastern settlement that will not furnish another example.

Rules of legitimacy are circumscribed by the pragmatism of the law of recognition. It is generally if not universally agreed that "a government is entitled to recognition as the government of a state when it may fairly be held to enjoy, with a reasonable prospect of permanency, the obedience of the mass of the population and effective control of much the greater part of the national territory".[73] It will be noted that this might cover the case of a community of Triffids, if such a thing were to establish itself upon part of the earth's surface, and supposing that rational communication with it were possible. It might even cover the case of Triffids ruling over a human population. There is a kind of precedent in the Ottoman Empire; there is a kind of precedent in South Africa.

The influence of principles of legitimacy upon international politics has been generally overestimated. The rules of legitimacy, whether dynastic or popular, have always been subordinate to the needs of state-building and state-consolidation. Here force plays a preponderant part, and consent is often evoked by modifying principles or even disregarding them. We need only remind ourselves of two examples: the violence and illegality with which the United States dispossessed the Indians, the violation of rights by which Prussia unified Germany.

David Apter has remarked that in politics "principles of legitimacy are normative first and structural second".[74] It is true no doubt of the state. In international society, however, principles of legitimacy remain normative without becoming structural. This is a differentia of international society. Conceptions of international legitimacy have had a minor part in shaping international history, except where they have run with the grain of state-consolidation. The general international rule has been, as Ossat said, "without further enquiry, to concern oneself only with the power and the possession".

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[73] Sir Alec Douglas-Home in the House of Commons, 24 January 1972, col. 967.
[74] David Apter, *The Politics of Modernization* (University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 16.

16

Reflections on International Legitimacy

The reflections in this paper started as a chapter in a book.* They then acquired a life of their own, raised questions to which I have not yet found the answer, and brought together a number of historical examples which I have insufficiently investigated. They were prompted originally by the question that presented itself to me: what part has been played in international history by doctrines of legitimacy, which embody international society's consciousness and assertion of its own nature? You must allow me to use this metaphysical language in order to state the theme: I shall hasten to qualify it in a moment. It surprised me, when I looked into it, to find that nobody has written about it. No historian has done, for the narrower notion of international legitimacy, still less for the wider notion of international society, what Ernest Nys did for the origins of international law,[1] J. N. Figgis for early modern international thought,[2] Meinecke for the idea of *Staatsräson*,[3] or more recently Richard Koebner for the notion of empire.[4]

One reason may occur to you as I go on. The path resembles the path one sometimes takes round the periphery of a fair-ground, stumbling over guy-ropes and trailing cables, getting a back view of tents which are more familiar from the front. The largest tent, and from which the loudest music reverberates, is probably

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* [Ed.] In addition to his papers entitled 'Dynastic Legitimacy' and 'Popular Legitimacy', Wight prepared a paper for the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics which was published posthumously with the title 'International Legitimacy' as a chapter in his *Systems of States*, ed. Hedley Bull (London: Leicester University Press, 1977). Wight also published a journal article entitled 'International Legitimacy' in *International Relations*, IV(1) (May 1972). Moreover, Wight presented a paper titled 'International Legitimacy' at the Sussex History Seminar on 21 October 1971. The Sussex paper consists to a large extent of passages later published in the chapter in *Systems of States* or the *International Relations* journal article. In this collection of Wight's works, for the most part only the passages in the Sussex paper not previously published are reproduced, and the title has been revised to 'Reflections on International Legitimacy' with a view to minimizing confusion.

[1] [Ed.] Ernest Nys, *Les origines du droit international* (Bruxelles et Paris: Alfred Castaigne Tijorin et Fils, 1894).

[2] [Ed.] See, for example, J. N. Figgis, *Studies of Political Thought from Gerson to Grotius, 1414–1625*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1916).

[3] [Ed.] See Wight's review of Friedrich Meinecke, *Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison d'État and Its Place in Modern History*, in *International Affairs*, 34(1) (January 1958), p. 69; and Wight's review of Richard W. Sterling, *Ethics in a World of Power: The Political Ideas of Friedrich Meinecke*, in *International Affairs*, 35(4) (October 1959), pp. 456–457. Both reviews are included in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, pp. 317–320.

[4] [Ed.] Richard Koebner, *Empire* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1961); and Richard Koebner and Helmut Dan Schmidt, *Imperialism: The Story and Significance of a Political Word, 1840–1960* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1964).

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that labelled Nationalism. Another is perhaps called Imperialism; a third the doctrine of the natural frontiers. I shall try not to wander on to the ground beaten hard by many feet that leads into them.

It is not easy to find instances of the collective judgment of international society. The clearest seem to me to be certain decisions taken on the grounds of the balance of power. Thus William III and Louis XIV agreed, in the partition negotiations of the 1690s, that the Spanish Monarchy must be divided, even if it meant overriding the prevailing principle of legitimacy, and this decision was eventually confirmed by the Utrecht settlement. Similarly, the Paris Peace Conference decided to override another principle of legitimacy by refusing to permit the union of Austria with Germany. These decisions might be taken as instances of international society exercising a quasi-legislative function, in the interests of the balance of power. But I shall leave them on one side, because they have the character of a deliberate modification of an agreed principle of legitimacy, and it is these principles of legitimacy that I want to get clearer.

It seems to me that in looking for the collective judgment of international society, there is an ascending series of kinds of evidence. Least persuasive, because most difficult to weigh, would be the opinion of intellectual circles. A new kind of evidence in the past generation has been debates and resolutions of the UN, which contain a wealth of discussion of this matter. One needs governmental action, followed by general acquiescence, probably taking the form of embodiment in treatises of international law.

Action by a single Great Power might create a presumption. Collective action by several Powers is better evidence. Most persuasive of all, as an expression of the prevailing consensus of international society, is an act of collective intervention by a number of Powers. The handling of the Ottoman Empire by the Concert in the second half of the nineteenth century is the classic example. If, *per impossibile*, the Great Powers, authorised by the United Nations, were actually to intervene in South Africa, we could conclude that international society had finally outlawed the South African regime and deprived it of its legitimacy.

The dynastic principle of legitimacy was extraordinarily tenacious of life. I believe it is true to say that, until the French Revolution, no dynasty was extinguished in Europe by conquest or arbitrary power. Every extinction of dynastic sovereignty took the form, either of merger in the territories of the successful claimant in a disputed succession, or of a lapse to the suzerain under feudal law. The failure of Ferdinand II's attempts to apply a different principle during the Thirty Years War is striking. In 1623, by an unconstitutional exercise of imperial authority, he deposed Frederick of the Palatinate and transferred his electoral office to Bavaria. In 1628 he dispossessed the dukes of Mecklenburg and bestowed their duchies on Wallenstein. But in 1631, the dukes of Mecklenburg were restored by Sweden, and the Treaty of Osnabruck describes the restoration of the rights of the Palatine House as "avant toutes choses discutée" at the Congress of

Osnabruck and Munster.[5] It is true that Frederick's son and heir only recovered half what his father had lost, plus a new eighth, electoral dignity; but that he did so at all was a tribute neither to his merit nor his power, but to principle.

In Italy it was through lapse to the suzerain that the political map was simplified: Cesare Borgia and Julius II reimposing Papal authority in the Romagna over fiefs that had fallen out of control, Milan reverting to the Empire when the Sforzas died out in 1535, Ferrara and Urbino to the Papacy when the Este and della Rovere died out respectively in 1597 and 1631, Mantua to the Empire in 1708 when the Gonzagas ended.

It is possible to give a different account of the original principle of legitimacy: to say that it was not dynastic so much as prescriptive. The earliest books on international law and diplomatic theory have no sections on the society of states, the subjects of international law, or recognition. All this could be taken for granted. The society of states needed neither definition nor explanation: it was what it was, and everybody knew its members. Burke lamented the passing of the international society of the Ancien Régime as the end of prescriptive right.

Can we say, then, that the doctrine of prescription accorded the same legitimacy to republics as to monarchies? There were several respects in which republics were not on quite the same footing as dynasties. Their magistrates did not rule, as dynasts did, by the grace of God. Moreover, they were socially inferior. In all matters of precedence, their representatives ranked after the representatives of Powers of equivalent grade. Sir William Temple has a perceptive passage in his *Observations upon the United Provinces*:

> "The Kingdoms and Principalities were in the world like the Noblemen and Gentlemen in a Country; the Free-States and Cities, like the Merchants and Traders: These at first despised by the others; The others serv'd and rever'd by them; till by the various course of events in the World, some of these came to grow Rich and Powerful by Industry and Parsimony; and some of the others, Poor by War and Luxury: Which made the Traders begin to take upon them, and carry it like Gentlemen; and the Gentlemen begin to take a fancy of falling to Trade".[6]

This is a good description of how the Venetian and Dutch Republics rose to royal honours. But those who had risen had to hold their position by their own strength, and the great majority of republics had not risen, but were content with modest circumstances.

Would the extinction of a republic have aroused the same sense of the violation of legitimacy as the extinction of a dynasty? The evidence does not seem clear.

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[5] Treaty of Osnabruck, article IV. Cf. Treaty of Munster, article 10.
[6] Sir William Temple, *Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands*, ed. by Sir George Norman Clark (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), pp. 147–8.

Gentz could write of the Ancien Régime in 1806: "It is certainly a remarkable occurrence, that in the course of three most eventful centuries, amid so many bloody wars, so various and decisive negotiations, so frequent changes of power, so great and extended revolutions, amid a general anarchy of all social, civil, religious, and political relations, not one independent state was annihilated by violent means".[7] And he illustrates the statement by express mention of republics. The description of "independent states" is not self-evident. Was Siena independent when Charles V ended its separate life in 1555, Donauworth when Bavaria appropriated it in 1607, the republic of Strasbourg when it was annexed by Louis XIV in 1681?

These were the centuries when Reason of State, *ratio status*, was generally appealed to as the principle of sound foreign policy. Dynastic legitimacy provided the parameters within which Reason of State operated. There was plenty of room for it, no question of the status quo becoming frozen. The great business of state-consolidation could go on. Provinces could be conquered and ceded without dynasties being extinguished; in Germany the Reformation had produced a wealth of secularised ecclesiastical territory that could be redistributed; in Italy the practice of exchange of territory became common.

There are two cases where the great business of state-consolidation, which for more than a century we have been accustomed to call by the anachronistic and question-begging name of the growth of the nation-state, seems to me to show signs of engendering an alternative principle of legitimacy to that of dynastic or prescriptive right. One is Sweden, the other France.

When Gustavus Adolphus crossed to Germany he landed at Peenemunde in the territory of Pomerania, and established his bridgehead in that duchy. Duke Bogislaw XIV was ageing without issue, and soon to die. What was to become of Pomerania? The heir, it was generally agreed, was the elector of Brandenburg. It was very much in the interests of Sweden to advance a claim, though she had no dynastic right to found it on. An attentive reader of Grotius, Gustavus Adolphus found his argument in *jus belli*.[8] The claim was developed, that Sweden was entitled to an *assecuratio* (itself a Grotian word for insurance against risk).[9] It was momentarily garnished with a proposal to marry the princess Christina to the electoral prince of Brandenburg (who turned out to be the Great Elector), but when that failed, and Gustavus Adolphus had died, and Bogislaw XIV himself was at last dead (1637), it was the naked claim to *assecuratio* that remained, and occupied so much of the negotiations at Westphalia. It was a simple strategic claim, resembling that which Stalin made for a belt of friendly states on the western borders of the Soviet Union after 1945. But in the end *assecuratio* had to

[7] Friedrich von Gentz, *Fragments upon the Balance of Power in Europe* (London: M. Peltier, 1806), p. 68.

[8] Grotius, *De Jure Belli ac Pacis*, iii.vi.   [9] Grotius, ibid., ii.xii.3.5, ii.xii.23.

compromise with the reversionary rights of Brandenburg: Pomerania was partitioned, and by the irony of history the unfortunate elector was browbeaten into surrendering his claim to half his inheritance by an Emperor who was anxious to make peace with Sweden quickly.[10]

The extension of the frontiers of France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and especially the *réunions* of Louis XIV, do not introduce new principles of legitimacy. What was striking here was simply the lack of scruple, and the success with which Louis XIV exploited the universally accepted principles of feudal succession, and the deliberate ambiguities of the Westphalian treaty.[11] The greatest gain of all, the duchy of Lorraine, was the greatest of territorial exchanges, showing that a dispossessed dynasty could be richly compensated: Francis Stephen, last of the House of Lorraine, got the goldenest handshake in history: Tuscany, the hand of Maria Theresa, and in due course the imperial crown. But there was one territorial acquisition which raised deeper issues: the principality of Orange.

Orange was a sovereign principality in the middle of southern France, a relic of the old imperial kingdom of Burgundy and the old county of Provence, ruled by a non-resident sovereign, who now happened to be the King of France's principal international opponent. It was, to our eyes, manifestly an obsolete survival of feudal Europe, due to be tidied away by the natural processes of history. So far as my reading has gone, the men of the seventeenth century were very slow to reach such a standpoint of geopolitical commonsense. None of the early books on the interests of princes, that early literature of the science of international relations, neither Rohan in 1638, when anyway the question of Orange had not yet become acute, nor the pseudo-Rohan of 1666, nor Courtilz de Sandras, assert that it is a prime interest of the king of France to extinguish Orange. It is not until Rousset's *Intérêts présens des puissances de l'Europe* in 1733 that we find this new language. He tabulates the French claims to Piedmont, Nice, Orange and Avignon, says the first two are probably unobtainable, remarks with satisfaction that Orange has been acquired by the Treaty of Utrecht, and of the adjacent Comtat d'Avignon, says that the French Crown is likely "à prendre de certaines mesures pour, à la première occasion, reparer la brèche faite au Royaume depuis que ce Territoire se trouve entre les mains d'un autre".[12]

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[10] Michael Roberts, *Gustavus Adolphus: A History of Sweden 1611–1632* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1958), vol. ii, pp. 644–9. See also Michael Roberts, "The Political Objectives of Gustavus Adolphus in Germany, 1630–1632," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Fifth Series, Vol. 7 (1957), pp. 19–46.

[11] Cf. C.-G. Picavet, *La diplomatie française au temps de Louis XIV 1661–1715* (Paris: Librarie Félix Alcan, 1930), pp. 172–3.

[12] Jean Rousset, *Intérêts présens des puissances de l'Europe* (The Hague: Moetjens, 1733), vol. I, p. 388. The French crown is likely 'to take certain measures in order to repair, at the first opportunity, the breach done to the kingdom since this territory has been in the hands of another state.'

How did the French government view the problem of Orange? I cannot at the moment provide an adequate answer. Orange had been the natural ally of the House of Burgundy against the French crown. In the wars with Charles V, Francis I twice confiscated Orange and restored its independence at the peace, as Louis XIV did afterwards. Louis had the added inducement to extinguish the principality, that under its new Nassau dynasty it had become a refuge for Protestants. He first occupied the principality in 1660, ironically with the pretext of protecting William III's interest during his minority. From then on Louis occupied and administered the principality most of the time, nominally restoring it to William's sovereignty at Nymwegen and Ryswyck, and he enforced the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes there. Pontbriant, the historian of Orange, says that there are a number of memoranda in Louis' own hand, in which he tried to find arguments to justify the annexation of the principality to France, disputing the original cession of sovereignty to Louis de Chalon by the Count of Provence in the fifteenth century, arguing that this had never been recognised unconditionally by the French Crown. I look forward to finding these memoranda.

When William died childless at the beginning of the Spanish Succession War, Louis seized the opportunity to assume the dubious character of feudal suzerain, and adjudged the principality to his cousin the prince de Conti, a useful family stooge whom he had just failed to settle on the throne of Poland. Conti had some claim by descent to the principality. But a year later Louis frankly abandoned the dynastic principle and adopted one of state interest. "L'avantage de la religion", he wrote, "et le bien de mon service m'ayant fait juger qu'il estoit nécessaire d'acquérir la principauté d'Orange", he exchanged it with Conti against other domains. Thus Orange passed into the French kingdom.[13] Its possession remained an international issue only in so far as the best Nassau claimant was the king of Prussia. By the Franco-Prussian Treaty of Utrecht he surrendered his claim in favour of France. The title of prince of Orange passed to the Nassau-Dietz line.

In those words "le bien de mon service" I think one can see the germ of a new principle of legitimacy, corresponding to Gustavus Adolphus's *assecuratio*: the interest of state-consolidation. What made it possible in each case for dynastic principle to be set on one side was the reigning prince—in Orange and in Pomerania—dying childless. Suppose William had had a son, to succeed him on the throne of Great Britain, in the Stadtholdership, and as prince of Orange. I guess that Anglo-French diplomacy in the eighteenth century would have largely revolved round an exchange project, as persistent as the attempt of the Habsburgs to get rid of the Netherlands, and that at some appropriate moment Orange would

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[13] Letter by Louis XIV to the comte de Grignan, 29 March 1703, in Antoine comte de Pontbriant, *Histoire de la Principauté d'Orange* (Seguin, 1891), p. 265. 'The advantage of religion and the good of my realm having led me to judge that it was necessary to acquire the principality of Orange', Louis took action.

have been ceded to the French crown in return, shall we say, for Martinique or Guadeloupe.

The Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars inadvertently filled in the pale outline of a people entitled to a separate and equal station in international society with the colouring of linguistic nationalism. When does this appear as a new principle of legitimacy, contradicting the old principle refurbished by Talleyrand? Not yet when Canning recognised the independence of the Spanish American colonies. He does not argue that they are in any sense "nations", not even that they have a right to self-government. He takes a stand simply on the grounds of fact and commercial interest.

> "Every impartial judgment will be convinced of the utter hopelessness of the success of any attempt to bring those Provinces again under subjection to the Mother Country; nor can it be deemed that a much longer continuance of so large a portion of the Globe without any recognised existence, or any definite connexion with the Governments of Europe whose subjects are in daily intercourse with them, must be productive of the greatest embarrassments to such Governments, and greatly injurious to the Interests of their Subjects, as well as to the General Commercial Interest of the World."[14]

In his first memorandum to the Cabinet he used the argument that the separation of the Spanish Colonies from Spain would complete the partition of the Spanish Empire in the interests of the balance of power which had been left incomplete at the Utrecht Settlement, and in his third memorandum he showed that the threat to the balance that he now had in view was from the United States.[15]

Perhaps the earliest recognition of the new principle of legitimacy, a recognition partly inadvertent, may be found in the Convention of 7 May 1832, whereby "The Courts of Great Britain, France, and Russia, *duly authorised for this purpose by the Greek nation*, offer the hereditary Sovereignty of Greece to the Prince Frederick Otho of Bavaria".[16]

Here an international document, which could be said to emanate from the Concert of Europe itself, adopted the language that the Greeks themselves had employed in the Constitution of Epidaurus ten years before.[17] Who drafted it?

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[14] Despatch to the Spanish Government, 31 December 1824, in H. W. V. Temperley, *The Foreign Policy of Canning, 1822–1827: England, the Neo-Holy Alliance, and the New World* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1925), p. 149.

[15] Temperley, pp. 146, 553. Canning's interpretation of the proposals of 1711 seems exaggerated: see Trevelyan, *England under Queen Anne*, vol. 3, *The Peace and the Protestant Succession* (London: Longmans, 1934), pp. 182–4.

[16] [Ed.] Convention of 7 May 1832, art. I (*British and Foreign State Papers*, 1831–1832, p. 35). This sentence also appears in Wight's 1972 article in *International Relations* and in his chapter in *Systems of States*.

[17] Christopher Montague Woodhouse, *The Greek War of Independence: Its Historical Setting* (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1952), pp. 82–3.

Conceivably Palmerston? Matuszewic? ("Take the pen, M. Matuszewic", as Talleyrand said, "you who know all the neutral words of the language".)[18] It would be pleasant to know, but scarcely important, since the convention was issued by the Conference as a whole. But I wish there was a study of the London Conference which brought both Belgium and Greece into existence: a study of it not as an episode in the life of Palmerston or Talleyrand, but in its own right as one of the most successful pieces of international cooperation in history.

It followed that there was the strongest presumption against minorities being able to establish their legitimacy to attain international recognition. To put it differently, there was the strongest presumption in international society in favour of any state that was maintaining its territorial integrity against centrifugal forces. In this there was nothing new: it had always been the case in theory, though enlivened in practice by the attempts of malevolent neighbours to help the centrifugal forces and gain some advantage, as Great Britain and France, for example, had hopefully granted belligerent rights to the Confederate States in 1861. What was new after 1945, was the contrast between the consecration of the territorial integrity of the new states and the language of self-determination that still prevailed—also, one might add, the remarkable absence, or perhaps impotence, of malevolent neighbours who might have wanted to gain advantage from civil wars.

Thus, because Lumumba had applied for the admission of the Congo to membership of the UN (though actually before membership had been granted), the UN insisted throughout the crisis of 1960 upon maintaining the unity of the Congo, and Tshombe's declaration of independence for Katanga had no international effect. In the Biafran War, only four states granted de facto recognition to Biafra. When India forcibly incorporated Hyderabad in 1948, when China suppressed the autonomy of Tibet in 1950, these actions, because their international status was dubious, were regarded as raising no questions of legitimacy. Nor did India's refusal to grant autonomy to the Nagas, though the Nagas did at one moment obtain a brief hearing at the UN through Michael Scott, that indefatigable advocate of the oppressed.

The conclusions I arrived at, after trying to make a conspectus of the kind of evidence I have discussed, are I think different from the preconceptions I began with.

It is probable that the influence of notions of legitimacy has declined rather than grown, with the transition from the dynastic to the popular age. In the dynastic age the play of power politics, and the great business of state-consolidation, were more affected or restrained by prevailing considerations of

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[18] [Ed.] Sir Charles Kingsley Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston, 1830–1841: Britain, the Liberal Movement, and the Eastern Question* (New York: Humanities Press, 1969), vol. 1, p. 110. See also Nicholas Mansergh, *The Commonwealth Experience*, vol. II, *From British to Multiracial Commonwealth* (London: Macmillan, 1982), p. 247.

right than has been the case since. To borrow what Stubbs said about the difference between medieval and modern history, "when a man coveted his neighbour's vineyard, he went as it were to law for it, and did not simply take it by force".[19] In the revolutionary age that has followed, the notion of law itself has lost much of its moral ascendancy.

Rules of legitimacy have been matter for argument, controversy, conflict, even war. They are intrinsically heady and exciting, because they spring from the deepest moral convictions. "The great task", said Acton, "is to discover, not what governments prescribe, but what they ought to prescribe; for no prescription is valid against the conscience of mankind."[20] It has been characteristic of Western men in recent centuries to identify their own beliefs with the conscience of mankind, and to believe that the conscience of mankind shapes history. Thus the influence of principles of legitimacy upon international politics has generally been overestimated.[21]

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[19] William Stubbs, "On the Characteristic Differences between Medieval and Modern History", *Seventeen Lectures on the Study of Medieval and Modern History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1887), p. 249.
[20] Acton, "Freedom in Antiquity", in *The History of Freedom and other Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1907), p. 24. This quotation was a favourite of Harold Laski's.
[21] [Ed.] This conclusion parallels that of Wight's journal article, 'International Legitimacy'.

17

Dynastic Legitimacy

"And therefore the second great blessing that God hath with my person sent unto you is peace within, and that in a double form.* First, by my descent lineally out of the loins of Henry the Seventh is reunited and confirmed in me the union of the two princely roses of the two Houses of Lancaster and York, whereof that King of happy memory was the first uniter as he was also the first ground-layer of the other peace. The lamentable and miserable events by the civil and bloody dissension betwixt these two Houses was so great and so late as it need not be renewed unto your memories; which, as it was first settled and united in him, so is it now reunited and confirmed in me, being justly and lineally descended not only of that happy conjunction but of both the branches thereof many times before. But the union of these two princely Houses is nothing comparable to the union of two ancient and famous kingdoms, which is the other inward peace annexed to my person."[1]

<div align="right">James I, speech at opening of his first
English Parliament, 19 March 1604</div>

"The order of succession is not fixed for the sake of the reigning family; but because it is the interest of the state that it should have a reigning family."[2]

<div align="right">Montesquieu, De l'Esprit des Lois, 1748</div>

The armed doctrines we have discussed in the last chapter divide the world into good and bad, and proclaim war between them. They try to impose a standard of *orthodoxy*. International society has also, however, principles of *legitimacy*, which embody its collective views about rightful membership of the Society of Nations, how sovereignty may be transferred, and how State succession is to be regulated,

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* [Ed.] The first sentence of this essay (after the epigraphs from James I and Montesquieu) refers to the 'armed doctrines we have discussed in the last chapter'. Wight may have intended to make this essay and the essay entitled 'Popular Legitimacy' serve as chapters following a new chapter entitled 'International Revolutions' in *Power Politics*, a long anticipated updated and expanded version of his 1946 pamphlet with the same title. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad did not, however, include these two essays in the revised version of *Power Politics* (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978) that they prepared after Wight's death in 1972.

[1] J. R. Tanner, *Constitutional Documents of the Reign of James I* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1930), p. 25.

[2] "Ce n'est pas pour la famille régnante que l'ordre de succession est établi, mais parce qu'il est de l'intérêt de l'État qu'il y ait une famille régnante." Montesquieu, *De l'Esprit des Lois, Oeuvres complètes,* Roger Caillois, ed. (Paris: Gallimard, 1951), book xxvi; chap. 16, p. 769.

when large States subdivide into smaller or several States combine into one. The principles of legitimacy illustrate the interdependence of international and civil or domestic politics: they prevail within a majority of the states that form international society, as well as in their mutual relations. Until the American and French Revolutions in the later eighteenth century, the principles of legitimacy were *dynastic*, being concerned with the status and claims of rulers. Since then they have increasingly become *popular*, in the sense of being concerned with the claims and consent of the governed. The sovereignty of the individual sovereign prince has passed into the sovereignty of the nation he ruled.

The dynastic principle derived from the social organisation of the States among whom the States system arose, though theories were spun to strengthen and embellish the principle, and sometimes attained almost the intensity of "doctrines" in the sense in which we have been using the word. The popular principle, by contrast, was the product or deposit of an ideology, a doctrine *about* social organisation. In the dynastic age, social arrangements preceded and predominated over political theories. In the popular age the relationship was partially reversed, and political theories moulded social arrangements. Or to use the language of some of the ideologists, custom gave place to reason.

Principles of legitimacy differ from doctrinal orthodoxies in the following ways. They are comprehensive rather than exclusive, admit, rather than refuse exceptions, assume reciprocity and mutual recognition rather than antagonism and mutual intolerance, seek to control or restrain international change rather than to compel it, and provide for peaceful relations rather than cold war. Let us remark also that principles of legitimacy are different from international law. International law is a system of rules and principles that has been distilled chiefly from the practice of States, with a view to regulating their relations and moderating their conflicts. Originating in the "dynastic" age, it incorporated at first the assumptions of dynasticism;[3] but the tendency of international lawyers was to be general and inclusive, finding rules that would be true for or acceptable to independent states of whatever complexion, Protestant as well as Catholic, republics as well as Kingdoms.

The branch of international law that is concerned with "legitimacy" in the sense in which the word is used in this chapter, is the law concerning the recognition of States. This seeks to lay down principles to guide existing states in the matter of recognising a new community as fulfilling the conditions of statehood and qualifying for membership of the Society of Nations. And the tendency of international law has been to make recognition of new states depend upon ascertainable fact, whether the community has a government exerting effective authority throughout the whole of its territory, and be granted on considerations of expediency, not of principle.

As early as 1601 the French ambassador in Rome, Cardinal d'Ossat, advised King Henry IV that "When a prince finds a considerable Power well established,

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[3] Grotius has a chapter on the laws of hereditary succession (book II, chapter VII).

he need not examine whether the sovereign who sends him an ambassador is legitimate or not;…he need only concern himself with the power and the possession." And he gave the familiar example of the Swiss.[4]

In this, international law has followed and on the whole approved the course of events. The states-system has expanded, in the moral as well as in the geographical dimension, to accommodate many Powers of kinds unimaginable (and perhaps happily unimaginable) to the doctrinaires, the theorists of legitimacy, or the international lawyers of the past. An armed doctrine that could successfully dictate the principles of legitimacy and the rules of international law might be able to mould the historical process to some extent, but this has not occurred yet in international history. The aim of the present chapter and the next is to show how the principles of legitimacy, dynastic and popular, have themselves been moulded and modified by the insistent pressures of state interest. We shall see that dynasticism and democracy are perhaps best understood as successive idioms or modes in which international politics have been conducted.

I

Who had a right to be recognised as a member of international society? In the fifteenth century, the conventional answer was any prince in communion with the Holy See. The criterion was twofold: to be neither heretic nor schismatic, and to exhibit the dynastic principle. There was no necessary link between them, though natural conservatism tended as time went on to make each cling to the other.

The principle of allegiance to the Holy See was the simple consequence of the states system being Latin Christendom, *res publica christiana*, under another aspect. Plenty of monarchs had been excommunicated during the Middle Ages, but no heretic had established himself on a throne until George Podiebrad, the Hussite king of Bohemia (1459–1471), who successfully resisted a crusade launched against him by the Pope. It was the German princes, who patronized Luther and renounced obedience to the Pope, who broke the Catholic unity of the states-system.

Dynasticism was a different matter. The word is here used to mean the principle of hereditary monarchy. It says nothing about absolutism or limitations on

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[4] Cardinal Arnaud d'Ossat, letter to Villeroy, 23 July 1601, *Lettres de Cardinal d'Ossat au Roi Henri le Grand* (Paris: Bouillerot, dernière édition, 1624), pp. 708–9. See also Noël-Henri, "Reconnaissance de Gouvernements Étrangers," *Revue Générale de Droit International Public* (1928), p. 24. For aspects of the question in international law, see Vattel, book IV, chapter V, par. 68; Oppenheim, vol. I, par. 71–5; Thomas Baty, *The Canons of International Law* (London: John Murray, 1930), chapter IV, par. 3; Percy E. Corbett, *Law and Society in the Relations of States* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1951), pp. 60–7; and *Law in Diplomacy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1959), pp. 67–82; Charles de Visscher, *Theory and Reality in Public International Law* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957), book III, chapter III, section 1.

the power of the monarch. Its opposites are elective monarchy and republicanism, of which indeed elective monarchy is a variant.

Dynasticism was rooted in the social structure of Europe. It can be traced back to the Hellenistic monarchies and to the political marriages of the aristocracy of the Roman Republic, of which Pompey's to Julius Caesar's daughter, to cement their alliance in the First Triumvirate, and Mark Antony's to Octavian's sister, to cement their alliance in the Second Triumvirate, are the most famous examples. In the Dark Ages dynasticism, the rule of the hereditary magnate, became the central political institution of Western Christendom, first in the territorial principalities into which the state had disintegrated through economic decline and barbarian invasion, and afterwards in the great Kingdoms that slowly consolidated from the twelfth century onwards, and became in due course the Powers of modern Europe.

The Western peoples, said the German historian Spengler, "are historical peoples, communities that feel themselves bound together not by place or consensus, but by history; and the eminent symbol and vessel of the common Destiny is the ruling 'house.'" All the nations of the West, he continues, "are of dynastic origins," created by their ruling families, as the Capetians created France and the Hohenzollerns Prussia. Western peoples are "conscious of the direction of their history," of "the sequence of the generations," and the nature of their national ideal "is *genealogical* through and through—Darwinism, even, with its theories of descent and inheritance is a sort of caricature of Gothic heraldry."

> It was because the blood of the ruling family incorporated the destiny, the being, of the whole nation, that the state-system of the Baroque [i.e., the period from 1500 to 1800] was of genealogical structure and that most of the grand crises assumed the form of wars of dynastic succession.[5]

At the beginning of modern history, then, when the states-system first becomes distinct, its members are with few exceptions hereditary princes. Their states were patrimonial: that is to say, they were regarded by their rulers as inherited property. The Papal States, where the ruler was elective, illustrated the same theory: they were known as the Patrimony of St. Peter. "In loving me," says Henry V, when wooing the French princess to consolidate what he believed was his rightful claim by descent to the French throne, "you should love the friend of France; for I love France so well, that I will not part with a village of it; I will have it all mine; and, Kate, when France is mine and I am yours, then yours is France and you are mine."[6] The patrimonial conception of the state did not fully disappear so long as

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[5] Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, trans. by Charles Francis Atkinson (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1926), vol. II, pp. 179–81; italics in the original.
[6] *Henry V*, Act 5, Scene 2.

there remained principalities which it fitted. Until the rise of national feeling in the nineteenth century there survived petty sovereignties, smaller than an English county, which resembled large private estates.[7]

In this community of princes there were, however, exceptions. The oldest and most glorious was the Most Serene Republic of Saint Mark. Venice began as a tributary of the Byzantine Empire, and became its leading Christian successor-state. The Crusades, in which she took an active part, made her a member of the Western community. Her aristocratic institutions withstood a strong tendency towards hereditary monarchy, and the Doge ranked in the international community as an elective duke. Another fragment of the Byzantine world was the South Star republic of Ragusa, a miniature Venice at the further end of the Adriatic, the only medieval Balkan state to escape conquest by the Turks, maintaining a precarious independence by paying tribute to the Sublime Porte, fervently Catholic and intermittently protected by the Pope and Spain, whose name and commerce has given the English language its loveliest word for a merchant-vessel:

> There, where your *argosies* with portly sail,
> Like signors and rich burghers on the flood—
> Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea
> Do overpeer the petty traffickers
> That curtsy to them, do them reverence
> As they fly by them with their woven wings.[8]

Venice and Ragusa were on the eastern frontiers of the states-system. Other republics and free cities grew up within the capacious framework of the Holy Roman Empire, in Italy and Germany, and slowly asserted their independence. The Lombard cities, led by Milan, revolted against the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa in the twelfth century, and the peace of Venice which he had to conclude with them in 1177 has been called "the first pact that Europe had seen made between a monarch and his subjects."[9] "At a distance of six hundred years, and in a more restricted setting, the resistance of the Lombard bourgeoisies to Frederick Barbarossa resembles the resistance of the French Revolution in 1790 [*sic*] to the armies of Prussia and Austria."[10] But the more truly they became sovereign Powers, the more likely it was that, either sooner (like Milan) or later (like Florence), they established or succumbed to dynasties. The only Italian republics of any consequence to survive down to the French Revolution were Genoa and little Lucca, chiefly because it suited the policy of Spain as suzerain of Italy to

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[7] The principalities of Liechtenstein and Monaco are survivors of this sort.
[8] *The Merchant of Venice*, Act I, Scene 1; italics added.
[9] Jean Charles Léonard de Sismondi, *A History of the Italian Republics* (New York: Anchor Books, 1966), chapter II, p. 51.
[10] Henri Pirenne, *A History of Europe*, trans. Bernard Miall (Allen and Unwin, 1939), p. 280.

maintain Genoa with her strategic and naval importance as a satellite, and to preserve Lucca against being swallowed up by Tuscany.[11]

But the Swiss confederates in the Alpine valleys became an exception to dynastic trends as important as Venice. They were a group of peasant communes later joined by free cities. The Pact of Brunnen, in 1315 between Schwyz, Uri and Unterwalden, provided that they should pay their customary dues to the lord upon whom they depended, "with the exception of lords who shall attack one of our valleys or shall seek to impose something unjust upon them."[12] This placed the principle of martial security above that of feudal allegiance, and from it grew the confederation that in two centuries of struggle threw off the suzerainty of the duke of Austria. By the late fifteenth century the Swiss were being treated as an international Power, above all by Louis XI of France in his conflict with Burgundy. At the Peace of Basle in 1499 the Emperor Maximilian reluctantly recognised their freedom from specific imperial authority.

The third great exception, accomplished by a tremendous struggle in the full light of modern history, was the United Provinces of the Low Countries. In 1581 they abjured their allegiance to Philip II, as having forfeited all sovereign rights in his capacity as Duke of Burgundy by breaking his oath to them and conspiring to subvert their ancient customs—the last great European act of feudal *diffidatio*, or unswearing of fealty, and at the same time the first declaration of national independence. Nevertheless, the Act of Abjuration was not republican in principle. It said that the United Provinces would now legally proceed to the choice of another prince for their defence, and the search was not abandoned for another ten years. At last the Swiss after 150 years, the Dutch after 70 years, had their independence fully recognised at the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. In the fully-fledged diplomatic community of the Ancien Régime which was destroyed by the French Revolution these three were sometimes known as the Great Republics, because they ranked with kings: the Most Serene Republic of Saint Mark, the Laudable Cantons of the Helvetic Body, and Their High Mightinesses the States-General of the United Provinces of the Low Countries.

II

There are several aspects of the dynastic international system that deserve to be underlined.

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[11] The tiny republic of San Marino, alone of all the states of Italy, was not occupied or interfered with by Napoleon; its independence was confirmed by the Congress of Vienna, and still continues. The Free Cities of Hamburg, Bremen and Lübeck carried their separate existence into the German Empire of 1871.

[12] [Ed.] The text of the Pact of Brunnen, 9 December 1315, may be found in Anton Castell, *Die Bundesbriefe zu Schwyz : Volkstümliche Darstellung wichtiger Urkunden Eidgenössischer Frühzeit* (Einsiedeln: Verlagsanstalt Benziger, 1969), pp. 44–49.

First, the hereditary principle coexisted with and indeed presupposed the elective principle. As Burke said, "all the beginners of dynasties were chosen by those who called them to govern."[13] The two supreme authorities of Christendom, the Pope and the Emperor, were elective, and this was regarded not as an anomaly but as right. It would not be proper for the Empire to follow the same rules of succession as a farm. Papal elections were great international issues at least until the end of the seventeenth century, because Louis XIV in his designs against Spain tried to make the Papacy subservient; elections to the Empire were great international issues at least until the war of the Austrian Succession, when the Habsburgs for the last time temporarily lost the imperial crown. Moreover, the kingdom of Poland, after two centuries under the great dynasty of the Jagiellons, had in 1572 reverted into election, a constitutional relapse that led directly to Poland's becoming a prize to tempt the avarice of half Europe.

The theory of dynasticism was twofold. On the one hand, the ruler was chosen for his job by God through the mechanism of hereditary succession. On the other hand he *represented* his subjects. Indeed his representative function was fuller than can be that of an elected representative, whose position is temporary and revocable. The representative character of the monarch was most strikingly seen in the decision of the Religious Peace of Augsburg in 1588, that princes should determine their subjects' consciences: *cujus regio ejus religio*. International relations were personal relations; treaties were personal contracts between sovereigns. National honour had its origin in the sovereign's personal honour. It was still possible for a sovereign of high principle to think of settling an international dispute without war by challenging his adversary to single combat. Charles V twice challenged the faithless Francis I: "It would be better for us two to fight out this quarrel hand to hand than to shed so much Christian blood." Charles XII of Sweden wanted to challenge Peter the Great on the same grounds. The impulse was noble, but the arguments used against it were significant. One of Charles V's advisors told him that the duel was only a means of discovering God's justice when there was uncertainty about legal rights, and here there was no uncertainty: therefore war was justified. Charles XII was dissuaded by the argument that there could be no guarantee that if the Tsar won the duel he would not then wage the war as well.[14]

Dynasticism was an international system. The dynasties were collectively the European ruling class, and regularly inter-married to maintain their social primacy. Moreover, their marriages were political, not private matters. "It has always been considered," said Bodin in 1576, "that the best guarantee of a treaty is

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[13] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, in Burke, *Works*, ed. Henry Rogers (London: Samuel Holdsworth, 1842), vol. I, p. 387. Cf. Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. L. A. Manyon (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), pp. 383ff.

[14] Karl Brandi, *The Emperor Charles V* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1963), pp. 242, 265; Ragnhild Marie Hatton, *Charles XII of Sweden* (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1968), p. 211.

ratification by a marriage alliance"[15]—strengthening the sincere friendship already established (to use the eighteenth century language) by the more sacred ties of blood. Thus before the Reformation the royalty of Europe formed one almost endogamous family group. The Reformation split them into two such groups, though by no means completely; the French Revolution, which attacked them both, brought them together again. In the nineteenth century, when dynasticism had lost almost all its political importance, the dynastic network spread busily across the old difference between Catholic and Protestant, and the older cleavage between Western and Orthodox cultures. Queen Victoria's son married the daughter of the Tsar, whom Queen Victoria described with disgust as "half Oriental;" her grand-daughter turned Catholic to marry the King of Spain. A Bavarian Wittelsbach and a Danish Glücksburg in turn mounted the throne of Greece, a Catholic Hohenzollern that of Rumania, a Protestant Saxe-Coburg that of Bulgaria, each of them changing his religion to accommodate his new subjects.

III

The period when dynasticism seemed to provide an international system was brief, the twilight when medieval Christendom was fading into the modern states-system. At times after this the dynastic international sometimes showed signs of pursuing a common interest, and even developing a common ideology. It also seemed at times that individual dynasties were pursuing dynastic interests at the expense of the interests of their subjects, or of what were coming to be called the "national" interests of their states. But these tendencies were short-lived, and defeated themselves. By the time the modern states-system reached its coming of age, with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, dynasticism had become a mode or idiom of power politics.[16]

Dynasticism reached its zenith as an international system in the first half of the sixteenth century, in the reign of the Emperor Charles V, when the Habsburg marriage network covered three-quarters of Europe. At one time or another during this reign, Charles V and his brother, with their sisters and children sat as ruler or consort on every royal throne of Europe except those of Sweden, Poland,

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[15]   Jean Bodin, *Six Books of the Commonwealth,* abridged and translated by M. J. Tooley (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1967), book 5, chapter 6, p. 174.

[16]   [Ed.] In his paper, 'The Origins of Our States-System: Chronological Limits', Wight wrote that 'a secularization of international society and international law…came to completion about the time of the Peace of Westphalia. Grotius provides a purely rational foundation for natural law, and the Peace of Westphalia provides a purely utilitarian foundation for the states-system. At Westphalia the states-system does not come into existence: it comes of age.' Martin Wight, *Systems of States*, ed. Hedley Bull (London: Leicester University Press, in association with the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1977), p. 152.

Scotland and Navarre.[17] This dynastic system seemed to attain a momentary stability, a deceptive shimmer of conservative marriage-alliances at the service of a universal policy of pacification. But the ceaseless toil of Charles's life was grappling with the disruptive forces that were breaking up Europe. We must remember that his own splendid inheritance was not the fruit of some impersonal dynastic system. The marriages of Austria with Burgundy, and then of Burgundy with Castile, had been arranged by his grandfathers, Maximilian and Ferdinand, in order to encircle and counteract the dangerous power of France. And similar political calculations then slowly unraveled the dynastic network.

Before Charles V abdicated, the divergent interests of the Empire and Germany (represented by his brother Ferdinand) and of Spain (represented by his son Philip) had already set up strains within the Habsburg family itself, and the two branches followed independent policies during the second half of the sixteenth century. When the United Netherlands abjured King Philip as their overlord in 1581, they struck a decisive blow at dynasticism. Queen Elizabeth's long and skilful refusal to marry was a triumph of national independence over foreign dynastic entanglement: the virginity of Elizabeth was the freedom of England. Philip of Spain's dynastic claims, first to the throne of England through his descent from the Lancastrians, and then to the throne of France on behalf of his daughter, were strained and unconvincing adjuncts of an unsuccessful policy of aggrandizement. Dynasticism was becoming an instrument of *raison d'état*.

Perhaps the last great example of international politics pursued in dynastic terms is Louis XIV's doctrine of devolution, by which he claimed the Spanish Netherlands in the name of his Spanish wife by appealing to dubious principles of family inheritance. Louis XIV appears in his person and style as the archetypal dynast of European history, and his policy partly aimed at recreating a European dynastic network like his ancestor Charles V's, but with the supreme aim of binding Spain to France. But all this was the vehicle of French national interest. Louis's plans to partition the Spanish monarchy on the extinction of its Habsburg dynasty showed the ascendancy of political calculation over dynastic right, and his hand was forced unexpectedly when the dying King of Spain combined national pride with royal initiative by bequeathing the divided Spanish Empire to Louis XIV's grandson.

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[17] The Habsburg dynastic network woven by Charles V deserves description. Let us limit it to kingdoms and duchies, and omit the Habsburg family intermarriages. Charles V inherited Burgundy, the five Austrian duchies (Upper and Lower Austria, Styria, Corinthia, Barriola), Castile, Aragon, and Naples. He ceded the Austrian duchies to his brother Ferdinand, who married the sister of the King of Bohemia and Hungary, and was afterwards elected to these kingdoms. Charles V's aunt Katherine was queen of England. He himself chose a Portuguese consort. He married his sister Isabella to Denmark and Norway, his sister Eleanor first to Portugal and secondly to Francis I of France, his sister Katherine to Portugal; his daughter Margaret first to Florence and secondly to Pope Paul III's grandson who acquired Parma, his daughter Joanna to Portugal; his Danish niece Christina first to Milan and secondly to Lorraine; his Portuguese sister-in-law to Savoy. His other nieces, Ferdinand's daughters, were married as follows: Anne to Bavaria, Mary to Cleves, Eleanor to Mantua, Joanna to Tuscany. He invested his son Philip with the conquered duchy of Milan and married him first to Portugal and secondly to Mary of England.

And it was in the reign of Louis XIV that the dynastic principle in international relations was formally subordinated to what can be called national self-determination. William III of Orange owed his authority and command within the United Provinces to the revival of the dynastic principle which was at war there with aristocratic republicanism; but through him it became the vehicle of national independence, first, for the Dutch Republic itself, and then for the German states whose leader he became. At the Glorious Revolution, when William unseated the legitimate king of England and accepted the vacant throne from Parliament, in order to bring England into his grand alliance against France, the English succession became an international issue. Louis XIV believed in the principle of indefeasible hereditary right: he had found it convenient to keep England a satellite state through the political weakness and financial necessities of his cousin King Charles II; he now aimed to restore his cousin King James II. The War of the League of Augsburg (1688-1697) was in one aspect a war of the English Succession, and the recognition of William III as rightful King of England was of central importance in the negotiations that brought the war to an end.

Louis at length agreed, in the Treaty of Ryswyck, to a preamble that referred to William as King by the grace of God (which would acknowledge divine sanction for the parliamentary title), and the treaty implicitly accepted the provision made for the Protestant succession in England by the Bill of Rights of 1689. When Louis foolishly violated his word by proclaiming the Old Pretender as King of England on James II's death in 1701, he consolidated English opinion for an inevitable war as Germany did when she violated Belgian neutrality in 1914. The Peace of Utrecht in 1713 once again gave international recognition to the Protestant succession in England as regulated now more fully by the Act of Settlement of 1701. It thus fulfilled William III's lifework, which had been devoted to establishing the balance of power and the right of nations to govern themselves. The English had imposed upon Europe the principle of national sovereignty, against Louis XIV's doctrine of monarchical legitimacy.

International relations pointed the way for civil politics. "The French philosophers went to school in England, and spread the doctrines over Europe which already in 1713 had been admitted to international law. The Treaty of Utrecht was the point of departure for the revolution in political ideas and public law, which culminated in the end of the eighteenth century in the downfall of the French monarchy."[18] This is an answer (not the only answer) to the insistent question by little Peterkin in Southey's poem, about why the battle of Blenheim was fought.[19]

[18] Émile Bourgeois, *Manuel Historique de Politique Étrangère* (Paris: Librarie Classique Eugène Belin, 1919), vol. I, pp. 239–40, 249. Cf. Montesquieu, *De l'Esprit des Lois*, XXVI, 16; Vattel, book I, chapter 5, par. 61.
[19] There continue to be old Kaspars who cannot tell what good comes at last of famous victories. "The War of the Spanish Succession is one of the unnecessary wars of Europe, one that grows more tedious and meaningless as history recedes." V.S. Pritchett, *New Statesman*, 8 July 1944, p. 27. [Ed. See

It was part of French Revolutionary propaganda, and echoed down the nineteenth century, that dynasties subordinated their countries' interests to those of family aggrandisement, and that dynasties were more warlike than states where the popular will prevailed. In a longer perspective, these judgments are open to doubt. There have been hereditary monarchs of course who have followed foolish and selfish aims in foreign policy, no less than there have been popular dictators. Charles VIII of France or Henry VIII of England wasted their peoples' resources in futile adventures as flagrantly as Mussolini or Sukarno. But more often dynastic interests have been the vehicle of national interest, the appropriate mode of self-determination. A conspicuous example of a ruler pursuing dynastic ends without consideration of the country she ruled is Elizabeth Farnese, the queen of Philip V of Spain. She was an Italian princess from Parma, towards which state her strongest patriotism lay. Dominating her Spanish husband, she pursued energetic policies for most of the period between the end of the Spanish Succession War in 1713 and the end of the Austrian Succession War in 1748, with the aim of acquiring Italian principalities (and especially Parma itself) for her two sons. Yet her policies had the support of Spanish public opinion, since they gave expression to national grievances about the Utrecht settlement, and in Italy they advanced the national interest, since they overthrew Austrian hegemony of the peninsula and replaced it by the more acceptable Spanish Bourbons.[20]

IV

In the Middle Ages, the claims and rights of royalty provided a political philosophy to compete with that of the Church under the Papacy. In the short run the Church seemed to win this contest, though in the long run it lost. The limits to the divinity that hedges a king[21] were first dramatically shown when Conradin, the last of the Hohenstaufen dynasty, King of Sicily by right of birth and claimant to the Empire, was judicially murdered in 1268 by Charles of Anjou, the Papal vassal and champion, at the urging of the Pope himself. To try, condemn and send to the scaffold a king captured in battle was without any precedent, and shocked

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Wight's comment about Southey's poem "After Blenheim" in his review of Hugh Ross Williamson, *Charles and Cromwell*, in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, pp. 313–314.]

[20] At the peace of Utrecht, the Emperor acquired Naples, Sardinia, Milan and the little state on the Sienese seaboard known as the Presidi. He also asserted his suzerainty over Tuscany. Thirty-five years later, after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the Emperor retained direct rule only in Milan, with a reduced territory, since Savoy had acquired Lombardy up to the Ticino; and Tuscany had been established as an Austrian secundogeniture, to be ruled by a younger son and not by the Emperor or his heir. (The Presidi, however, were reunited with Tuscany in 1759.) Savoy had become the Kingdom of Sardinia. As a result of Elizabeth Farnese's efforts, her two sons, half Spanish Bourbon and half Farnese, were established in the combined duchy of Parma and Piacenza and in the reunited Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

[21] [Ed.] 'There's such divinity doth hedge a king,/That Treason can but peep to what it would,/Acts little of his will.' *Hamlet*, Act 4, Scene 5.

the opinion of Christendom. But it made the distant precedent, though not a conscious one, for the execution of Mary Queen of Scots and her grandson afterwards, and the memory of it was revived by German nationalists in the nineteenth century. "Once in a beer-cellar at Göttingen," wrote Heine about 1830, addressing the French, "I heard a young Old-German assert that it was necessary to be revenged on France for Conradin of Hohenstaufen, whom you beheaded at Naples. Doubtless ye have long since forgotten that; we, however, forget nothing."[22]

   In the post-medieval states-system, the dynastic international sometimes showed signs of developing an ideology in continuity with medieval regalian doctrines, and of pursuing a common interest. Every lawful monarch was in principle interested in the rights and due succession of every other monarch, and might claim the right to intervene to uphold them. Until the nineteenth century, popular feeling could run the same way. Yet this potential common dynastic interest never made headway against the particular and different interests of states. Mary Queen of Scots' position, during her nineteen years of captivity in England, should have been of theoretical interest to all the kings of Christendom. She had been compelled to abdicate under duress from her own throne; she was dowager queen of France; she was heir to the English throne, and indeed, by generally accepted dynastic principle, she was the lawful queen of England rather than Elizabeth. Her execution by the English government in 1587 was a violation of all dynastic right, and provoked a storm of popular protest in Paris, then dominated by the Catholic Guises, more violent than any anti-American demonstrations in London or Berlin in the later twentieth century. But no foreign government had regarded her as anything but a pawn in its play against other Powers, and most conspicuously her son, King James VI of Scots, prudently preferred to keep warm his own claim to the English throne rather than avenge his mother. His eventual happy succession to Queen Elizabeth in 1603 was a triumph of the divine right of inheritance, and confirmed him in a high dynastic doctrine. One reason for his reluctance to come to the aid of the Protestant cause in the Thirty Years War was his dislike of Dutch and Bohemian rebels. "There is an implicit Tie among Kings," he said, "which obligeth them...to stick to and right one another upon an insurrection of Subjects."[23] But he contradicted this in his muddled support for the Dutch and for his son-in-law the Elector Palatine. In 1646, when King Charles I had been decisively defeated by Parliament, the all-powerful minister of France, Mazarin, sent an ambassador to England with new instructions that showed

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[22] Heinrich Heine, *Religion and Philosophy in Germany*, trans. John Snodgrass (Trübner, 1882), p. 161. In 1847 the King of Bavaria presented a romantic statue of Conradin, designed by Thorwaldsen, to the church of Santa Maria del Carmine in Naples that stands beside the old market square where Conradin was executed.

[23] [Ed.] King James VI of Scotland (James I of England), quoted in James Howell, *Epistolae Ho-Elianae: The Familiar Letters of James Howell*, ed. by Joseph Jacobs (London: David Nutt, 1890), Book I, p. 102.

anxiety about the danger of England's establishing a republic. The ambassador was to foment discord by all means on the victorious side, between Independents, Presbyterians and Scots, so as to hinder any tendency to abolish the monarchy. He spoke of "the bad example which the revolt of the English and Scots against their King offers to the subjects of other princes, who accordingly have an interest in not allowing an evil which can be easily checked to run its course and achieve fulfillment."[24] But ten years later Mazarin was in alliance with the regicide Commonwealth under Cromwell. Thus when the floods subside the streams of national interest return to scour their separate channels.

Voltaire was a strong believer in monarchy and saw international politics in terms of dynastic relations. It is amusing to read his shocked reflections on the Spanish Succession War, which "those who are more concerned with humanity than politics" will see as a family civil war. Louis XIV was fighting against his relatives and connections in Bavaria, the Palatinate and Savoy; worst of all, James II was turned off his throne by his son-in-law and daughter. "If there is any justice on earth, it did not become the daughter and son-in-law of King James to chase him from his own home. This action would be horrible among private individuals; the public interest seems to establish another morality for princes."[25] It does indeed. Montesquieu a year or two earlier had given him the answer: "It is ridiculous to pretend to decide the rights of kingdoms, of nations, and of the world by the same maxims on which (to borrow an expression of Cicero) we should settle a dispute between individuals about a leaking gutter."[26] Voltaire was giving offended recognition to the way in which dynastic interests were becoming subservient to *raison d'état.*

Dynasticism had become ever more distinctly the vehicle of national interest; it was dead as an international system. The French Revolution brought it to life again, by attacking the society of which dynasticism was the coping-stone. "Whether it be the Court of Versailles," wrote Thomas Paine early in 1791, "or the Court of St. James, or of Carlton House, or the Court in expectation, signifies not; for the caterpillar principle of all courts and courtiers are alike. They form a common policy throughout Europe, detached and separate from the interest of Nations; and while they appear to quarrel, they agree to plunder."[27] This was a statement of doctrinal symmetry rather than of political circumstances, but the course of events soon lent it a measure of truth. In June 1791 the unfortunate Louis XVI attempted unsuccessfully to flee to the frontier of the Austrian Netherlands where he would be within reach of the troops of his brother-in-law the Emperor, and was taken back to Paris a prisoner and a hostage. The Emperor

[24] Instructions to Bellièvre, July 1646, in Leopold von Ranke, *A History of England Principally in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1875), vol. V, pp. 486–7.
[25] Voltaire, *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*, chapter XVI, last paragraphs, and chapter XXIV, first paragraph.
[26] Montesquieu, *De l'Esprit des Lois*, XXVI, 16, citing Cicero, *De Legibus*, I, 14.
[27] Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1951), pp. 127–8.

and the King of Prussia on 27th August 1791 issued the Declaration of Pillnitz, "that they regard the present situation of the king of France as an object of common interest to all the Sovereigns of Europe."[28]

But monarchical solidarity was the smaller part of the motives which, the following year, brought them into conflict with the French Revolution. The Emperor was more concerned with the restoration of the rights of the German princes in Alsace, which the Revolution had abolished although they were guaranteed by the Treaty of Westphalia—and Prussia was more concerned with territorial gain at the expense of France.[29] The execution of Louis XVI in 1793 evoked in England popular demands for war which Pitt acted upon in expelling the French ambassador. But only slowly did the successive coalitions that in the end defeated Revolutionary France acquire a common policy for the restoration of the states-system, in which the role of dynasticism was faintly revived.

Meanwhile, the Napoleonic Wars had themselves produced something not foreseen: a revolutionary dynasty. The Bonapartes were a Corsican clan that provided a historical caricature of the Habsburgs and Bourbons, more close-knit, nominally controlling more states than the Bourbons at their height and as many as the Habsburgs at theirs, rootless and expecting no future, totally dependent on the adventurer who was their head.[30] Napoleon crowned his dynastic edifice by marrying a Habsburg archduchess, a great-niece of Marie Antoinette, partly to conciliate a defeated Austria as an ally against a hostile Russia, partly to legitimize the new Empire of the West by union with the old imperial dynasty of Europe as Charlemagne was said to have considered consecrating his new Empire by marriage with the Empress of Byzantium. Napoleon believed that the Emperor Francis of Austria would remain bound to the interests of his son-in-law and future grandson. It was a grotesque miscalculation. Once defeated, the Bonapartes were uprooted without argument. As the novelist Stendhal remarked, "Napoleon made the mistake of all parvenus — that of estimating too highly the class into which he had risen."[31] In many respects Napoleon appears as the first and greatest of modern dictators, but if we contrast his imperial title and dynastic ambitions

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[28] Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la révolution française* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit et Cie., 1903–1905), II, *La chute de la royauté*, pp. 256–7.

[29] Sorel, II, p. 72.

[30] Napoleon himself was Emperor of the French, King of Italy, and Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine; his son had the title of King of Rome. His brother Joseph was given first Naples and secondly Spain; his brother Louis, Holland; his brother Jerome, Westphalia. His sister Elisa was given, first, with her husband Felix Baciocchi, the principality of Lucca and Piombino, and secondly, viceregal authority in Tuscany with the title of grand-duchess. His sister Caroline's husband Murat was given, first the grand-duchy of Berg, and secondly Naples; Bernadotte was allowed to become crown prince of Sweden because he was married to Joseph's sister-in-law. His stepson Eugene Beauharnais (son of the Empress Josephine by her first husband) was viceroy of Italy, and married the daughter of the King of Bavaria. His stepniece Stephanie Beauharnais married the grand-duke of Baden.

[31] Stendhal quoted by Felix Markham in "The Napoleonic Adventure," in C. W. Crawley, ed., *The New Cambridge Modern History*, vol. IX, *War and Peace in an Age of Upheaval, 1793–1830* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 321. See also Stendhal, *Vie de Napoléon*, chapter lx.

with the party-dictatorship of Lenin or Hitler, we can measure the depth of all the European past.

V

The primary aim of a dynastic marriage was to provide an heir to the throne. But there were usually secondary aims, to consolidate an alliance or extend influence, or to legitimise the acquisition of territory. In the latter case, dynastic marriage had a similar function to that of the plebiscite under the popular mode of international politics. Like plebiscites, dynastic marriages were sometimes to avert an undesired result, sometimes fraudulently rigged. The problem was not psephological but genetic, to try to control the uncertainties not of how populations will vote, but of whether individuals can have children.

Henry VIII's marriages provide the classic case of the search for an heir, though only his first queen, Catherine of Aragon, and his fourth, Anne of Cleves, brought an international tie. By the sixteenth century it was not difficult for a prince to have a childless marriage dissolved by ecclesiastical authority. The assumption in most cases went against the repudiated queen, though Henry IV of Castile had his marriage with Blanche of Aragon annulled in 1446 on the grounds of his own impotence. A depth of dynastic degradation was reached in the marriage transaction between Tuscany and Mantua in 1584. Partly because the Medici grand duke of Tuscany wanted to humiliate the more proud and ancient dynasty of the Gonzagas, partly because the duke of Mantua himself wanted to humiliate his own son, the marriage settlement required that the Mantuan heir-apparent, before he married the grand duke's daughter, should give proof of his virility.[32]

On the other hand, it was sometimes thought necessary to control the succession by preventing a relative from marrying. Ecclesiastical preferment and morganatic marriage were two common ways of meeting the need; only in the Ottoman and Muscovite empires were they supplemented by murder. In the German states there were endless subdivisions of inheritance, and the principles of primogeniture and indivisibility of tenure came to be accepted long after the rest of Europe. The house of Brunswick-Lüneburg gave an example of putting dynastic interest before personal. In the Thirty Years War, four brothers in succession ruled the Lüneburg-Celle dominions, having agreed that all should remain unmarried save one, to whose sons the territory descended in 1641. These sons again were four, and the dominions were divided. The youngest, Ernest Augustus, married the princess Palatine Sophia, niece of Charles I of England. When two of the brothers had died, Ernst Augustus in 1665 persuaded the remaining brother, George William,

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[32] Maria Bellonci, *A Prince of Mantua: The Life and Times of Vincenzo Gonzaga*, translated by Stuart Hood (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1956), chapter iv.

with whom he was on terms of close affection, into what Sophia called an "anti-contract" of marriage.[33] George William was contented with his mistress, and her position was given some formal recognition by his promise to remain unmarried, so that the duchy would continue in Ernest Augustus's line. Nevertheless, to make assurance doubly sure, Ernest Augustus married his son George Lewis to the only daughter of George William, Sophia Dorothea, in 1681. At this point the law of primogeniture was accepted by the estates of the House of Hanover. It was a condition for the raising of Hanover to electoral rank in 1682, and helped William III's choice of George Lewis for the Protestant succession in Great Britain.

When in 1714 Philip V of Spain chose Elisabeth Farnese, a princess of Parma, as his second wife, her uncle (and step-father) the duke of Parma saw the marriage as a way to bring Spanish influence back into Italy against Austrian domination. He warmly supported his niece's schemes for the succession to Parma of her own son Carlos. Accordingly he prevented his brother Antonio from marrying, which that obese and lazy bachelor had no desire to do; and it became Austrian policy to persuade Antonio to marry, and raise up seed to the Parmesi who would keep Spain out. Antonio did succeed his brother for four years, and accepted a marriage arranged by imperial diplomacy. When he died in 1731 his widow believed herself to be with child, but Spanish troops occupied the duchy before her expectations were proved wrong, and Carlos entered into his inheritance.

The deceptions and uncertainties of dynastic diplomacy may be illustrated by another transaction in which Elisabeth Farnese took a leading part. In the period between the Peace of Utrecht in 1713 and the outbreak of the next great continental war, that of the Polish Succession, in 1733, two great dynastic issues troubled Europe. First in importance was the marriage of the youthful Louis XV, to secure the succession to the French throne in the direct line. The second was provision for Elisabeth Farnese's children, who, since their mother was the second wife of the King of Spain, were barred from the Spanish throne by two older step-brothers. Spanish policy veered wildly in these years, but tended to come to rest in an entente with France, a family understanding between the two branches of the House of Bourbon. In 1721 it was arranged that Louis XV (aged 14) should marry Elisabeth Farnese's daughter, the Spanish Infanta Maria Anna (aged 5), and she was sent to be brought up at the French court. At the same time, the regent of France, the duke of Orleans, promoted his own family interests by marrying one daughter to the Spanish heir apparent, the prince of the Asturias, and betrothing another to Don Carlos, the King of Spain's third son and Elisabeth Farnese's eldest.

But as the great French diarist Saint-Simon remarked, these marriages had not been made in heaven.[34] In 1723 the regent Orleans died, and his children became

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[33] A. W. Ward, *The Electress Sophia and the Hanoverian Succession* (London, Paris, and New York: Goupil and Company, 1903), p. 98.
[34] *Mémoires du duc de Saint-Simon*, ed. M. Chéruel (Paris: Hachette, 1878), xii. 434.

less desirable matches. The Spanish queen began exploratory talks with Austria for an alternative alliance. The new French government were not committed to Orleans' matrimonial policy; and Louis XV's illnesses suggested the need to get him married without delay to a bride of his own age. In 1725 they annulled the betrothal to the Spanish Infanta, and sent her back to Spain. The Spanish sovereigns displayed fury at the insult, and hastened to conclude negotiations with Austria. Though the Emperor and Spain had many grounds for conflict, they had the common interest of being both revisionist Powers after Utrecht; moreover, the Emperor had daughters to find husbands for, and the Spanish sovereigns had sons to find fortunes for. On 5 November 1725 the two Powers signed the secret treaty of Vienna.

Spain was the suitor, and the treaty was framed to serve Austria's interests. We are concerned only with the dynastic clauses. They were ambiguously drafted.[35] By article 2, the Emperor contracted to give two of the three archduchesses, as soon as they should be of marriageable age, to Don Carlos and his younger brother Don Philip. By article 3, he promised that if he himself should die before that period, then the eldest, Maria Theresa (now aged 8) should marry Don Carlos (now aged 9). Though a later article provided that the Crown of Spain was untenable with the Habsburg possessions, the betrothal of Carlos and Maria Theresa seemed to hold splendid possibilities of dynastic union. They intoxicated Elisabeth Farnese, and caused alarm in France and England, where the terms of the treaty were guessed beforehand. Carlos, the future Charles III of Spain, was the best of the Spanish Bourbons, as Maria Theresa, the future great empress, was the best of the Habsburgs; their marriage would have been interesting.

But the Emperor had made the Spanish alliance for its short-term and psychological effect, to lessen his own diplomatic isolation. He was concerned more with the loopholes or safeguards in the Treaty of Vienna than with the apparent purpose of the dynastic clauses. Maria Theresa could not marry for four or five years. Philip V might die at any time, in which event Elisabeth would lose her influence and Don Carlos would be a second-rank Bourbon prince without the backing of Spain. Charles himself was only 40 in 1725, and might yet have a son who would transform his policy regarding the succession after his death. In 1728 his youngest daughter died. This seemed to remove the ambiguity from article 2 of the Treaty of Vienna, and the Queen of Spain pressed for a fulfillment of the contract. Charles now wanted to marry Maria Theresa to the son of the duke of Lorraine, and persuaded himself that the Treaty of Vienna was void through altered circumstances; but he hoped not to antagonise Spain, and took refuge in evasion and procrastination. The two Powers were at loggerheads over the succession to Parma, which the Emperor regarded as an imperial fief in his own gift, and

[35] See Gabriel Syveton, *Une Cour et un aventurier au XVIIIème Siècle: le Baron de Ripperda* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1896), appendix, pp. 285–6.

Elisabeth Farnese regarded as the rightful inheritance of Don Carlos; and in this conflict of interests the dynastic alliance of 1725 dissolved and disappeared.

To rig a plebiscite is to falsify the will of the people consulted, or to invent a will when such a will is lacking. To rig a dynastic marriage is to falsify the natural expectation of dynastic offspring. In either case, the main purpose is to deceive other Powers. That the people concerned—the population consulted, the dynastic couple—may themselves be deceived, is secondary. Two examples may be given of a Power gambling, or thought by foreign observers to be gambling, on the sterility of a dynastic marriage arranged by itself.

When in 1598, at the end of his life, Philip II of Spain was compelled to make a peace settlement with France, he ceded the Netherlands to his daughter the Infanta Isabella, and at the same time arranged her marriage to his governor of the Netherlands, the Archduke Albert. Charles V in the past had sometimes considered devolving his Burgundian inheritance upon another member of his dynasty, as he had devolved his Austrian lands upon his brother Ferdinand in 1525. Philip now adopted it as a solution of the insoluble problem of the Dutch Revolt, hoping that the Netherlands as a whole might be conciliated by conceding them an appearance of independence.

The arrangement naturally affected his relationships with his enemies. The coalition against him of France, England and the Dutch themselves began to fall apart when Henry IV entered negotiations for a separate peace towards the end of 1597. The Spanish negotiators used the Netherlands plan to persuade the French of Philip's sincere desire for a general peace settlement; the English secretary of state, Cecil, watching anxiously on the side-lines, thought the plan was intended to deceive and divide the allies. Henry IV wanted arguments whereby he could justify his desertion of his allies to himself, as well as to them, and was not above trying to persuade the Dutch that they could reach an honourable settlement with a ruler as benevolent as an independent Archduke would prove to be.[36]

The peace settlement of 1598 consisted then of two parts. One was the negotiation between Spain and her principal enemy France; the other was Philip II's decision concerning the Netherlands, which was unpopular with his advisers and his heir. The Treaty of Vervins was signed on 2 May 1598, but was considered by the Spanish government so humiliating that it was not published in Madrid for several months. The deed of cession was signed by Philip in Madrid on 6 May. It conveyed the Burgundian lands (including in theory the seven revolted United Provinces of the north) to the Infanta Isabella and her descendants. On 30 May Isabella transferred absolute authority over her dominions to her future husband, the Archduke Albert. On 13 September Philip II died, and was succeeded by Philip III, who as heir-apparent had reluctantly underwritten the cession. Isabella

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[36] See the diplomatic correspondence of the French negotiators, *Mémoires de MM. de Bellièvre et de Sillery* (Paris: Ch. de Sercy, 1676), vol. I, pp. 371–2, 314, 384–5.

and Albert were married on 15 November, and were known thenceforward as the Archdukes.

The cession erected the Archdukes into a shadowy sovereignty.[37] It was as popular with the Belgians of the southern half of the Netherlands, where the Archdukes ruled at Brussels, as it was unpopular with the new Spanish government. On one side was the hope of a measure of independence, on the other the hope of recovering alienated dominion. The Dutch, of course, were uninfluenced by the cession: their war of independence was now waged nominally against the Archdukes. But the news that Isabella was expecting a child, whose succession would confirm the independence of the Netherlands, encouraged England in her own peace negotiations with Spain in 1602.

But Spain had two safeguards. One was a series of secret agreements of the kind that bound the Habsburg dynasty. If the Archdukes had a son, his marriage required the approval of Spain; if a daughter, she must marry either the king of Spain or his son; if they were childless, the Burgundian lands were to revert to the Spanish Crown. The second safeguard was the knowledge that the Archdukes were unlikely to have children anyway. Within a year of their marriage, this was a matter of international diplomatic gossip. How far Philip II had foreseen it, we cannot tell. His enemies said that he had planned it. It would have been in accordance with his unsparing manipulation of his dynasty, but against his sincere love for his daughter to sacrifice her happiness knowingly. In the event Isabella, like her father's first wife Queen Mary Tudor, was disappointed of motherhood. The Spanish Netherlands preserved their anomalous independence under the prosperous rule of the Archdukes until Albert died in 1621. Then they reverted to the Spanish Crown, with Isabella remaining governess for her nephew Philip IV until her death in 1633.[38]

In the middle of the nineteenth century an international crisis was caused by the marriage of another Spanish Isabella to an impotent husband. The affair was less important than the marriage of 1598, for Spain had sunk from the Dominant Power to a minor rank; but it was more notorious, because it was transacted not in the secrecy of the Escorial but by the diplomatic network of half Europe, it stirred the public opinion of three nations, and it had a sensational climax.

The question was a husband for the young queen Isabella II. She had succeeded to the throne of Spain in 1833, when she was not yet three years old, and had survived an atrocious civil war against her claims. Britain and France had cooperated uneasily to support her, when the despotic Powers of the Holy Alliance had

[37] On the degree of independence of the Netherlands under the archdukes, see Charles Howard Carter, *The Secret Diplomacy of the Habsburgs, 1598–1625* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 77–87, 282–5.

[38] H. Lonchay, "Philippe II et le mariage des archducs Albert et Isabelle," *Académie Royale de Belgique: Bulletin de la Classe des Lettres*, 1910, pp. 364–88; Ernest Gossart, *La domination espagnole dans les Pays-Bas à la fin du règne de Philippe II* (Brussels: Lamertin, 1906), pp. 210–11.

refused to recognise her; but they then became rivals for the control of Spanish policy. France supported the conservative faction, Britain the progressive. Each of the Great Powers regarded itself as wooing in Spain an independent ally, but the other as seeking to reduce her to a satellite.[39] The decision about the young queen's marriage would in the end rest with the queen-mother Christina, who played foreign Powers and Spanish military politicians against one another with crafty avarice.

France had been linked with Spain dynastically since Louis XIV's grandson had succeeded to the Spanish throne as Philip V in 1700. King Louis Philippe was anxious not to be thought of as a usurper, and he pursued his own Bourbon dynastic policy. In the later 1830s he began to contemplate the possibility of a marriage between Isabella and one of his own sons. But other Powers would see in this the dangers of a Franco-Spanish union that were supposed to have been averted for ever by the Treaty of Utrecht. As Isabella approached marriageable age, therefore, Louis Philippe confined himself to the requirement that her consort must be a Bourbon, a descendant of Philip V. In 1843 the French foreign minister Guizot persuaded the British foreign secretary Aberdeen to give a cautious acceptance to this principle. The relations between the two Great Powers became so friendly at this juncture that Aberdeen coined the phrase *entente cordiale* to describe them.

If this was to be the principle of choice, there were three effective candidates. Two were Spanish Bourbons, cousins of Isabella—the duke of Cadiz and the duke of Seville. Cadiz was generally believed to be incapable of parenthood, and Isabella found him effeminate and repulsive. Seville was detested by the queen-mother for his parade of radical politics, which inclined Palmerston to favour him. The third was a Neapolitan Bourbon, Count Trapani, a stunted adolescent of mean intelligence. He was the chosen candidate of the French government. The French conquest of Algeria had been in progress since 1830, and France had a new interest in naval control of the Mediterranean. She planned, by strengthening the dynastic tie between Naples and Madrid, to establish under her own leadership a Bourbon league, partly to offset Austrian ascendancy in Italy, but mainly to balance the supremacy that Britain exercised in the Mediterranean with her satellites in Portugal and Greece. But Spanish opinion despised the Neapolitans and resented a candidate from the inferior line of the dynasty; and this was fatal to the plans of those who supported Trapani.

But another aggrandising dynasty was making plans for the queen of Spain, the house of Saxe-Coburg. Its effective head was Leopold I, King of the Belgians; "marriage alliances were Leopold's special method of extending his personal

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[39] See Palmerston's letter to Granville, 24 November 1835. Charles Webster, *Foreign Policy of Palmerston 1830–1841* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1951), vol. I, p. 436.

influence".[40] Its most active member at this juncture was Queen Victoria, and its most intelligent, Prince Albert. Their candidate for the hand of Isabella was their cousin Leopold, who had all the physical and intellectual qualities that the Bourbons conspicuously lacked, and could be expected to bring a vivifying touch of new blood to the decadent line. Queen Christina herself at times seriously contemplated the advantages of this match. The French regarded the Coburg prince as the British candidate, and vetoed him on the same grounds as the British vetoed a son of Louis Philippe. Aberdeen was embarrassed by the comparison, for the dynastic sentiments of Buckingham Palace played a lesser part in British foreign policy than did the dynastic interests of Louis Philippe in the foreign policy of France. Palmerston, who replaced Aberdeen at the Foreign Office in 1846, put it in an extreme way: "We cannot for a moment admit of any parity of position, as regards political jealousy, between a son of a King of the French, and a third son of a German nobleman".[41] This was characteristically obtuse towards foreign opinion, which might reasonably see the British getting the best of both worlds. British policy in general emphasized the right of the Spanish government to make their own decision about the marriage; Aberdeen agreed not to encourage the Coburg candidature; Palmerston refused to discourage it.

The marriage question was a double one, because Queen Isabella had a younger sister, the Infanta Louisa. In 1844 Louis Philippe proposed that, once Isabella was married to the agreed candidate and had had children, the Infanta might be married to one of his own sons. He was planning not only dynastically, but *en bon bourgeois père de famille*, since the Infanta possessed a valuable fortune. The proposal was at first concealed from the British, but later avowed, and Aberdeen was persuaded to give it an informal consent, provided always that the two marriages were not simultaneous. Palmerston, when he returned to power, worked himself into an opposite view. "The great object to be accomplished in the interest of England is to prevent a French prince from marrying either the Queen or the Infanta". The Bourbon Family Compact was bad enough for England in the eighteenth century; now France occupied 500 miles of the Algerian coast and was building a naval base at Algiers. "In short, the marriage of a French prince with either of the daughters of Christina would be a plain and public declaration to Europe that both Spain and France are looking forward to a combined war against England."[42]

It was the change of government in Britain in 1846 that brought Palmerston back to the Foreign Office, and brought the Spanish marriages issue to its climax. The French government disliked and distrusted Palmerston personally, and

[40] E. Jones Parry, *The Spanish Marriages (1841–1846): A Study of the Influence of Dynastic Ambition upon Foreign Policy* (London: Macmillan, 1936), p. 68.

[41] Letter to Lytton Bulwer in Madrid, 16 August 1846, in Sir H. Lytton Bulwer, *The Life of Viscount Palmerston* (London: R. Bentley, 1874), vol. iii, p. 271.

[42] Letter to Bulwer, 3 August 1846, ibid., vol. iii, p. 266.

believed his political position in Britain was weak; they were disposed therefore to seize an advantage rather than be conciliatory. Palmerston offered them an advantage in the worst diplomatic blunder he ever made. He wrote a tactless despatch to the British ambassador in Madrid, and with imprudent confidence allowed the French ambassador in London to have a copy of it; the French government at once communicated it to the Spanish. The despatch antagonised them equally. It said that Britain had never agreed to exclude the Coburgs, which the French believed Aberdeen was committed to; and of the Bourbon candidates that Britain preferred Seville, whom the queen-mother now regarded as a dangerous enemy; it further denounced the Spanish regime in scathing (and well-merited) terms for its unchanging arbitrariness and misgovernment.

Thus, instead of conciliating Christina, he drove her into alliance with Louis Philippe. The French ambassador reported that when Christina heard of the despatch, she exclaimed: "Les Anglais et la révolution nous menacent",[43] and ordered the double Bourbon marriage to be arranged at once.[44] On 28 August 1846 it was decided in Madrid that the weeping queen Isabella was to marry the repulsive duke of Cadiz, and the Infanta simultaneously to marry Louis Philippe's youngest son. The marriages were pressed forward with indecent haste, and celebrated on 10 October, Isabella's seventeenth birthday. Guizot told his critics in the French chamber triumphantly that the Spanish marriages were "the first great thing which we have accomplished alone, quite alone, in Europe since 1830".[45]

In England there was a national outburst of indignation and resentment, and the *Entente Cordiale* collapsed. Louis Philippe was supposed to have arranged the marriage with Cadiz in order that Isabella should remain childless and the crown pass to her sister. This was unjust. Louis Philippe had always supported Trapani's candidature; it was only in the last resort that he allowed himself not to be deterred by Cadiz's defects from a repulsive arrangement. The consequences, as usually happens, defied the hopes and fears of either party. With the breakdown of the *Entente Cordiale* France lost her only ally in Europe, and was isolated, and the régime forfeited prestige both externally and with its critics at home. By March 1848 Louis Philippe and Guizot were exiles in England. Isabella had children, though her consort was not their father, and the later Bourbon kings of Spain descended from her. The Infanta and her Orleanist husband played no part in international, nor even in Spanish, politics. In 1848 Isabella was deposed, and there followed the interregnum in which the offer of her crown to a Hohenzollern prince occasioned the Franco-Prussian war.

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[43] [Ed. "The English and the revolution threaten us."]
[44] Letter from Bresson, ambassador at Madrid to Guizot, 8 August 1846, in Guizot, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de mon temps* (Paris, Levy, 1858–1867), vol. viii, p. 303.
[45] Speech of 5 February 1847, in P. Thureau-Dangin, *Histoire de la Monarchie de Juillet* (Paris: Plon, 1884–1892), vol. vi, p. 305.

VI

The Vienna Settlement in 1815 introduced an Indian summer of dynasticism, deceptively presiding over a century of bourgeois expansion and national self-fulfillment. The peace settlement itself was based not on dynasticism but on "legitimacy," a special case of the general principles that we are concerned with in this chapter. Talleyrand supplied its classic formulation, expressly extending it to all governments which were consecrated by long prescription, monarchies or republics, hereditary or elective, aristocratic or democratic. In practice, this principle of "legitimacy" favored monarchies at the expense of republics. Venice and Genoa were conspicuously not restored; Lucca became a duchy and was united with Parma; the United Netherlands completed their long transformation from an aristocratic republic into a kingdom under the house of Orange; only the Swiss Confederation escaped the dynastic mould.

The Holy Alliance, with which the Czar Alexander I garnished the peace settlement, transcended dynasticism in theory, establishing a Christian fraternity of paternal monarchs, untroubled by questions of common interest, hereditary succession or dynastic intermarriage. (Indeed, Alexander disconcerted his autocratic allies by asserting that the Alliance was compatible with granting constitutions "founded on the sacred rights of humanity."[46]) In practice the Alliance was invoked during the first ten years after the Vienna Congress to justify intervention upholding autocratic regimes against liberal revolt. It then dwindled into the alliance between the three eastern monarchies, Russia, Austria and Prussia. Their common interest was to maintain the partition of Poland. Their common defence was the power of Russia, which suppressed the revolutions of 1848 in Central Europe. "By 1850, Francis Joseph of Austria and Frederick William IV of Prussia seemed to be Russian dependants, subservient not only from ideological similarity, but from their inability to hold their monarchical power except with Russian support. The Holy Alliance was the Cominform of Kings."[47]

Tsar Nicholas I combined the legitimist and conservative dynastic principles, and was bitterly hostile to revolutionary regimes which affronted them. The Orleanist usurper in France, Louis Philippe, he recognized coldly and tardily; Napoleon III he refused to recognize in proper form, omitting the salutations customary between monarchs of "Sire, mon Frère," and addressing Napoleon III only as "our very good friend." Napoleon replied that he appreciated the kindness of the Tsar's unusual form of address, "for we put up with our brothers; we choose

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[46] [Ed.] Alexander I quoted in Walter Alison Phillips, *The Confederation of Europe: A Study of the European Alliance, 1813–1823, as an Experiment in the International Organization of Peace*, second edition (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1920), p. 36.

[47] A. J. P. Taylor, *Rumours of War* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1952), p. 32.

our friends."[48] It was Napoleon III's best repartee, and it might serve as the obituary of the dynastic principle.

But only in the two ramshackle empires of Eastern Europe had dynasticism not become national by the nineteenth century. The Austrian monarchy had been built up by the House of Habsburg and found no other principle of unity than dynastic loyalty. When the Emperor Francis Joseph was told that a politician was patriotic he asked, with perfect logic, "Is he a patriot for me?"[49] The Russian empire had been ruled by the Romanov dynasty since the early seventeenth century; but since the time of Catherine the Great, who was purely German, they had been more strictly the Holstein-Gottorps, and there was a latent conflict between the dynasty with its foreign links and the awakening nationalism of the Great Russians.

Everywhere else in Europe dynasties had become instruments of national self-consciousness, after the manner of William of Orange, not of Louis XIV, resting on utility, not hereditary right. New states looked for Kings and changed them readily; so did old states when dissatisfied with their rulers, as happened in Spain, or when seceding into a separate existence, as happened with Norway. In 1763 the *Almanach de Gotha* had first been published in that small German ducal capital. It became the stud-book (to adopt a coarse expression of Bismarck's) of nineteenth century dynastic Europe, as necessary to aspiring governments for reference as UNCTAD reports after 1960.[50] General Juan Prim, leader of the Spanish Provisional Government, thumbed through the *Almanach de Gotha* in 1868-1869 to find a candidate for the Spanish throne of the necessary breeding and Catholic religion. He found a Hohenzollern prince, whose successful candidature, as Bismarck told the King of Prussia, would raise the Hohenzollerns to the level of international influence formerly attained by Habsburgs and Bourbons, and provided the pretext for the Franco-Prussian war. But Prince Leopold never reigned in Madrid. The Spaniards chose instead an Italian royal duke, who endured his position only two years before abdicating. The Greeks chose a Bavarian, and then replaced him by a Dane. The Bulgarians chose a Battenberg, who was kidnapped and spirited away by the Russians, to be succeeded by a Saxe-Coburg. Only in Montenegro and in Serbia were there indigenous dynasties, in Serbia two of them, who in turn deposed and assassinated one another.[51]

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[48] Frederick Arthur Simpson, *Louis Napoleon and the Recovery of France, 1848–1856* (London: Longmans and Co., 1923), pp. 198–200. The joke was adapted by the Czechs after the Soviet occupation of 1968.

[49] Anatol Murad, *Franz Joseph I of Austria and His Empire* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1968), p. 17.

[50] [Ed.] The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development was founded in 1964.

[51] The last monarchy in Europe appeared in Albania, the last state to come into existence before 1914, under the alphabetically appropriate King Zog. As Achmed Bey Zogu he was a tribal chief who became premier, president, and in 1928 King. When Italy invaded Albania in 1939, Zog escaped across the mountains to Greece with his Hungarian wife and 3-day old child. He lived the usual life of exiled royalty in New York and Cannes until his death in 1961.

Bismarck when it suited him made play with dynasticism, and used the international monarchical idea as a basis for the Three Emperors' League of 1873. He wrote in his *Reflections* that he always believed the key to German politics lay with the dynasties, not with public opinion.[52] But he ruthlessly uprooted the legitimate dynasties of Hanover, Hesse-Kassel and Nassau in order to annex their states to Prussia in 1866. Dynasticism was politically so obsolete that when President Wilson came to formulate the principle of self-determination during the First World War he did not mention dynasticism as a way in which   was any longer thwarted.

The last appearance of dynasticism in international politics was the result of the British settlement of the Middle East after the First World War. During the last years that Arabia formed part of the Ottoman Empire, it had two leading local rulers: Hussein, the Emir of the Hejaz, a member of the Hashemite branch of the tribe of the Prophet, Sherif of Mecca and custodian under the Ottoman Sultan of the Holy Cities of Islam; and Ibn Saud, the Emir of Nejd in the interior. There was old rivalry between them, and when Turkey entered the War on the side of Germany, each of the Arab princes had thoughts of using Allied help to acquire independence. Britain subsidized both: the British authorities in London and Cairo (now formally a British protectorate) supported the Sherif, and the Government of India supported Ibn Saud. It was the Sherif who in 1916, fortified by a British promise to recognize the independence of the Arabs, proclaimed the Arab Revolt against Turkey, and reaped the rewards of victory. As a result of the War, Hussein became King of the Hejaz, his son Feisal was established on the new throne of Iraq, and another son Abdullah was Emir of Transjordan. Iraq and Transjordan were mandated territories under Britain, so that the Hashemite dynasty found itself an important pillar of British paramountcy in the Middle East, with some similarities to the Bourbon-Farnese princes in respect of Spanish paramountcy in Italy in the eighteenth century, but with the differences that the Hashemites were not connected dynastically with the paramount Power itself, and were rulers of indigenous stock, however unpopular they might be in their new states.[53]

Their rival Ibn Saud, however, was a better politician than any of the Hashemite family and enjoyed a more independent power. When in 1924 Britain ceased paying subsidies to the Arab rulers, and therefore no longer had a restraining influence, Ibn Saud attacked and conquered the Hejaz, dethroning Hussein, and

[52] Otto Fürst von Bismarck, *Gedanken und Erinnerungen* (Stuttgart: Verlag der J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1898), vol. I, chapter XIII, "Dynastien und Stämme," pp. 288–96; *Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman, Being the Reflections and Reminiscences of Otto Prince von Bismarck*, trans. by A. J. Butler (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1898), vol. I, chapter XIII, "Dynasties and Stocks," pp. 314–23.

[53] See Elie Kedourie, *England and the Middle East: The Destruction of the Ottoman Empire* (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1956), chapter 7.

unifying Arabia except for its southern and eastern fringes. For a generation thereafter, rivalry between the Saudi King and his two Hashemite neighbors on his northern frontier was a theme of Arab politics. It was increasingly circumscribed by the claim of Egypt to be the leading Arab Power, and by the rising tide of Arab nationalism, which in 1958 swept away the monarchy in Iraq, leaving Hussein of Jordan (great-grandson of the Sherif) as the last embarrassed and probably transient representative of the Hashemite dynasty. But the substance of the Saudi-Hashemite rivalry was competition between Saudi Arabia and Iraq for influence and expansion over the sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf, and this was likely to outlive the dynastic mode.

18

Popular Legitimacy

"For, when the people speaks loudly, it is from being strongly possessed either by the Godhead or the Demon; and he, who cannot discover the true spirit from the false, hath no ear for profitable communion."[*,1]

<div align="right">Wordsworth, Convention of Cintra, 1809</div>

"The real difference lies between those who insist that nationalism, to be legitimate, must stem from the people themselves and be felt as a natural emanation, and those who believe that a concerted feeling can be nourished from above by the deliberate exercise of state policy....Boundaries need not matter; size can be unimportant; the absence of local traditions may be an advantage—provided the government makes strong and successful efforts to instil discipline and unity. It is in the nature of states to try to make their peoples more loyal by making them ever more dependent upon the state for safety and comfort."[2]

<div align="right">J. D. B. Miller, The Politics of the Third World, 1966</div>

The American Declaration of Independence proclaimed what its authors believed to be both a fundamental principle of politics, and its application to international affairs. The principle was that men are endowed with certain inalienable rights by their Creator, that governments are instituted to ensure those rights, and derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that it is the right of the people to alter or abolish a government that has become destructive of these ends, and to institute a new government. In the setting of the states-system, this became the principle of self-determination. It might become necessary in the course of

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[*] [Ed.] Martin Wight may have intended to insert the essay entitled 'Dynastic Legitimacy' and this essay titled 'Popular Legitimacy' as chapters following a chapter entitled 'International Revolutions' in *Power Politics*, an updated and expanded version of Wight's 1946 pamphlet of the same name. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad did not, however, include these two essays in the revised version of *Power Politics* (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978) that they prepared after Wight's death in 1972.

[1] William Wordsworth, *Wordsworth's Tract on the Convention of Cintra,* with an introduction by A. V. Dicey (London: Humphrey Milford for Oxford University Press, 1915), p. 110. Wordsworth's tract was first published in 1809.

[2] J. D. B. Miller, *The Politics of the Third World* (London: Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1966), pp. 106–7.

human events, said the Declaration, for one people to dissolve the political bands which had connected them with another, and to assume, among the Powers of the earth, the separate and equal status to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitled them. This revived and renovated the ancient political tradition that had inspired the independence of the Swiss and Dutch, and announced the popular theory of legitimacy, that was to be diffused over Europe by the French Revolution, and to extinguish the dynastic principle.

The words "dynastic" and "popular" each describe a qualification which, at different times, has been normal for membership of the family of states. We are accustomed to see a process of historical development in this, in which the peoples first of Europe and then of the wider world have painfully disencumbered themselves of dynastic institutions and stood forth, in their own identity, as nations by right of self-determination. And we are inclined to assume, with Kant, Mazzini and President Wilson, that the peoples can work together in naked republican nationhood. We see the two terms, dynastic and popular, as not equivalent. Dynasties do not exist without nations to reign over, except in the sad ghost-world of exiled pretenders. Peoples can exist without dynasties to reign over them. The dynasty is the discarded husk, the people is the kernel. Whether this view is still tenable, we shall consider later.

What however is a "people" that enjoys the rights proclaimed by the Declaration of Independence? This question is perhaps the most difficult and most argued of any in the field of political philosophy. The French Revolutionaries thrashed out a Declaration of the Rights of Man, aiming at a universality of doctrine which the American revolutionaries, with a certain aristocratic aloofness, did not need to concern themselves with; and this was prefixed to the French constitution of 1791, as the Covenant of the League of Nations was prefixed to the Treaty of Versailles. The Declaration of the Rights of Man gave a mystical intensity to another word: the nation. The representatives of the French people, it said, constituted into a national assembly, declared among other things that the principle of all sovereignty resided essentially in the *nation*; and the constitution required the king to take an oath of loyalty to the nation and the law. How did a nation differ from a people? An answer was suggested by the famous decree of 15 December 1792, which promised the succor of the French *nation* to all *peoples* who wished to recover their liberty. The French Revolutionary creed assumed that France was the one people whose consciousness and general will had crystallized into nationhood, and that it was her task to liberate other peoples from the yoke of their feudal prejudices. France, as the *peuple législateur* of Europe, monopolized the name of nation. The other nations of Europe would have to revolt against their French governess before the principle of nationalism could become general. It was the Spaniards, the most reactionary people in Europe, who began the revolt

against Napoleon in 1808, and it was Wordsworth, the English poet, who first saw the significance of their insurrection.

> "The events of the last year," he wrote, "gloriously destroying many frail fears, have placed—in the rank of serene and immortal truths—a proposition which, as an object of belief, hath in all ages been fondly cherished; namely—That a numerous Nation, determined to be free, may effect its purpose in despite of the mightiest power which a foreign Invader can bring against it. These events also have pointed out how, in the ways of Nature and under the guidance of Society, this happy end is to be attained: in other words, they have shewn that the cause of the People, in dangers and difficulties issuing from this quarter of oppression, is safe while it remains not only in the bosom but in the hands of the People; or (what amounts to the same thing) in those of a government which, being truly *from* the People, is faithfully *for* them."[3]

This stated the new principle of popular legitimacy that was to conquer the world.

2

Wordsworth with deep political insight hailed a successful revolt against a Dominant Power before the revolt had succeeded. But the theory of popular legitimacy remained full of uncertainties and ambiguities, which the succeeding centuries have explored. Its early devotees thought that it was natural for every people to choose its allegiance for itself, and that granted this right, it would be simple to reorganize the states-system along national lines. Mazzini said confidently in 1847, in his opening address to the international society he had founded under the name of Young Europe, "There is no international question as to forms of government, but only a national question."[4] Nevertheless, there *was* an international question. What were the marks or qualities of cultural identity that entitled a people to claim to be a nation? By what standards, other than by successful revolt, might existing Powers test such claims?

And the qualitative question concealed a quantitative question. Was there a limit of size for a people claiming to be a nation?[5] Wordsworth recognized Spain,

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[3] Wordsworth, *Wordsworth's Tract on the Convention of Cintra*, pp. 155–6; italics in the original.

[4] Mazzini quoted in John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, First Baron Acton, 'Nationality', in *The History of Freedom and Other Essays*, ed. John Neville Figgis and Reginald Vere Laurence (London: Macmillan, 1907), p. 286.

[5] [Ed.] In an earlier draft, Wight here asked, "How small a division of the human race might claim to be a nation? Was there a minimum unit for self-determination?"

Italy, France, Germany, Russia and the British Isles as the nations of Europe, but said, "The smaller states must disappear, and merge in the large nations and wide-spread languages."[6] Mazzini granted national freedom to Hungary and Poland, which Wordsworth ignored, but he thought Portugal should merge with Spain, and Scandinavia form a single nation, dismissed the claims of Ireland, and was a colonialist about Asia, an "appendix of Europe" to be civilized by Russia and England.[7] His vision of a national Europe was closer to medieval Christendom than to the Europe of the Versailles Settlement. Until 1870, nationalism seemed predominantly a consolidating process, with the unifications of Italy and Germany and the defeat of secession in the United States as its great examples. After 1870, its disintegratory tendencies came to the fore. So long as they had been seen mainly in the Spanish Empire in Latin America, and in the Ottoman Empire in south-eastern Europe (which all right-thinking Europeans con-demned), they had seemed welcome. But how far might they go?[8] Gladstone's conversion to the cause of Irish home rule in the 1880s was deeply disturbing to many far-sighted men. Home rule, independence, secession, made a slip-pery slope.

The quantitative question enclosed yet another question: the relative rights of majorities and minorities. It is a difficult question in domestic society, where the differences dividing minorities from majorities will not usually be those of nationality. In international society, it is the question whether it is morally right or politically practicable to compel a minority to inhabit the confines of a single state with a majority that it regards as alien or even inimical. It became a central question at the Paris Peace Conference, when the complexity and confusion of the national map of Europe was for the first and last time systematically studied by the Great Powers. President Wilson proclaimed the principle that all nations had a right to self-determination in his great speeches of 1918, but even before he arrived in Paris and confronted the difficulties of applying the principle, he had seen some of its limits. "All well-defined national aspirations," he said in the Four Principles speech of 11 February 1918, "shall be accorded the utmost satisfaction that can be accorded them without introducing new or perpetuating old elements of discord and antagonism that would be likely in time to break the peace of Europe, and consequently of the world."[9] The proviso defined the difficulties of the program.

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[6] Wordsworth, letter to Captain Pasley, 28 March 1811, in *Wordsworth's Tract on the Convention of Cintra,* p. 238; cf. pp. 163–4.

[7] Bolton King, *The Life of Mazzini* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1911), pp. 107, 309.

[8] [Ed.] In an earlier draft, Wight here asked, "Were there limits to the right of secession?"

[9] Wilson, speech of 11 February 1918, "The Four Principles," quoted in H. W. V. Temperley, ed., *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris* (London: Oxford University Press, Hodder and Stoughton, 1920), vol. I, p. 439: Fourth Principle. It is true that in other speeches he was not so cautious.

3

There were three different tests of popular legitimacy, to which nationalist leaders variously appealed: language, history and choice. They often overlapped and reinforced one another, but they were also often in conflict. Language seemed the simplest, and was perhaps the oldest. As early as the year 968 bishop Liudprand of Cremona, on an embassy to Constantinople from the Western Emperor Otto the Great, had told the Eastern Emperor Nicephorus Phocas that Apulia belonged not to the Byzantine Empire but to the Kingdom of Italy "as the speech of its inhabitants proves."[10]

The French encouraged the notion that the language of a province or population is evidence of the state it ought to adhere to, because France was the largest continental state with a fairly homogeneous language, and there were French-speaking peoples beyond her boundaries. The notion became the doctrine of linguistic nationalism as a result of the French Revolution, but it had already appeared earlier, in dynastic times. When Charles the Bold of Burgundy died in battle, and the chief candidate for his daughter Mary's hand was Maximilian of Austria, Louis XI quickly seized the opportunity to send troops into the spreading Burgundian lands along the eastern frontier of France. "He invaded everywhere, alleging in each place a different claim." In Flanders he appealed to the sentiment for which the word "national" was not yet in use. "If my cousin were well advised," he said to the Flemings, "she would accept marriage to the Dauphin. You Walloons, you speak French, you need a French prince, not a German."[11]

Over a hundred years later Henry IV extended the idea. As a result of the Franco-Savoyard War of 1600-1, France acquired from Savoy the French-speaking districts of Bresse, Bugey, and Gex, which lie between the Rhône and the Saône. When deputies from the new territories came to pay homage to the King, he said to them: "It was reasonable that since you naturally speak French, you should be subjects of the King of France. I grant willingly that the Spanish language remains to Spain, the German to Germany; but all the French ought to belong to me." A French historian has described this pronouncement as being Henry IV's true Grand Design, rather than that attributed to him after his death by Sully.[12] It is

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[10] *Legatio*, ch. vii. An authoritative edition offers a different translation: 'The land…which you say belongs to your empire, is proved by race and language to be part of the kingdom of Italy.' Liudprand of Cremona, 'Relatio de Legatione Constantinopolitana', in *The Works of Liudprand of Cremona*, trans. F. A. Wright (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1930), p. 239.

[11] Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la révolution française* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit et Cie., 1903–1905), vol. I, *Les moeurs politiques et les traditions*, p. 257, citing François Guizot, *Histoire de France depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'en 1789* (Paris: Hachette, 1873), vol. II, p. 432.

[12] Pierre Mathieu, *Histoire de France depuis 1598 jusqu'en 1604* (Paris, 1606), II, p. 444; Joseph Reinach, *Recueil des instructions données aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France*, vol. X, *Naples et Parme* (Paris: Alcan, 1893), introduction, p. xci.

plain that the doctrine would not have been used by the French Kings if it had required territory to be ceded rather than acquired.

The linguistic test of popular legitimacy, the principle that all a people who speak the same language have the right to form a single state, was consecrated by the unification of Italy, and became the rule of the peace settlement of 1919. It was on the whole a principle imposed by the educated middle class upon the illiterate peasantry, who did not think of their dialects as versions of a national language; and the peace settlement of 1919 had examples of people voting in contradiction to their linguistic ties and of leaders of nations to whom the national language was strange.[13]

The appeal to history is more vague and general than the appeal to language. Indeed, the linguistic test commended itself to nationalist pedants in the nineteenth century as a scientific test of the results of history. History implies culture, which is the social result of living together in time; especially it includes religion, the greatest of all social influences.

4

The appeal to history is more varied, and has been less cogent. It has taken three forms.

1. It has been made by an existing Power to justify expansion. The classic example is the French hankering after the frontiers of ancient Gaul—the Ocean, the Pyrenees, the Alps and the Rhine, which were desired before the French Revolution as the historical limits, and afterwards as the natural limits of France.[14] The retention of obsolete titles shows such a claim in a fossilized form, as when the King of Great Britain continued to call himself King of France, and Egypt continues to call itself the United Arab Republic.[15]
2. It has been made by an existing Power to resist change. Before the French Revolution, prescription and long usage were the basis of legitimacy, because they presumed consent and upheld the safety of states and the tranquility of peoples. After the French Revolution, they became more likely to be seen as evidence of injustice and oppression.

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[13] *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, ed. by H. W. V. Temperley (London: Henry Frowde and Hodder and Stoughton, 1924), vol. VI, pp. 244n, 557; and Martin Wight, "Eastern Europe," in Arnold Toynbee and Frank T. Ashton-Gwatkin, eds., *The World in March 1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), pp. 217–18.

[14] Sorel, vol. I, pp. 319–25. Cf. C.-G. Picaret, *La Diplomatie Française au temps de Louis* XIV (Paris: Alcan, 1930), pp. 177–8.

[15] [Ed.] The political union of Egypt and Syria known as the United Arab Republic lasted from 1958 to 1961, when Syria withdrew. Egypt retained the 'United Arab Republic' name until 1971.

3. Thus, the appeal to history has been made by subjugated peoples demanding change. This is the version that has contributed to the principle of popular legitimacy. The submerged nations of Eastern Europe, of whom the Poles are the classic example, expressed their national consciousness at first in historic terms, claiming to resume a history that had been interrupted in the past.[16] Many of the nations that gained their independence in Asia and Africa after 1945 made a similar claim.

Sir Lewis Namier has told how in 1919 a Polish diplomat expounded to him "the very extensive (and mutually contradictory) territorial claims of his country." Namier inquired on what principle they were based. "He replied with rare frankness: 'On the historical principle, corrected by the linguistic wherever it works in our favour.'"[17] But in general the Paris Peace Conference adopted the linguistic principle in drawing the new frontiers of Europe, modified according to the demands of economic life, communications, and defensibility. The most striking example of subordinating the historical to the linguistic was the establishment of a South Slav state, in which Catholic and Western Croats and Slovenes found themselves in uneasy partnership with the Orthodox Serbs with whom they had no common experience.

The only instance where the Conference endorsed the historic principle at the expense of the linguistic was Czechoslovakia. The Czechs claimed the frontiers of the lands of the Bohemian Crown on grounds of historic right and juridical continuity, although these enclosed the German-speaking communities who afterwards came to be known as the Sudetendeutsch. The Allied Great Powers conceded this for economic and strategic reasons.[18]

The Hungarians then put forward exactly the same claim for retaining the frontiers of the Hungarian Kingdom, which they asserted with pardonable exaggeration to have been for a thousand years a political unity predestined by nature.[19] Their claim was rejected. The allies used two arguments: that Hungary had grave responsibility for the launching of the war by the Dual Monarchy in 1914, and that the Magyars had misgoverned their subject peoples. "Even a thousand-year-old state is not built for permanence (*n'est pas fondé à subsister*) when its history is that of a long oppression by a minority avaricious for rule of the races enclosed within its frontier. Historic right does not avail against the will

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[16] Wight, "Eastern Europe," pp. 221–3.

[17] L. B. Namier, *1848: The Revolution of the Intellectuals*, Raleigh Lecture on History (Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 66. Cf. H. J. Paton in *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, vol. VI, pp. 235–6.

[18] H. W. V. Temperley, ed., *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris* (London: Henry Frowde and Hodder and Stoughton, 1921), vol. IV, pp. 267–9.

[19] The Hungarians' most astonishingly stable frontier had been that dividing them from the Germans. It was marked by the little river Leitha from 1043 to 1919, when as part of the peace settlement the Burgenland was transferred from Hungary to Austria.

of peoples, and of this there can be no doubt."[20] In fact, the subject peoples had already emancipated themselves, and the Romanians had occupied and sacked Budapest.

The true justification for treating Czechoslovakia and Hungary differently, however, was that the Czechoslovak nation was not viable without the historic frontiers of Bohemia, though they incorporated 3 ½ million Germans with 8 million Czechoslovaks; while a truncated Hungary, in which the 10 million dominant Magyars had been shorn of their 10 million subject peoples, was viable without the historic frontiers of Great Hungary. This was seen at the time, and subsequent history confirmed it.[21]

As the principle of popular sovereignty has spread outside Europe, the historical claim has gained an ascendancy over the linguistic. The nations of Asia and Africa cannot, on the whole, build themselves upon linguistic homogeneity. The greatest linguistic group, those who speak Arabic (whatever its differences of dialect and divergences between classical Arabic and the vernacular) are, as it has been wittily said, divided by nothing so much as by the question of Arab unity. This colonial nationalism easily takes a negative form, repudiating the history of subjection to a Western empire, but then seeks sustenance in a vision of a greater historic past, as of medieval Ghana and Zimbabwe or the empires of Sri Vijaya and Majapahit. The leading Arab state makes an appeal to its ancient, pre-Arab, Pharaonic past. The appeal to religion is more cogent outside Europe than within. Pakistan is the supreme modern example of a state being established on an exclusively religious foundation. If Saudi Arabia is a nation, it is by reason of the stern Islamic puritanism of the Wahhabi movement. But the supreme example of an appeal to history to justify the making of a new national state, where an ancient religion has generated a unique sense of manifest destiny, is Israel.

5

The third way of testing popular legitimacy seems the simplest: not to consult the doubtful oracles of language and history, but to invite those concerned to express their wishes. But the simplicity is deceptive. How do you decide who is concerned, and establish the unit of consultation? How do you translate their wishes into political form, and formulate the alternatives between which a choice must be made? And who supervises these procedures?

[20] *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, vol. IV, p. 422.
[21] See R. W. Seton-Watson in *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, vol. IV, pp. 276–7. The national composition of Hungary before 1914 is described in A. J. P. Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1948), appendix 4, pp. 268–9.

It has been difficult in international history to employ the smallest unit of consultation, the individual himself, and allow him to choose his allegiance. The first examples of the legal right of individual option for nationality occur in treaties of the seventeenth century. They allowed the inhabitants of the provinces ceaselessly annexed to the expanding France to change either their allegiance or their residence. But this remained exceptional until the nineteenth century.[22] Perhaps the most striking example of the exercise of the right in the twentieth century was the free movement of nearly a million inhabitants from North Vietnam to South Vietnam immediately after the Geneva Agreements of 1954.[23] This freedom was the only happy aspect of that ill-fated settlement, and it was due to exceptional circumstances. The majority of the population of the world have never had the legal right, let alone the opportunity, whether after conquest or in time of peace, of freely emigrating.[24]

French history in the dynastic age affords what is perhaps the earliest example of an appeal to choice, or popular consultation, to confirm the legitimacy of a conquest. When Charles V captured Francis I at the battle of Pavia in 1525 and took him a prisoner to Madrid, Francis recovered his freedom by signing a treaty of peace with the Emperor. Its chief provision was that he would retrocede the Duchy of Burgundy to Charles, which Louis XI had seized fifty years before from Charles's grandmother Mary, and Charles regarded as his rightful patrimony. As soon as Francis got back to Paris, he found reasons to violate his promise. He said that Burgundy could not be ceded without first being consulted. The estates of Burgundy were summoned, and were suitably persuaded to issue a declaration requesting the King not to surrender his subjects who wished to remain under his crown. "Here surely in this declaration," says a French historian, "which may not have been entirely spontaneous but would have served no purpose had it not corresponded to local feeling, is one of the first expressions of 'the rights of peoples to self-determination.'"[25] It was indeed in several respects the ancestor of the plebiscite.

The plebiscite, which means putting a simple question of fundamental importance to the direct vote of the people, was introduced into the states-system by the French Revolution, to give effect to the principle that peoples (hitherto

[22] Sir George Norman Clark, *The Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), p. 143; Sir Geoffrey Butler and Simon Maccoby, *The Development of International Law* (London and New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1928), pp. 340–5.

[23] Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities in Vietnam, 20 July 1954, article 14 (d); Final Declaration of the Geneva Conference, 21 July 1954, article 8. These are in *Further Documents Relating to the Discussion of Indochina at the Geneva Conference*, Cmd. 9239 (1954). They are conveniently accessible in Marvin E. Gettleman, *Vietnam: History, Documents and Opinions on a Major World Crisis* (Penguin special, 1965), pp. 148, 161; cf. pp. 177, 208.

[24] See Lassa Oppenheim, *International Law: A Treatise*, 8th edition, ed. by Sir Hersch Lauterpacht (London and New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1955), vol. I, pp. 647–9, paragraphs 296–296a.

[25] Joseph Calmette, *The Golden Age of Burgundy: The Magnificent Dukes and Their Courts*, trans. by Doreen Weightman (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962), p. 344.

called "subjects") had the right to dispose of their allegiance. It is indeed an instance of a political device being used internationally before it is used for internal politics. Avignon in 1791, Savoy in 1792,[26] were allowed to unite themselves to France as the result of a popular vote, before the still-born Constitution of 1793 was put to the French people in a similar way.[27] The plebiscite in Savoy was conducted with rare scrupulosity, but those which followed were soon perverted by every kind of intimidation and falsification, and the plebiscite became an instrument of conquest.[28]

Much of the interest in the international politics of the nineteenth century is to see the national idiom steadily ousting the dynastic. The principle of national self-determination introduced new methods of international intercourse, pressure and expansion. The plebiscite replaced dynastic marriage as the means of legitimizing the transfer of sovereignty. In most cases, the plebiscite gave the result wanted by the authorities that arranged it, or confirmed the bargain struck.

The most famous example is the cession of Savoy and Nice by Piedmont to France in 1860. Napoleon III and Cavour, when they met in secret conference at Plombières in 1858, had discussed this, if not agreed on it in principle, as a way of compensating France for Piedmontese aggrandisement "from the Alps to the Adriatic." (The Plombières meeting also illustrated the dying dynastic mode, since the two statesmen spent the greater part of their time in arranging the marriage between Napoleon's disreputable cousin, Prince Jerome Bonaparte, and the fifteen-year-old daughter of Cavour's King.) When Tuscany and Emilia (the province composed of the two former states of Parma and Modena and the Papal territory of Romagna) voted themselves into the united Italy in March 1860, Napoleon, who was himself pressed by French public opinion for some territorial consolation, compelled Cavour to pay the price. The Treaty of Turin of 24 March 1860 between the two Powers announced the cession of Savoy and Nice to France. "Les gouvernements," said article 1, "se concerteront le plus tôt possible sur les meilleurs moyens d'apprécier et de constater les manifestations de cette volonté."[29]

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[26] Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la révolution française* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit et Cie., 1903–1905), II, *La chute de la royauté*, pp. 98–104, 293; Albert Sorel, *L'Europe et la révolution française* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit et Cie., 1903–1905), III, *La guerre aux rois, 1792–1793*, pp. 114–16, 198–204.

[27] There were precedents in the New England states for this kind of referendum. The word plebiscite was consecrated by the Consulate and Empire because it was part of the political panoply of ancient Rome.

[28] The standard works are Sarah Wambaugh, *Plebiscites* (1918) and *Plebiscites since the World War* (1933), both published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. There are useful résumés in Geoffrey Butler and Simon Maccoby, chapter X, "Changes of Nationality," and C. R. M. F. Cruttwell, *A History of Peaceful Change in the Modern World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), chapter V.

[29] *State Papers*, vol. 50, p. 413. The wording in some reproductions of the Treaty of Turin is slightly different: 'les meilleurs moyens d'apprécier et de constater la manifestation de ces volontés'. The key clause might be translated as follows: 'It is agreed by their Majesties that this annexation [*réunion*] will be effected without any constraint upon the wishes of the populations and that the Governments of the Emperor of the French and of the King of Sardinia will concert together as soon as possible on the best means of assessing and taking note of the expression of these wishes.'

French troops were sent into Savoy and Nice to arrange the plebiscites, powerfully supported by a commercial and financial commission which dispensed glowing assurances of economic benefits to come. Both French and Piedmontese forces were then decently withdrawn and the plebiscites were conducted in April 1860 by carefully selected pro-French native officials, with the desired result.

Cruttwell has remarked on the curious circumstance that Savoy voted in 1792 to unite with Revolutionary France; in 1815 acquiesced in reunion with Piedmont, evinced no serious discontent and generated no pro-French party; and in 1860 voted to unite with reactionary Catholic imperial France.[30] Although not entirely spontaneous, the popular consultations did clearly register local feeling; but we might conclude that plebiscites tend to be arranged in territories where judicious manipulation can mould the decision.

The plebiscites which brought united Italy into being were in the same way a method of annexation, by Piedmont.[31] The unification required not only the expulsion of Austria from Lombardy and Venetia, but also the dethronement of the duchess of Parma and Piacenza, the duke of Modena, the grand-duke of Tuscany, and the King of the Two Sicilies, as well as stripping the Pope of all his territorial possessions except his main residence. These changes, whether carried out by popular revolt, instigated revolt, or Garibaldian conquest, were ratified by plebiscites. The plebiscites were managed. In Tuscany the return of the expelled dynasty was excluded from the alternatives of the vote, because it might have been popular with the peasants. In Sicily and Naples the continuance of independence *without* the return of the expelled dynasty was excluded, because that might have distracted the voters from the national idea. The electorates were mostly illiterate and incapable of understanding the issue. Mr. Mack Smith has pointed out that the votes of intelligent men sometimes "went to the government which offered the best hope of law and order at the moment…One can even suspect that it was the most common of all sentiments during this year of national revolution, and that it was as powerful as the more specialized impulse of patriotism in helping to form a national state."[32] The remark may have a wider application. All the same, the plebiscites were successful as a means of legitimizing the transfer of sovereignty. Their main function was to assure foreign Powers that the populations concerned were in favor of the changes. And though unrest continued, especially in Sicily and Naples, it remains true, as Cruttwell said, that

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[30] Cruttwell, *Peaceful Change*, p. 152.

[31] A Parliament at Turin, including deputies from Naples, Sicily, and the former Papal States, conferred on Victor Emmanuel the title of King of Italy by the grace of God and the will of the people on 17 March 1861. But he remained Victor Emmanuel the Second. More important, in spite of some agitation for a constituent assembly for the new united kingdom, its constitution remained that which Charles Albert had granted to his Kingdom of Sardinia in 1848. This was nominally the fundamental law of Italy until the fall of the monarchy in 1946 and the republican constitution of 1948.

[32] Denis Mack Smith, *Cavour and Garibaldi 1860* (Cambridge University Press, 1954), p. 379.

"there has been no irredentist party in any area transferred by plebiscite before 1919."[33]

It is worth remarking the contrast between the methods by which Germany and Italy were first unified, and then legitimized before the court of international opinion. In Italy they were offensive alliance between Piedmont and France, the Dominant Power in Europe, popular revolt, revolutionary war, and the plebiscite. In Germany they were Prussian conquest gouging a channel for German nationalism, diplomatic negotiation between the states uniting, and a final veneer of universal suffrage. The outbreak of war between Prussia and Austria in June 1866 dissolved the German Confederation of 1815.

In the flash of victory, in August and September, Prussia, in the person of Bismarck, was engaged in three interdependent sets of negotiations, with defeated Austria, with the German states north of the River Main, and with the German states south of the Main. 1. Austria by the Treaty of Prague agreed that the old Confederation was dissolved and that Germany might be organized anew without Austria herself taking part. 2. The states north of the Main (some of whom, particularly Saxony, had gone to war against Prussia on the Austrian side) were summoned to Berlin to discuss a new confederation, "a congress of roaches presided over by a benevolent pike."[34] At a second conference their delegates discussed and amended a constitution for a North German Confederation drafted by Bismarck. In 1867 a constituent Reichstag, elected by universal suffrage but with virtually no powers of amending the constitution, enacted it, and it was confirmed by the parliaments of the several states. 3. The four states south of the Main (Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden and Hesse-Darmstadt) had all been belligerent against Prussia. With these she made generous peace-treaties, purchased by secret defensive and offensive alliances, which bound them to put their armies under Prussian command in time of war. The Franco-Prussian War in 1870 brought the treaties into force. In November 1870, at a time when the victorious Prussian headquarters was established in Versailles, the four south German states made treaties agreeing to join the Confederation, and in 1871 with minor changes it became the German Empire.

Events took a different course in Italy from Germany because in Italy they were under some degree of international supervision. Cavour could not carry out his plans for Piedmontese aggrandisement without the help of Napoleon III, and the benevolent intervention of Britain proved almost equally important. Russell, the British foreign secretary, asked that the territorial changes in Italy should be confirmed by free elections. Napoleon III, himself a plebiscitary emperor, prepared the plebiscite. Bismarck, on the other hand, exerted all his powers to carry through the unification of Germany without foreign interference. Universal

[33] Cruttwell, *Peaceful Change*, p. 151.
[34] C. Grant Robertson, *Bismarck* (London: Constable and Company, 1918), p. 225.

suffrage was an idea he could supply himself. It awakened useful echoes of 1848; it was confined to the federal assembly, while Prussia herself, two-thirds of the Empire, carefully retained the three-class suffrage which effectively disfranchised the great majority; and it was (as Bismarck rightly thought while Germany was still not industrialised) a guarantee of conservatism.

Rumania gave a purer example of how national feeling expressed through popular assemblies could legitimize the subversion of treaties and revolutionary international arrangements, for the Romanians had neither a Prussia nor a Piedmont. The Danubian principalities of Moldavia and Walachia had been since the sixteenth century tributary to the Ottoman Empire, and from the end of the eighteenth century became objects of cupidity to Russia on the north and Austria on the west. Russia's occupation of them in 1853 was the occasion for the Crimean War. The Treaty of Paris, which registered the defeat of Russia in 1856, provided that the principalities should continue to be under the suzerainty of the Sublime Porte, and that Russia's previous claim to an exclusive protectorate should be replaced by a collective guarantee of the Great Powers. The union of the principalities was a matter on which the Powers were divided; they therefore took the weak course of referring it to a European commission of investigation; and meanwhile Turkey promised to convoke in each principality a representative council, to express the wishes of the people about their future. Turkey and Austria were both hostile to union, and now exerted themselves to rig the elections. Napoleon III, backed by Russia, Prussia and Piedmont, demanded that the rigged elections should be annulled. Fresh elections in 1857 returned assemblies which asked for union under a hereditary prince from some European dynasty. The Turkish government indignantly dissolved them.

In 1858 the Powers met in another Paris Conference to complete on behalf of the Principalities the work of the Congress of two years before. They agreed on a draft constitution put forward by France. It threaded a middle course between union and separation. The Principalities were to have separate assemblies and governments, and separate princes elected from among natives (and therefore subjects of the Porte). But they were to be styled the United Principalities of Moldavia and Walachia, and to have a central commission for unitary legislation as well as military uniformity. Early in 1859 the two assemblies upset this constitution, embodied in an international convention, by the unforeseen expedient of electing the same candidate as prince (an obscure colonel named Cuza), and thus effecting a personal union. Austria was distracted by the Italian War, and Turkey had to accept the *fait accompli*. From then on the convention of 1858 steadily crumbled. In 1861 a unitary government and assembly were established; in 1864 Cuza held a plebiscite on a new constitution, which increased his power. In 1866 he was deposed, and a provisional government prepared to elect a foreign prince, who would symbolize independence from the Sublime Porte. There was an international crisis. The Great Powers, foreseeing that Serbia and other Balkan

provinces of the Ottoman Empire might follow suit and the dissolution of the Empire get out of control, vetoed a foreign prince. The provisional government, however, had been negotiating with Prince Charles of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringer, and held a plebiscite which invited him to assume the government of the Principalities. The Powers declared that this contravened the convention of 1858. But Charles was smuggled across the frontier and proclaimed in Bucharest amid rejoicings, and a new constitution declared the Principalities one and indivisible under the name of Rumania. The Powers were now distracted by the Austro-Prussian War, and in October 1866 the Sublime Porte reluctantly recognized Charles as hereditary ruler of the United Principalities under the suzerainty of the Sultan. Thus he remained until the independence of Rumania was finally recognized by the Congress of Berlin in 1878.

Rumania was the original for Ruritania, and her national self-determination was marked by intrigue, bravado, defiance and good fortune, without war. Or rather, she reaped the benefit of others' wars. The Powers most dangerous to her national development were Russia, which was quiescent after defeat in the Crimean War, and her old suzerain Turkey, who could not defend her legal rights without the backing of the Great Powers. The Great Powers were divided, and twice, in 1859 and in 1866, the Rumanian revolution was lost sight of in a greater European crisis. Only at the last stage, Rumania was dragged into war against Turkey in Russia's wake in 1877, and purchased her formal independence by being compelled to cede Bessarabia to her rough liberator.[35]

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The further the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 recedes into the perspective of time, the more it can be seen as the great assize of international history. In spite of all the conflicts, fears, hatreds and cupidities immortalized by Maynard Keynes and Harold Nicolson, disillusioned young liberals, never before and never since has so much impartiality, goodwill, painstaking investigation of evidence and rational discussion been devoted to establishing an international order that would be accepted as rightful. The Congress of Vienna had sought stability, according to the old principle of "legitimacy." The Paris Peace Conference, in unprecedented circumstances of states breaking down and international revolution, over which the Allied Great Powers had only nominal control, sought justice according to the new principle of national self-determination. Justice between nations is difficult

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[35] For the crisis of 1858–1859, see W. G. East, *The Union of Moldavia and Wallachia, 1859* (Cambridge University Press, 1929); for the crisis of 1866, W. E. Mosse, *The Rise and Fall of the Crimean System 1855–1871* (Macmillan, 1963), chapter v. For the whole story, see T. W. Riker, *The Making of Roumania* (Oxford University Press, 1931); and R. W. Seton-Watson, *A History of the Roumanians* (Cambridge University Press, 1934).

to formulate and more difficult to embody in acceptable political arrangements. But the Versailles Settlement should be judged, not by the success with which Hitler within half a generation had perverted its principles in order to overthrow it and start a second German war, but by the way in which its main provisions for the European states-system survived that war.

At the peace settlement of 1919–1920, the plebiscite reached its zenith and became, as near as may be, an impartial method of self-determination. Earlier plebiscites had been used to determine the wishes of historic states or provinces, like Tuscany or Savoy, whose identity and frontiers were not substantially in question. The new post-war plebiscites tested the allegiance of ill-defined districts of heterogeneous population which were the debris of the collapsed Central Empires. They were arranged by Allied commissioners, who determined from the best available evidence both the unit within which the vote was to be taken and the method of voting. These plebiscites were at the limit of what was technically feasible in consulting popular wishes. "The practical difficulties are as great as the theoretical advantages."[36] They had to be policed by Allied troops, and there were not enough Allied troops to police more. In every case it was inherently difficult to get the decision made on the long-term and fundamental issues, undistracted by the immediate fears and confusions of the circumstances which made the plebiscite necessary at all.

Plebiscites were not held when their result might have been at the expense of one of the Allied Great Powers. France refused to allow the return of Alsace-Lorraine to be contingent on a plebiscite. Yugoslavia requested a plebiscite for Istria, to settle the dispute between herself and Italy, and Italy refused. Poland seized Vilna, the historic capital of Lithuania, on the grounds that the Poles were in a majority there. The League proposed a plebiscite, and arranged for nine neutral Powers to provide an international force to supervise. Lithuania raised difficulties, appealing to the historic against the plebiscitary principle; the Soviet Union objected to an international force so close to her borders; the nine Powers abandoned their role; and Poland remained in possession of Vilna. All the same, no victors in history have ever put their power so fairly behind a beneficent principle. The Saar plebiscite in 1935 marked the zenith of this method of self-determination. The Saar was a great German-speaking industrial community, to which France had historical and strategic claims. For fifteen years it was administered by an international commission responsible to the League of Nations. It then decided, through the first poll in international history to be conducted by neutral troops, to return to Germany. This plebiscite might be taken as the highest, as it was certainly the last, achievement of the reign of international law under the League of Nations.

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[36]   *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, vol. VI, p. 557. Cf. ibid., p. 245.

The settlement after the Second World War marked the abandonment of this constitutional mode of establishing legitimacy.[37] The partial Paris Peace Conference of 1946 to a great extent ratified the work of its predecessor by restoring the national boundaries of Europe as they had been established in 1919. The boundaries of Germany were the exception, for Germany was not represented at the Conference. Stalin had already pushed the Polish frontier westwards, engulfing the frontier so carefully and painfully delimited in 1919–1920 by the plebiscites on the boundaries of East Prussia and Upper Silesia, and the Western Powers had accepted this *de facto*.[38]

Instead of plebiscites, there were two activities which marked the difference between the age of Stalin and the age of Woodrow Wilson. One was the expulsion of minorities. The East European countries which had suffered conquest by the Germans now visited retribution on their own German minorities, and drove them out, so that ten million refugees crowded into prostrate Germany.[39] The second was denazification. In October 1918 President Wilson had proclaimed as a condition of making peace the destruction of arbitrary rule in Germany, by which he meant the imperial and Prussian constitutions.[40] Now, to be legitimised, Germany needed more than this degree of self-determination. She needed to be purged of those Germans who had violated the principles of civilised society. She was occupied by the Allies with the purposes, among others, of destroying the Nazi Party, eradicating Nazi institutions, and re-educating the German people in the principles of democracy.

Under the United Nations, the institution of the plebiscite lost ground, when it might have been expected to gain. The criteria of legitimacy became more arbitrary, more revolutionary, more ideological. The worst precedents of the Versailles Settlement became dominant. When in 1919 the Germans complained that the resurrected Poland was being given, in the former Prussian provinces of Posen and West Prussia, large German populations as well, they got the reply: "There is imposed upon the Allies a special obligation to use the victory which they have won in order to re-establish the Polish nation in the independence of which it was unjustly deprived more than one hundred years ago…To undo this wrong is the first duty of the Allies."[41] This line of argument was afterwards developed by Israel, to justify her own aggrandizement as rectifying the wrongs of the past,

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[37] [Ed.] The text from this paragraph to the end of 'Popular Legitimacy' is similar in several respects to passages in Wight's article 'International Legitimacy'.

[38] William Hardy McNeill, *America, Britain, & Russia: Their Co-operation and Conflict 1941–1946* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), pp. 608 and n., 617.

[39] Michael Balfour, "Four-Power Control in Germany 1945–1946," in Michael Balfour and John Mair, *Four-Power Control in Germany and Austria 1945–1946* (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 119–20.

[40] Reply of 14 October to German Note of 12 October 1918, in Temperley, *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, vol. I, pp. 452, 126.

[41] *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, vol. II, pp. 284–6.

what Bismarck called the *injuria temporum*,[42] rather than seeking to establish justice today. When in 1919 the Germans asked for a plebiscite in Alsace-Lorraine, the French replied in occult and irrelevant terms: "The question of Alsace-Lorraine is a question of right, and therefore not a French question but a world question."[43] It was with the same argument of indefeasible right, not to be tested by any popular consultation, that Indonesia in 1966 tried to evade her obligation to hold a plebiscite in West Irian.[44]

   In some unimportant instances the UN supervised plebiscites to decide the future of former colonies, as in British Togoland, the British Cameroons, and Western Samoa, or elections, as in French Togoland and Ruanda-Urundi. In a more important issue, at the beginning of the international conflict between Indonesia and Malaysia in 1963, it investigated and confirmed the elections by which North Borneo and Sarawak had chosen to join the Malaysian Federation. These consultations were designed to make it "as clear as possible to the electorate, covetous neighbours, and to the world at large that the principle of self-determination had been fully complied with."[45] But Ethiopia managed to swallow Eritrea in 1960 without the wishes of the inhabitants having been ascertained, India from 1947 onwards steadfastly refused to allow the plebiscite in Kashmir called for by Pakistan and the UN, Indonesia treated with contempt the UN observers who tried to attend "the act of free choice" which in 1969 she reluctantly allowed to be staged in West Irian,[46] and when Gibraltar expressed its own self-determination through its legislative assembly, the UN General Assembly voted to disregard it.[47]

[42] Otto Fürst von Bismarck, *Gedanken und Erinnerungen* (Stuttgart: Verlag der J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, 1898), vol. II, p. 267; *Bismarck: The Man and the Statesman, Being the Reflections and Reminiscences of Otto Prince von Bismarck*, trans. by A. J. Butler (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1898), vol. II, p. 290.

[43] Stéphen Pichon, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, quoted in Temperley, *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, vol. II, pp. 167, 280–2.

[44] Alan James, *The Politics of Peace-keeping* (New York and Washington: Frederick A. Praeger for the Institute for Strategic Studies, 1969), pp. 158, 165.

[45] James, ibid., p. 23.   [46] See Stewart Harris in *The Times*, 8 July 1969.

[47] [Ed.] There were several General Assembly votes on Gibraltar in the 1960s. It is not clear which one Wight had in mind, but it might have been UN General Assembly, *Question of Gibraltar*, 19 December 1967, A/RES/2353, available at: http://www.refworld.org/docid/3b00f1c74c.html. Wight also discussed the status of Gibraltar in his 1972 journal article 'International Legitimacy'.

19

What Confers Political Legitimacy in a Modern Society?

"What confers political legitimacy in a modern society?"* The question you have propounded for me to answer is full of ambiguities and concealed presuppositions. I am not sure that it is the right question.

1. What does "legitimacy" mean? It is a slippery notion, half legal, half moral. Legal, constitutional authority can become illegitimate if a sufficient number of persons subject to it withdraw their moral consent. It is possible that legal authority can become illegitimate if international society—a sufficient number of persons, not subject to that authority, outside its jurisdiction, but morally and socially involved with it—condemn it in some way. South Africa might be an example. Its government is perfectly legal, but its legitimacy might be thought to have been impugned by the various resolutions of condemnation in the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. And if legal authority has been stripped of its legitimacy, it is half way towards being regarded as illegal. When we use the word "legitimacy" in political argument, we can watch its sense swinging in pendulum fashion between the legal and the moral connotations.
2. What is "a modern society"? This is a terribly question-begging phrase. If modernity has only a temporal, chronological meaning—belonging to the now—we all possess it equally. If modernity has a meaning of value—of being in a special way identified with the supposed goodness of the now, of being in the vanguard of progress—then one of the most obvious and yet extraordinary features of the period since the Second World War is that the whole world aspires after this quality and claims it.

You and I might privately have the opinion that Soviet Russia is one of the most archaic and backward of states in the world today, a muscle-bound autocracy, but if we were talking to Mr. Brezhnev we should withhold our opinion and listen to him expounding the ultra-modernity of the socialist state, at the head of the

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* [Ed.] Martin Wight prepared this paper for delivery at the Liberal Summer School, Lancaster House, University of Sussex, Brighton, 21–23 July 1972, but was unable to deliver it, owing to his death on 15 July 1972.

human race.[1] The Third World passionately asserts both its right to modernity and its capacity for it. The propaganda of the Third World countries, whether advertising for investment or for tourists, emphasizes less what makes them culturally distinct than what makes them culturally similar to the rest of the world: airlines, container ports, industrial plants, silos, Hilton hotels, development. "Give us your pollution," said the Brazilian foreign minister the other day: we are determined to be modern as you are, we can take the rough with the smooth.[2]

I wonder if your committee in settling on this phrase, "a modern society," were really thinking of what we might more naturally call a Western society? The Third World is hurrying along but has not got there yet; the Communist bloc is special; it is the West which is properly modern. Is this the picture of the world that is delicately concealed beneath this ambiguous phrase? If so, there is a paradox. The societies of the Western world differ from those of the rest by being historically more deeply rooted, having a more consciously valued political and social continuity, being more at ease with their pasts. The rulers of the Communist and Third World states, by contrast, think in terms of revolutionary myths: the Marxist myth, the myth of liberation. Is "modernity," then, organically connected with historical continuity?

If there seems a paradox in presenting Western societies as modern societies *par excellence*, it might be pursued further. We might be inclined to say that it is precisely outside the Western world that the problems of legitimacy today arise. They arise in the plural and multi-national societies of the Third World especially, in relation to Biafra and Bangladesh, to the Portuguese colonies in Africa or to the Indians whom the Brazilian government is apparently exterminating in the Amazon. They arise in relation to the countries partitioned by ideological conflict. Where is legitimacy today in Korea, or Vietnam, or East Germany? Who has the most legitimate claim to rule Taiwan: the Peking government, or Chiang Kai-shek, or the Taiwanese themselves, who probably would like to be independent of both Chinese factions?

In the Western world, on the other hand, legitimacy is about as clear as things can be in this world. There are well-tried and well-understood processes of election and representation, producing decisions that, with more or less grumbling, can be and are accepted. In the past year we have had a great debate in this country, a rather spurious debate but a quite enjoyable chapter of our party games, about the legitimacy of Mr. Heath's railroading us into the European Community.[3]

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[1] [Ed.] Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, ruled the USSR from 1964 to 1982.

[2] [Ed.] At the United Nations Stockholm environment conference in 1972, the Brazilian environment minister reportedly said, 'If it is a choice between pollution and industry, or no pollution and no industry, give us your pollution.' Stewart Cohen, David Demeritt, John Robinson, and Dale Rothman, 'Climate Change and Sustainable Development: Towards Dialogue', *Global Environmental Change*, 8(4) (1998), p. 350.

[3] [Ed.] Edward Heath served as the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1970 to 1974.

We all know that it is legitimate for the government to carry its legislation by the smallest of parliamentary majorities. The Great Reform Bill passed its second reading in the House of Commons in 1831 by a majority of only one vote. The Habeas Corpus Act passed the House of Lords in 1679 only because the tellers jokingly counted a fat lord as ten, and failed to correct their figures.[4] Today we do not worry about this. We know it is how the system works. We accept the Reform Bill, and Trevelyan called Habeas Corpus "the best joke ever made in England."[5]

What is wrong about this reasoning? You may have noticed how my use of the word "legitimacy" has swung towards the legal side. Obviously the Heath government has constitutional authority so long as it can carry its legislation by a single vote. The question is moral authority. After making such pledges about seeking "whole-hearted consent," in an issue of such magnitude, is it legitimate to proceed according to the letter of the book?

But this is among the shallows of the subject. We must push out deeper. There is a growing number of people in the West who are not interested in "how the system works." They bring radical criticism against the system. These political dissenters can be divided into two groups: special critics and general critics. The special dissenters hold that the legitimacy of society is impaired because it neglects urgent special issues and needs. There are particular grievances and social abuses, concerned perhaps with minorities like immigrants or the gypsies, or with social groups like the aged or the homeless or students, that demand redress so insistently and yet ineffectively, that political action outside the system, perhaps even political disobedience, is justified in order to awaken a callous society to their existence. But in the end what they want is not so much a different society as a different share in the proceeds of the existing one.

The general dissenters go further. They repudiate the entire system as corrupt and unjust. The provision for constitutional protest they regard as nothing more than a part of the establishment, serving to buttress the rusty social order. It is the safety valve which bourgeois society has developed to allow the steam of resentment against its evils and inequalities to be let off under control, without harm to the fundamentals of the system.

These dissenters in different degrees withdraw their moral consent from government and society, and in that measure deprive legal authority of its legitimacy. The two kinds of dissenters usually are found cooperating in particular crises. They formed the diverse groups who produced the events of May 1968 in Paris. They have acted together in the United States in protest against the Vietnam War. The general dissenters try to gain the support of the special dissenters for their

[4] Gilbert Burnet, *The History of My Own Time*, ed. O. Airy (Clarendon Press, 1897–1900), ii, pp. 263–4.
[5] George Macaulay Trevelyan, *England Under the Stuarts* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), p. 406.

general aims, but after a particular effort or a particular victory (or defeat) the special dissenters are apt to fall away: which is why political dissent has so far had limited success in Western countries.

Two questions arise here. (1) What theory of legitimacy do these dissenters hold? How do they justify their political disobedience? (2) Can a minority perform a moral secession from the society of which they are a part, by saying they no longer recognize its legitimacy? Is it legitimate for the majority to restrain or coerce them into resentful conformity? How big a minority is required to pull the rug of legitimacy finally and altogether from under the feet of legal authority? Shall we say, quite simply, that legal authority remains legitimate until the dissident minority has grown into a majority, starting with a majority of one; and with a majority of one, at a stroke, legitimacy is withdrawn?

The world of history and politics is not a tidy rational garden, where superb tulips bloom in rows upon parallel stalks of rigid and immaculate justice. Nor is it a jungle. It is a wild garden, full of strange intrusive growths, where we ploddingly weed, and get a bed cleared, to see it overgrown again next month, and never altogether get rid of shrubs and creepers that do not derive their legitimacy from our planting.

What is needed is not classification of misgovernment and tyrannies, Greek colonels, Haiti, South Africa, etc., but refinement of the instrument of judgment.

Where do the dissenters get their own theory of legitimacy? For the special dissenters, it comes on the whole from within the Western tradition. Here there is the richest deposit in the world of arguments that the legitimacy of government and society presupposes the right of political protest and arrangements for the redress of grievances. Des Wilson and Peter Hain are in a tradition that goes back through Shaftesbury and Francis Place to Granville Sharp and Defoe.[6]

The general dissenters, on the other hand, usually derive their theory of legitimacy from outside the Western tradition. The most obvious form it takes is Marxism. Marx himself was of course a marvelous product of diverse strains in Western culture; but it is non-Western societies that have revolutionized themselves according to versions of his teaching. This illustrates the interdependence of the Western world with the rest, and the difficulty of restricting the word "modern" to the West alone. When a Western dissenter wants a more modern theory of legitimacy than the fly-blown theories of John Stuart Mill and T. H. Green, he finds it in China or in Cuba.

The hold of Marxism today on Western thought is an interesting phenomenon. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that it is has become the established doctrine of

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[6] [Ed.] When Martin Wight prepared this paper in 1972, Des Wilson was perhaps best known as a columnist for *The Observer* and as one of the founders of Shelter, a charity for the homeless. He subsequently became a leading figure in the Liberal Party and the Liberal Democrats. Peter Hain in 1972 was probably best known as a campaigner against apartheid in South Africa. He went on to become a prominent British Labour Party politician.

Western intellectuals. You can see its quasi-established status in the position of Sartre in France or of *The New York Review of Books* in America, and in the way that university departments of philosophy in this country now make appointments specifically in Marxist philosophy.

A student I was teaching last term said to me, as we discussed his essay, "Well, I was brought up a Marxist," with the same pious smile with which a hundred years ago he would have said, "Well, I was brought up an Anglican." It was said spontaneously and without having been challenged. He was referring I think to upbringing by his school teachers rather than by his parents; but he meant that this had given him a frame of ideas which he knew no reason to criticize. He is representative of a generation.

The intellectual hold of Marxism as an ideology has increased as the attractiveness of Marxism in practice has decreased. Marxist society in Soviet Russia has long been regarded as having somehow gone wrong. Mao offered the true alternative, until the Great Cultural Revolution subsided. Since then, and more particularly since the Sino-American rapprochement, the Chinese People's Republic has seemed to fade into the light of common day, and become a Great Power like any other. Castro's experiment arouses less enthusiasm than it did when Che Guevara and Régis Debray were spreading the gospel of rural guerrilla warfare in the sixties. The end of the rainbow shifted southwards to Chile when Allende got in, but he has been very far from providing a satisfactory revolutionary transformation of society.[7]

But in spite of these disappointments, Marxism as an ideology, as an explanation of what is wrong with the world, as a statement of goals and a belief in inspiring action, is stronger in the Western world than it has ever been. This is a profoundly interesting circumstance: the growth of the power of the creed along with the reluctant recognition that in practice it has fallen short of expectation. It is hard to recall a precedent in intellectual history. I think it is too early yet to be able to tell whether it is another chapter in the creative ferment of Western intellectual life, perhaps comparable to the extraordinary vogue of German philosophy throughout Europe between the generations of Coleridge and Croce, or whether it marks the decisive alienation of the Western intelligentsia from Western traditions.

In this case, there is a crisis of legitimacy. Legitimacy is not a word in the Marxist vocabulary, though of course Marxism has a doctrine about what legitimizes political authority. But deriving from an intellectual assumption of the primacy of contradiction, of the Heraclitan conflict of opposites, and from a psychological impulse of hatred for evil rather than love for good, Marxism is strongest as a negative creed. It has a doctrine of illegitimacy rather than of legitimacy,

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[7] [Ed.] Salvador Allende was President of Chile from November 1970 to September 1973.

which is a powerful solvent of societies that have lost their self-confidence.[8] The most important question for us, in considering legitimacy, is whether we accept the Marxist theory that our society is illegitimate, and if not, why not.

What confers legitimacy in a modern society? I want to make four points as a prolegomena to an answer. They are considerations that must be taken into account before we can find an answer.

1. Necessity of Bureaucracy

In politics, which means making arrangements for multitudes of men, action precedes legitimation as often as legitimacy prescribes action. Our general assumption, in a civilized society, is that the broad lines of policy are laid down by proper authority, and that the executive then takes appropriate action to give effect to them. This is half the truth. It is a kind of external truth, the constitutional truth. The internal truth is the experience of the man in power, which is on the whole a pragmatic truth. He is faced with Clydeside shop stewards who organize a successful work-in, or miners on strike who picket the power stations, or speculation against the pound on the foreign exchange, and he does the best he can. He has to make immediate decisions at the price of inconsistencies and of what some of his supporters will regard as betrayals of principle; and he leaves the justification to afterwards. As Mr. Heath said last week, "I have stated publicly that if the nation was facing a disastrous economic situation, any government must be prepared to take measures to deal with it."[9]

Behind the man in power, the ruler, supporting him, are the administrative officials, the bureaucracy. Most people regard a bureaucracy as a dismal necessity, but a necessity it is. Since the Roman Empire every modern society has had a class of administrative officials as its cartilaginous structure. The necessity has become greater as society has become industrial and technological. Marxists have deplored this necessity, but found no way of avoiding it.

In Marxism there is an anarchist streak, which has always deplored the necessity of bureaucracy, and when in the Marxist fulfillment of history the state withers away, bureaucrats will vanish as well. Bureaucrat has traditionally been a word of abuse in Russia. "Incorrigible bureaucrats and office rats," Stalin once called them,[10] perhaps to divert attention from the bureaucracy behind the bureaucracy by which his own power was made effective.

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[8] [Ed.] See Martin Wight's essay 'The Communist Theory of International Relations' and the section on Communism in his 1972 *International Relations* article, 'International Legitimacy'. These works may be found in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, pp. 131–140 and pp. 182–209, respectively.

[9] *The Times*, 14 July 1972.

[10] Report to the 17th Congress of the C.P.S.U., 1934, in Emile Burns, ed., *Handbook of Marxism* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1935), p. 950.

Bureaucrats are the people who make the necessary arrangements whereby hundreds or thousands of men can live together and cooperate in some sort of order. You may think of them as faceless, prompted by love of power, pushing their careers complacently up the ridiculous ladders of the Honours List. You may think of them as selfless, devoted to the public good, working long hours for meagre rewards and small thanks. But they are the experts: they carry the collective practical memory of society. They know how the system works, what has been tried and what has failed, the alternative plans now available and which is more likely to produce the desired result.

It is not only the Civil Service in central and local government of which I speak. Every smaller society has its bureaucracy. Almost all that gets done efficiently in this university gets done by the administrators; almost all that is done inefficiently is done by the academics. And every private association has its officials, down to the honorary secretary and honorary treasurer who write the minutes, draw up the programme, and struggle unavailingly against the apathy of the members. This Liberal Summer School was arranged by the officials of the Committee, not by a demo outside Whitehall Place. It is legitimated, *ex post facto*, by what advantage you get out of it.

Like all men who exercise power, bureaucrats tend to extend the range of their power. Politicians come and go; the officials are always there. In the interstices of political action they make the administrative decisions that keep things going, and the line between administrative and political can easily become blurred. There is reason to suppose that educational policy in this country since 1945 has been made more by the officials of the Ministry than by the two parties.

The question of legitimacy, then, is partly the question of legitimating what the bureaucrats have done on our behalf.

2. Political Norms and Popular Consultation

My first point is that action often precedes legitimation. My second is that legitimacy implies agreement about political norms.

The simplest way of stating the moral element in legitimation is that it confers on society or on the regime the consent of the governed. All government depends on the loyalty of some of the governed. The despots of antiquity depended on the loyalty of the army; the despots of modernity depend on the loyalty of the Party.[11] But the wider the range of required consent, the larger becomes the question, what is the test of principle on which the consent is given? The principle of

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[11] See J. R. Lucas, *The Principles of Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), pp. 75–76, on "the Mameluke argument."

government by consent inescapably raises the principle of the norms or standards by which political life ought to be judged.

Government by consent means organized popular consultation. Let us use the phrase in the wide sense. In this country, popular consultation takes the form of elective parliamentary government. Ministers make policy, and the officials carry it out: this is the theory, and substantially the truth. Of course the distinction cannot be clear: ministers accept the advice of their officials, it is often thought too much; and there are many aspects of national life—environmental pollution today might be one of them, raising the school-leaving age another—where there are no differences of policy between the parties, and what is wanted is the most efficient legislation to meet an agreed technical need. In these circumstances the bureaucrats probably have a decisive say.

Assessing the relative influence of ministers and their officials in matters on which the documents have become public is a happy hunting-ground of historians. Was it Sir Edward Grey,[12] or the little group of high Foreign Office civil servants, outstandingly competent and strongly anti-German, who got us into the 1914 war? How far are the sinister figures of Horace Wilson and Nevile Henderson to be blamed for the policy of appeasement? Here, at any rate, the making of policy was firmly in the hands of the Prime Minister.[13]

Rousseau poured contempt on the British form of popular consultation. "The people of England regards itself as free; but it is grossly mistaken; it is free only during the election of members of parliament. As soon as they are elected, slavery overtakes it, and it is nothing. The use it makes of the short moments of liberty it enjoys," he added, "shows indeed that it deserves to lose them."[14]

Rousseau held that representative government was a degraded survival of the feudal system, and that true legitimacy was only to be found in the direct democracy of a city-state. His influence has moulded the alternative forms of popular consultation in the world today. The most obvious is the plebiscite, used by both the Napoleons and by Hitler to legitimize their regimes. A similar mode of popular consultation is the voting for the Party's list of candidates, sometimes with a choice of candidates, in one-party states. This is the system that unites Communism and Fascism, and provides the original meaning of the word totalitarianism; and since

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[12] [Ed.] Sir Edward Grey, also known as Viscount Grey of Fallodon, served as the United Kingdom's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1905 to 1916. On 3 August 1914, at the outbreak of the First World War, he made the famous observation, 'The lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our life-time.' Viscount Grey of Fallodon, *Twenty-Five Years, 1892–1916* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925), vol. II, p. 20.

[13] [Ed.] The Prime Minister to whom Wight refers was, to be sure, Neville Chamberlain, who served in that office from 1937 to 1940, and who is best known for his policy of appeasement toward Nazi Germany, including the 1938 Munich agreement. Sir Horace Wilson (Chamberlain's advisor) and Sir Nevile Henderson (then the British Ambassador to Germany) supported Chamberlain's pursuit of appeasement policies.

[14] Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, book iii, chapter xv, in Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Discourses*, trans. by G. D. H. Cole (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1950), p. 94.

the majority of the states of the world today are one-party states, this might be regarded as the world's prevalent mode of legitimation.

3. Redress of Grievances

The Oxford philosopher T. H. Green, who a hundred years ago gave liberal political thought perhaps its supreme expression, argued that the right of resistance to the state is limited in proportion to the degree of popular consultation. "Supposing then the individual to have decided that some command of a 'political superior' is not for the common good, how ought he to act in regard to it? In a country like ours, with a popular government and settled methods of enacting and repealing laws, the answer of common sense is simple and sufficient. He should do all he can by legal methods to get the command cancelled, but till it is cancelled he should conform to it. The common good must suffer more from resistance to a law…,than from the individual's conformity to a particular law…that is bad, until its repeal can be obtained. It is thus the social duty of the individual to conform."[15]

This is the classic doctrine of the liberal state. There are, however, two large holes in it. Even "a country like ours," with a popular government, may support abuses which weaken the citizen's duty of conformity. The United States had just been through the Civil War when Green wrote, and he discussed carefully whether the legal existence of such an abuse as slavery had imposed on the citizen a higher duty, a duty towards common humanity, overriding his duty to uphold the law. His cautious and qualified answer was yes.

Moreover, there are a great many countries in the world which are not "like ours," i.e. despotisms of various kinds. The state, says Green, is above everything an association for the maintenance of rights. Therefore, "we only count Russia a state by a sort of courtesy," and there is doubt whether Turkey is "a state at all."[16]

The same difficulty is expressed by a contemporary political philosopher, J. L. Lucas. He, like Green, argues that there is a *prima facie* obligation to obey laws held to be wrong, since the purpose of political association is not to determine what is morally right, but to maintain arrangements for peaceable social living. But Lucas has lived in the age of Hitler and Stalin as Green lived through the American Civil War and the Czarist suppression of Poland, and he goes on to make a necessary distinction between normal systems, in which his principle holds good, and "pathological" systems, characterized by inefficiency, arbitrariness, or plain wickedness, where there is a *prima facie* right of rebellion.[17] Now the

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[15] Thomas Hill Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation,* section 100 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967), p. 111. Green's lectures were delivered in 1879–1880, and published posthumously in 1885.

[16] Ibid., sections 132, 168, pp. 137, 172.   [17] Lucas, *The Principles of Politics,* pp. 327–32.

central difficulty, as old as political thinking, is to establish criteria for distinguishing between normal and pathological societies.

4. Legitimacy Transfers

My fourth point is that legitimacy is never absent, never suspended. There is of course a moment of transition between an old legitimacy and a new, most obviously in a time of civil strife. But the period of vacuum of legitimacy is limited. Legitimacy withdrawn is legitimacy transferred. It may be transferred in a disagreeable direction. In revolutionary times in the past there has been seen the operation of a kind of Gresham's Law of legitimacy, the worse driving out the better. Perhaps it can be seen at work in the Third World today.

When acrobats perform on the high trapeze, they have suspended far below them a safety-net, in case they fall. When we discuss legitimacy and the right of revolution, we too have what I shall call a pragmatic net suspended beneath us. To put it crudely, it is the principle that revolution is justified when it is successful. A new authority is legitimated if a new doctrine of legitimacy can be made to stick.

When Henry VII won the battle of Bosworth and ended the Wars of the Roses, he had a doubtful claim to the throne; but he wanted at the same time to end the evils that flowed from quarrels about dynastic legitimacy. During Perkin Warbeck's revolt, in 1494, he called his Parliament and made a law, a statute of treason, which is the only part of the old law of treason that still forms part of our present law. It declared that nobody who went to the wars with "the king and sovereign lord of this land for the time being," that is to say, the king *de facto*, and did him true service, should be guilty of treason. A perplexing law: the king who had ten years ago been a usurper, but had become king *de jure*, and was now himself being challenged by another, enacted that obedience might in principle safely be rendered to a successful usurper (though he took the precaution of excluding from the benefits of the act any who might in future desert himself). But a magnanimous law, suggesting that dispute over legitimacy can become destructive, and that after grave social disorder what is needed for ordinary citizens is the assurance that they can support the existing government without fear of subsequent purges and liquidations.[18]

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[18] II Henry VII, c. 1. J. R. Tanner, *Tudor Constitutional Documents* AD *1485–1603* (Cambridge University Press, 1922), pp. 5–6. See Francis Bacon, *History of the Reign of King Henry VII*, ed. Joseph Rawson Lumby (Cambridge University Press, new edition, 1892), p. 133; H. A. L. Fisher, *The History of England from the Accession of Henry VII to the Death of Henry VIII* (Longmans, 1913), pp. 62–3; W. S. Holdsworth, *History of English Law*, iii.359, iv.500. "This statute may perhaps be regarded as the earliest recognition to be found in English law of a possible difference between the person and the office of the king, though nothing can be more vague and indirect than the way in which the distinction is hinted at by the words 'king and sovereign lord of this land for the time being.'" Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, *A History of the Criminal Law of England* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1883), ii.254.n.2.

When in the seventeenth century Oliver Cromwell's supporters urged him to accept the crown, one reason was to gain for themselves the shelter of this statute in the event of a Stuart restoration; for the statute did not cover obedience to a Lord Protector.[19] The realism implicit in the statute is expressed in an extreme way in the familiar Elizabethan couplet:

Treason doth never prosper: What's the reason?
For if it prosper, none dare call it treason.[20]

Now, you may think that this is obsolete and irrelevant. You may argue that dynastic legitimacy has been superseded by popular legitimacy, which is a superior kind of legitimacy, and lays on citizens a moral obligation to watch more carefully the moral health of the society in which they are more active participants than medieval man was. And you may argue in particular that the Nuremberg Tribunal after the Second World War established once for all that the citizen of a modern state cannot always protect himself by the defense that he was obeying *de facto* authority. The Nuremberg Tribunal established that the citizen has a duty to exercise his moral discrimination when authority orders him to commit an act that is a crime under international law. And this is half way towards exercising moral judgment about the legitimacy of the authority or regime that can order such acts.

Let us put the Nuremberg judgment in perspective first of all. This marked a special situation. It related to a situation of international, not civil, war. It related to crimes under international law: to crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity (which means certain acts against civilian populations when done in connection with crimes against peace or war crimes).

If you argue that the principle of popular legitimacy itself lays on men an obligation to judge their rulers, in a way that Henry VII's statute of treason seemed to excuse his subjects from doing, a distinction has to be made.

It is the distinction between the right to choose your rulers, and the right to sit in judgment on society, which implies the right of revolution.

The right to sit in judgment on society is inherent in political life, because of the moral nature of man. It has always existed. In ages of divine monarchy or aristocracy its exercise was in practice limited; nevertheless, the poor and weak resorted to it no less than the powerful.

The popular principle of legitimacy turned subjects into citizens, and gave them a right to elect their rulers. Now, it is difficult to distinguish between the act

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[19] See Cromwell's conversation with Bulstrode Whitelocke of November 1652, in Wilbur Cortez Abbott, *The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1939), ii. 590.

[20] Sir John Harrington, *Epigrams*, book iv. no. 5.

of choice, which elects rulers, and sitting in judgment on them, and then sitting in judgment on society. It has only been in special and favorable conditions of culture and history that a habitual distinction has grown up between electing your rulers—an intricate and enjoyable political game, implying agreement about the rules of the game, that is to say, agreement about legitimacy—and having periodical revolutions.

In a democratic age, everybody has an equal right to elect his rulers, and in the democratic age more members of society become capable of claiming it; it becomes universalized; and the tendency to abuse it increases. Hence, in part, the growth of revolutionary discontent.

If the first point is that action often precedes legitimation, the second point is that legitimation depends on popular consultation. Legitimation implies agreed norms. Legitimacy is never suspended.

Legitimation and Time: The Ambiguity of Time

The clarification of norms and the judgment of time are the two most difficult tasks in politics. Is time on our side? Is time healing or exacerbating conflict? Is time ripe for change? Every historical situation has to be judged on its merits. Here there is no formula.

One can have a fascinating argument, which has done more harm in politics: patience, the disposition to work with time and let time work for you (of which Mr. Whitelaw has provided an honorable example lately,[21] and Mr. Wilson's Southern Rhodesia policy that I should call a less honorable example), or boldness. The argument cannot be solved, because we cannot in the end measure harm. I can only remind you of the ambiguity of time in politics, as something to be aware of.

In a settled society, the passage of time confirms legitimacy, and even in some circumstances actually confers it. But all societies are mortal, and come to a moment when time seems to take a down-swing, scattering old unacceptable legitimacy behind it. The presumption is then in favor of the new and untried.

When legitimacy begins to be questioned, when "a dispersion of beliefs occurs in a society, when judgment becomes an individual matter and the public authority is stripped of its various prestiges," it is a sign of an ageing civilization.[22]

Time can legitimate in two ways. It makes us used to a state of affairs, so that we are more disposed to accept it and less disposed to question it. And it can also

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[21] [Ed.] Wight might have had in mind the negotiations that William Whitelaw, then the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, conducted with the Provisional Irish Republican Army in 1972.

[22] Bertrand de Jouvenel, *Sovereignty: An Inquiry into the Political Good*, trans. by J. F. Huntington (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1957), p. 266.

legitimate by actually bringing improvement, by moving towards the fulfillment of our norm. As an example of the two processes together, look at General Franco.

Twenty-five years ago he emerged from the ruins of the Second World War as the last survivor of European Fascism, universally ostracized, excluded from the UN. Some of us refused on principle to take our holidays in Spain. Now he has become a rather benign figure. Liberals as good as Professor Hugh Thomas praise his achievement in having given Spain the longest period of public order it has known for centuries.[23] The young royalty of Europe gambol round his throne to delight the readers of glossy magazines, and we are tolerant even of his determined effort to annex Gibraltar against the wishes of its inhabitants. He has survived, and his regime has moved in a moderately social-reformist direction. Nobody foresaw this 25 years ago.

Or look at that enlightened autocrat the Shah of Iran. His father was a usurper; there are better claimants to the throne, keeping their peace in Persia. By an accident of the Second World War the father abdicated and the present Shah succeeded. His state was backward and "feudal," his position was obsolete by the new standards of legitimacy, his authority was challenged internally. But he survived, and has done good. He has carried through his "white revolution": broken the power of the feudal landlords, transferred the land to the peasants, and gained their massive support by a Bonapartist or Gaullist use of the plebiscite.

Legitimation by success is still clearer with the revolutions of the left. Here indeed it may be more evident than it was in the past, because most revolutionaries today advance under the banner of cooperating with history. By annexing the movement of history itself to their cause, they trump their opponents' aces and sweep the board. The future is ex hypothesi more legitimate than the present.

Think of the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe. Twenty-five years ago the Western Powers were protesting ineffectively against the violence and chicanery with which Stalin was establishing Communist domination in Eastern Europe. Now the People's Democracies have become quite respectable. Even East Germany, which from a liberal standpoint has always been the ugliest of them, is obviously here to stay,[24] and is a highly modern state: the fifth industrial nation in Europe and the eighth in the world. The Committee for Recognition of the German Democratic Republic busily reminds us that if Willy Brandt is ready to do business with East Germany, who are we to worry about the absence of free elections and the Berlin Wall?

The Communist revolutions are of great interest because there has not yet been a Communist revolution that was unsuccessful. I don't mean that any

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[23] [Ed.] The most acclaimed book by Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War*, was first published in 1961, and followed by revised and enlarged editions in 1965 and 1977.

[24] [Ed.] It should be recalled that Wight was writing in 1972. The German Democratic Republic was 'here to stay' until 3 October 1990, when it passed into history and five new Federal States on its territory (and the reunified Berlin) joined the Federal Republic of Germany.

such revolution has led towards a condition of society which is recognizable as *Communist*, according to the book. I only mean that no Communist revolution has yet been reversed. No country where the Communist Party has got into power has yet got rid of it.[25] (The only exception I can think of is the case of Bela Kun in Hungary in 1919. And he lasted so short a time, between 21 March and 1 August 1919, that perhaps he never got into power; and he was got rid of not by the Hungarians but by the Romanian invasion of Hungary and occupation of Budapest.)

This is an awe-inspiring reflection, and suggests that whether or not the Communist Party can build Communist societies, it is in a mysterious way in tune with the trend of things. And a great part of its success is due to the ideological legitimation it can supply for its rule.

But there are other kinds of legitimation. Political scientists, studying the Third World, have done some interesting work recently in studying and classifying "myths of legitimacy," where myth means a simple idea or fantasy believed in by rulers and half-consciously manipulated by them to evoke consent from the ruled. For example, there is the Robin Hood myth: the heroic outlaw, who plunders the rich to give to the poor. Fidel Castro is the most obvious example of this: he even manages to look like our childhood ideas of Robin Hood. But the role has been widely played by nationalist leaders, and some who have successfully maintained it internally have gone on to play it externally, robbing the rich nations, by expropriating foreign companies and so on, in the name of the poor nations.

A different kind of myth was used by Ben Bella, the Algerian leader: the myth of the siege. He compared the crisis of liberation to a siege. When his measures or his authority were questioned, he justified them by saying that the siege continued, that military discipline was still necessary.

Nehru used the myth of the pilgrimage. The peoples of independent India were on a great pilgrimage together. When his opponents spoke of class conflict and social problems in India, he would answer soothingly that all these were reconciled in the great forward movement of common pilgrimage.

The slogans of Western parliamentary leaders, the New Frontier and the Great Society,[26] the white-hot technological revolution[27] and nothing less than altering the course of British history, have less potency because we know them as part of a

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[25] [Ed.] Again, Wight was writing in 1972, long before the political upheavals in Eastern Europe in 1989. For an overview of these unanticipated developments, see Gale Stokes, *The Walls Came Tumbling Down: Collapse and Rebirth in Eastern Europe* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[26] [Ed.] John F. Kennedy used the "New Frontier" phrase when he accepted the Democratic Party's nomination for president on 15 July 1960, and it became a slogan for his campaign and his administration's policies. On 7 May 1964 Kennedy's successor as president, Lyndon Johnson, first argued for a series of "Great Society" initiatives involving ambitious reforms in various policy domains.

[27] [Ed.] On 1 October 1963, Harold Wilson, then the leader of the Labour Party, called for the United Kingdom to embrace the 'white heat' of a scientific and technological revolution. See Stuart Butler, 'White heat at 50: Harold Wilson and scientific collaboration with Europe', *Guardian*, 24 September 2013.

settled political game. In a new, post-revolutionary society, these ideas become myths, are eagerly responded to by the masses, and become potent instruments to legitimate authority.

I have tried to clear the ground by making three points. First, that political action is prior to political justification: the necessity of bureaucracy. Secondly, that political consultation follows: the necessity of consent. Thirdly, that legitimacy is a matter as much of fact as of right, because men as a whole are inclined, after sophomoric efforts at change, to acquiesce in political facts.[28]

Let me now come back to the question, "What confers political legitimacy in a modern society?" and try to face it frontally. I shall give you my initial answer to the question, in three words. Its own existence. The modern society's own existence. That a modern society exists creates a presumption of legitimacy.

Let me go a little deeper, and make this answer more precise. Not just the modern society's own existence legitimates it: first of all, the blood that has been shed for it. I do not say this to shock you. I am not an advocate of bloodshed. I want to remind you that bloodshed is not intrinsically destructive, irrational, and wicked, as the media present the familiar horrors of today. Bloodshed has been in history a creative force.

When Lincoln spoke at the dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg, he said,

> "we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract."

This states a universal human truth. Men care about a society which has been born in a heroic war of independence, or reborn in a war about a great principle like the American War of Independence, in proportion to the suffering. One reason for the instability of the Third World states is that for most of them the struggle for liberation was spurious. They were given independence: they did not have to win it in a great war, as the Dutch did, or the Germans, or the Greeks, or even the Italians. The only African state which has fought a war is Nigeria, to preserve its unity, and I think we shall see that it has acquired a more deep-rooted legitimacy thereby than most of its contemporaries. (I speak as one whose sympathies were with Biafra.)

However, bloodshed, continuance, to be a going concern, are only the beginning. As Lincoln went on to say (everything is in that marvelous speech), "It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced." What is the unfinished work? To lead the blood-consecrated, continuing society towards the good life.

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[28] [Ed.] In this third point Wight combined what he had previously discussed in this essay under the headings of redress of grievances and legitimacy transfers.

But then there comes the generation, perhaps the present generation, which no longer respects the bloodshed of the past, perhaps not even the purposes of that bloodshed, but holds that all must be done over again. There must be a re-legitimating.

A society that is a going concern, providing order of a kind, if not full justice or freedom, safeguarding living of a kind, if not prosperity, and evoking the habitual obedience of the majority of its members, even if it is apathetic, unreflecting, and sometimes reluctant, is a political and social good that deserves respect. Its legitimacy should not be challenged without very careful pondering of the ancient question, whether the disturbance resulting from revolutionizing it would not cause greater harm than its continuance with all its defects.

There is an opposite question, which deserves equal weight. By what right does a dissenter presume to question the legitimacy of the society he belongs to? What confers political legitimacy on dissent about political legitimacy?

The central answer is, his own moral judgment, his own conscience. The individual defying the state, conscientiously withstanding organized power, is the glorious center of the universe of politics. Socrates: "Men of Athens, I respect and love you, but I shall obey the god rather than you." Luther: "Here I stand, I can do no other." Thomas More, dying "the King's good servant, but God's first."[29]

Daniel Ellsberg today, the RAND Corporation consultant, into whose hands the Pentagon Papers fell, who believed they showed that the American government had been deceiving the American people, tried for a year without effect to persuade the appropriate Senate Committee to take them up, and then decided he had a moral duty to publish them, at the same time quietly preparing his 12-year-old son to expect him to be sent to jail. This is noble, splendid, heroic, central.

But is anybody entitled to use this kind of language without scrutiny of his moral credentials? What about Angela Davis, dedicated Communist, unjustly brought to trial? What about the gunmen of the IRA? What about the Nazis? They too were [regarded as] heroic; they too had splendor of a kind. They were young, sincere, socialist, idealistic, when they challenged the corrupted legitimacy of Weimar Germany and the bourgeois Europe of "contemptible worms" like Chamberlain and Daladier.[30] But here, I guess, our reservations are total. The Nazis have unintentionally performed a great historic service by providing a

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[29] [Ed.] Last words on the scaffold, reported in 'The Paris News Letter', 1535, Appendix II in Nicholas Harpsfield, *The Life and Death of Sir Thomas Moore, Knight, Sometymes Lord High Chancellor of England,* ed. Elsie Vaughan Hitchcock and R. W. Chambers (London: Oxford University Press for the Early English Text Society, 1932), p. 266. This source, indicated by Wight, provides a contemporary description in French of More's last words: 'Apres les exhorta et supplia tres instamment qu'ils priassent Dieu pour le Roy, affin qu'il luy voulsist donner bon conseil, protestant qu'il mouroit son bon serviteur et de Dieu premierement.'

[30] [Ed.] In August 1939 Hitler said, 'Our enemies are small worms. I saw them in Munich.' Ian Kershaw translated the phrase *kleine Würmchen* as 'small worms' in one passage and as 'small fry' in another. Kershaw, *Hitler 1936–1945: Nemesis* (New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 2000), pp. 123, 208.

model of wickedness, a *ne plus ultra* of human development, a great landmark of human experience, which every participant in later political debate can unite to condemn.

How can we distinguish between dissent that claims our moral respect, and dissent that does not? I suggest three criteria. It should be in origin at least individual; it should be conscientious; it should be rational.

Dissent is more likely to be morally respectable in proportion as it is individual and solitary. It is less likely to be so, in proportion as it is multiple and collective, in proportion as it tends towards faction or conspiracy.

About Socrates, refusing to abandon his divine mission of persuading men to tend their souls, and equally refusing to escape from the just penalty of the law, I suppose we have no doubts. This is the simple, shining archetype of conscientious objection. About Luther too, while he was acting on his own. It is when he is taken up by the German magnates and used for their purposes that we become dubious.

You do not need to be reminded that this is not an infallible criterion. Hitler started as an isolated individual brooding about the subject of legitimacy. But it is a pointer. A man who has come to the resolution to defy the state by wrestling with his individual conscience is more likely to have made the right decision than one who has been moved to it by the emotional lift of association with others in the cause.

The first criterion is a pointer to the second, which is much more difficult to formulate. It concerns (to borrow a cliché of contemporary social science) the quality of decision-making. The decision made in mental anguish and wrestling is more likely to have deep moral content, and to reach the depths of the crisis, than a decision made with motives of egotism, resentment, and self-assertion.

Let me put it like this. At the heart of political discussion there is an endless chicken-and-egg argument, whether the sick society is the result of sick individuals, or sick individuals are the result of sick society. The argument cannot be resolved because of the interdependence of the terms: society is composed of individuals, and individuals are social animals. It does seem the case, however, that the only end of the stick that any individual can certainly get hold of is his own. There are usually formidable difficulties about improving society, but self-improvement is within everybody's reach. As Hooker said of the contentious Puritans in Elizabethan times, "To seek reformation of laws is a commendable endeavor; but for us the more necessary is a speedy redress of ourselves."[31]

What I have been concerned to carry a banner against, in what I have been saying, is a rationalist illusion about politics, which I think lurks in this question, "What confers political legitimacy in a modern society?"

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[31]   Richard Hooker, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, book v, Dedication, 2.

It is the illusion that we are spectators of the play of society and politics, that we are critics in the stalls; and that we are free to decide that the spectacle we are watching does not come up to our standards so we'll give it a bad press and transfer our patronage to another show. There is a three-fold fallacy in this attitude: 1. an exaggerating of the degree of detachment from the political life of his own community that is proper for a citizen; 2. an exaggerating of the degree of rationality that is attainable in political life. 3. If we (who are a minority) judge society, as we have an intrinsic right, let us remember that society, which is everybody else, the majority, moreover the past as well as the present, by the same right judges us. Our legitimacy is under scrutiny.

There is a further fallacy lurking here: exaggerating the rationality of political life. It sees politics as a realm where felt needs are supplied by techniques, of conscious planning and deliberate exertion, where (as Saint-Simon and after him Marx believed) the government of men can progressively give place to the administration of things. But this is not the case. "Society is not a number of individuals who have consciously determined to combine for the greatest happiness of the greatest number, it is a living stream whose surface may be partially illuminated by the fitful light of reason but which springs from subterranean sources and flows towards an unknown sea."[32]

In politics, as I have tried to suggest to you, legitimation is not achieved by rational debate. It is achieved by the adoption, and usually the imposition, of myths, ideologies, fantasies even, which have a rational admixture, and the better of which are capable of being explored and developed by reason, but whose strength is in their going down to the sub-rational and instinctual roots of human behavior.

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[32] Christopher Dawson, *The Gods of Revolution* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1972), p. 135.

20

Note on Conquest and Cession

I have not found a history of the institution of conquest and cession.* It is one of the strands in the states-system, making possible the redistribution of territories between sovereign states by due process of law. Its development shows several half-way stages, some of them disguising cession to save the amour-propre of the ceding Power. One might distinguish:

1. *Enfeoffment in feudal law.* "Keep what you have conquered but be (or continue to be) my vassal." Louis XI's surrender of the Somme towns to Charles the Bold under the Treaty of Conflans, 1465, at the end of the War of the Public Weal, might be an example.
2. *Grant of an imperial vicariate.* "Keep what you have conquered but be my vicar." The most important example is the cession of the Three Bishoprics to Henry II of France under the Treaty of Chambord, 1552. France thus acquired Metz, Toul and Verdun in a doubtful capacity as imperial vicar, conferred by Maurice of Saxony and the Protestant princes of Germany. The cession was not confirmed by the Empire until the Peace of Westphalia.
3. *Evasion of the issue.* In the War of the Holy League, 1511–1514, Henry VIII had conquered Tournai from France. When Anglo-French peace negotiations began, the English demanded to retain Tournai and obtain also Boulogne. Their war ended with the Treaty of London, 1514, which on the one hand provided for the dynastic marriage of Louis XII with Mary Tudor, Henry VIII's young sister, and on the other hand made no reference at all to Tournai or Boulogne, which remained in the hands of their possessors.
4. *Camouflaged cession.* The Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, 1559, confirmed the French conquest of Calais. But the treaty left Calais nominally an English possession in the temporary custody of France; the French undertook to restore it after 8 years or to forfeit half a million crowns. This was a transparent device to save England some humiliation. It was disposed of by the Treaty of Troyes, 1564, by which Elizabeth accepted 120,000 crowns and the rights of both monarchs in regard to Calais were reserved.

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* [Ed.] Wight may have drafted this note for inclusion as an appendix in the second edition of *Power Politics*, a work-in-progress at the time of his death in 1972. Wight wrote in the margin 'cession to an intermediary', perhaps as a possible addition to the taxonomy; but he gave no example. He wrote the date June 1971 at the end.

5. *Conditional cession.* By the Treaty of Utrecht, 1713, Spain ceded Gibraltar to Great Britain in perpetuity, with certain restrictions on its commerce, population and naval use to protect Spanish interests, and with the provision that Spain should have first refusal if Great Britain ever wanted to divest herself of it.

From the Treaty of Utrecht, if not from earlier, cession of conquered territory becomes straightforward, undisguised, and on the whole unconditional. A new issue now grows in importance: the doctrine that territory should not be ceded without the consent of the inhabitants.

From 1919, conquest falls into disrepute, and the legal means of validating it change accordingly. The influence of third parties and of the international community begins to be effective in the Kellogg Pact, the Stimson Doctrine, and the UN. Some of the old face-saving devices appear in new forms. A mandate under the League of Nations has resemblances to an imperial vicariate.

The Arab refusal to recognize both the existence and the conquests of Israel has been a sustained experiment in the diplomatic advantages of withholding legal validation of military arrangements.

21

Fortune's Banter

The word fortune describes the most ancient and fundamental experience in politics—the politician's consciousness that men and happenings are recalcitrant to purposeful guidance, that the results of political action never square with the intention, that he never can have command of all the relevant material.*

In a celebrated chapter of *The Prince* Machiavelli says that sometimes, in reflecting on politics, he has been tempted to agree with those who believe that chance governs everything and human wisdom cannot influence events. "Nevertheless," he concludes, "(so as not to discard our free will altogether), I judge that it may be true that fortune is the arbiter of half our actions, but that she still leaves the control of the other half (or a bit less) to us."[1]

This agreeable sentence, with its naïve quantification, may be taken as an attempt by a political scientist to describe the limits of freedom in political experience.

It is echoed two hundred and fifty years later by Frederick the Great, perhaps consciously, but in the more slapdash and cynical way to be expected from the political practitioner. "Plus on vieillit, disait-il souvent, et plus on se persuade que sa Majesté le Hasard fait les trois quarts de la besogne de ce misérable univers."[2]

Machiavelli's chapter on Fortune is philosophically crude, but calculated. He is deliberately dethroning one traditional conception, to replace it by another more ancient. The idea dethroned is that of Providence, which sees all the operations of chance as having a moral purpose and occurring under the supervision of a benevolent deity, or in accordance with a beneficent process. The believer in Providence does not select for his contemplation different experiences from the

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* [Ed.] Martin Wight wrote 'Chicago 13 March 1957' at the top of the first page of what appears to be the earliest draft of 'Fortune and Irony in International Politics'. He presented a paper with this title at the inaugural meeting of the History Society, University College, Dublin, on 17 May 1960. He subsequently crossed out the original title and wrote 'Fortune's Banter'. Michele Chiaruzzi included 'Fortune's Banter' as an appendix in his book *Martin Wight on Fortune and Irony in Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). The original text of 'Fortune's Banter', found in the archives of the British Library of Political and Economic Science, is reproduced with the gracious permission of Gabriele Wight in this Oxford University Press collection of Wight's miscellaneous works. This text does not include Professor Chiaruzzi's extensive and impressive scholarly annotations.

[1] Niccolò Machiavelli, *Il Principe*, ed. by L. Arthur Burd (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891), chapter XXV, p. 358.
[2] Albert Sorel, *La Question d'Orient au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Plon, 1889; second edition), p. 99. Cf. p. 77 and note. [Ed. 'The older one grows, he often said, the more one is persuaded that His Majesty Chance does three-fourths of the labor of this wretched universe.']

votary of Fortune, nor a wider range of experience. He receives the same experience with a different set of presuppositions. He harnesses Fortune between the shafts of a broader doctrine. Thus Dante speaks of "fortune, the power which we more properly and exactly call 'divine providence,'"[3] and in the *Inferno* describes her as a guiding spirit, whom God has appointed to control our earthly lot, comparable to the angelic intelligences who regulate the heavens.[4] Thus Donoso Cortes, the Catholic philosopher who was Spanish ambassador in Paris, wrote in 1852:

> Du reste, ces prévisions et toutes celles de mes précédentes lettres peuvent être trompées; tous les calculs peuvent être déjoués par un de ces coups d'État de la Providence que le vulgaire appelle *coups de fortune*. Tout ce que j'ai annoncé doit arriver, selon l'ordre naturel des choses; mais généralement ce qui doit arriver de cette manière n'arrive pas. Il y a toujours à point une fièvre pernicieuse, une armée révoltée, un coup d'homme hardi, un changement soudain d'opinion, qui vienne à l'improviste anéantir les espérances des uns, les craintes des autres, la sagesse des sages, l'habilité des habiles, la prudence des prudents, et les calculs de tous.[5]

There is irony about this passage, in which Donoso Cortes seems to be hedging his bets. For it comes at the end of a series of letters remarkable for their political penetration, and immediately after an assessment of the explosive international situation in which he predicted a Russian war with Turkey, an Austrian occupation of the Danubian provinces, Prussian conquest of North Germany, English occupation of Egypt, and aimless French expansion. The one *coup d'État* of Providence in the next thirty years which the Catholic philosopher's blinkers prevented him from foreseeing was the unification of Italy and the extinction of the Temporal Power of the Papacy.

Donoso Cortes was echoing the opening chords of Burke's first *Letter on a Regicide Peace*. Burke rejects the idea that states have a life-cycle like individuals. "Commonwealths are not physical but moral essences." He deduces incidentally that domestic politics are more difficult to analyse, are more the field of

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[3] Dante, *De Monarchia*, Book Two, Chapter IX, as translated by Donald Nicholl, *Monarchy and Three Political Letters* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1954), p. 53.

[4] *Inferno*, vii. 73ff. Cf. *Paradiso*, xxviii. Dante's conception of fortune is anticipated by, and borrowed from, Virgil: *Aeneid*, iii. 375–6. Cf. ix. 107–8.

[5] Juan Donoso Cortes, *Lettres politiques sur la situation de la France en 1851 et 1852; Oeuvres* (Paris: Vaton, 1858), ii.428. [Ed. 'Besides, these forecasts and all those in my earlier letters may be mistaken; all of these calculations may be foiled by one of those coups d'état by Providence that common people call *blows of fortune*. Everything that I have announced should happen, according to the natural order of things; but generally what should happen in this way does not happen. There is always at the critical juncture a deadly fever, an army in rebellion, a bold man's blow, a sudden change of opinion, that unexpectedly brings to nothing the hopes of some, the fears of others, the wisdom of the wise, the skill of the skilful, the prudence of the prudent, and the calculations of all.']

uncertainty, than international politics. "I doubt whether the history of mankind is yet complete enough, if ever it can be so, to furnish grounds for a sure theory on the internal causes which necessarily affect the fortune of a state. I am far from denying the operation of such causes: but they are infinitely uncertain and much more obscure, and much more difficult to trace, than the foreign causes that tend to raise, to depress, and sometimes to overwhelm a community." He goes on to describe the scope of what Machiavelli called Fortune. "It is often impossible, in these political enquiries, to find any proportion between the apparent force of any moral causes we may assign and their known operation. We are therefore obliged to deliver up that operation to mere chance, or, more piously, (perhaps more rationally,) to the occasional interposition and irresistible hand of the Great Disposer." The histories of states reveal different patterns of efflorescence, and the majority of them have had great reversals of fortune. "The death of a man at a critical juncture, his disgust, his retreat, his disgrace, have brought innumerable calamities on a whole nation. A common soldier, a child, a girl at the door of an inn, have changed the face of fortune, and almost of nature."[6] Did more of Burke's first readers than of those in the present day, one wonders, see in this famous passage the allusions to Arnold von Winkelried on the field of Sempach,[7] the nine-year-old Hannibal taking his oath of hatred,[8] and Joan of Arc helping in the inn at Neufchâtel?[9]

The Fortuna that Machiavelli put in the place of Providence was a dominant idea of Hellenistic and Roman antiquity, and Machiavelli's version of it probably owed more than to anyone else to Polybius.[10] Polybius was a statesman of the Achaean League who played a part in the establishment of Roman power in Greece. His *Histories* describe how within a span of fifty years Rome destroyed Carthage and Macedon, conquered the Greek states, and made herself mistress of

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[6] Edmund Burke, *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, 1796, "Letter I: On the Overtures of Peace," in *The Works of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke*, with a Biographical and Critical Introduction by Henry Rogers (London: Samuel Holdsworth, 1842), vol. II, pp. 275–6.

[7] [Ed.] Arnold von Winkelried threw himself against the Austrian pikemen to open a breach in the enemy lines. He thus sacrificed his life to enable his Swiss compatriots to win the Battle of Sempach (1386).

[8] [Ed.] According to the Roman historian Titus Livius (Livy), Hannibal's father Hamilcar took his nine-year-old son to the altar to swear an oath to prove himself an enemy of Rome.

[9] [Ed.] Some authors hold that in 1428 Joan and her family fled Domrémy for Neufchâtel to escape Burgundian raiders, and that Joan worked at an inn there. See, for example, Mary Gordon, *Joan of Arc: A Life* (London: Penguin Books, 2008), p. 5.

[10] Machiavelli's knowledge of Polybius is a matter of controversy. On the one hand, Machiavelli nowhere mentions Polybius by name; on the other hand, the *Discorsi*, Book 1, chapters 1–15, paraphrase Polybius, book vi, and sometimes reproduce it almost verbatim. On the one hand, Machiavelli probably did not read Greek; on the other hand, though the first five books of Polybius had been translated into Latin, no translation of book vi is known to have existed at the time the *Discorsi* were written. See Leslie J. Walker, *The Discourses of Niccolò Machiavelli* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950), ii. 289–92; J.H. Hexter, "Seyssel, Machiavelli, and Polybius VI: The Mystery of the Missing Translation," *Studies in the Renaissance,* iii (1956), 75–96.

the world. This extraordinary international revolution he ascribed primarily to Fortune, or Tyche:

> Tyche has guided almost all the affairs of the world in one direction and has forced them to incline towards one and the same end. A historian should likewise bring before his readers under one synoptical view the operations by which she has accomplished her general purpose…For fruitful as Tyche is in change, and constantly as she is producing dramas in the life of men, yet never assuredly before this did she work such a marvel, or act such a drama, as that which we have witnessed.[11]

The Tyche of Polybius is a richer and more complex concept than the Fortuna of Machiavelli. Polybius on the whole approved what Tyche had done in his lifetime, while Machiavelli on the whole resented what Fortuna had done in his. Fortuna had affronted Machiavelli's patriotism, and been malignant to him in his personal career.[12] Tyche had given Polybius a wider patriotism, and incidentally given him the friendship of the younger Scipio, the most important relationship of his life.[13]

For Machiavelli Fortuna was a destructive force, like an Italian river in spate. For Polybius Tyche was fundamentally benevolent, and the rise of Rome was "her most beautiful and beneficial performance."[14] Sometimes this Tyche comes near to being Providence, for providential is the word we use to describe inexplicable occurrence that we find consonant with our deeper purposes.

In the second place, Machiavelli is writing for the instruction of the politician: he sees Fortuna as the force that conditions political action and tends to thwart it. Polybius is writing for the historical student. He is the spectator, not the political agent; as an author he stands at a greater distance than Machiavelli from the political process; and for him Tyche is a category of historical interpretation, a way to explain the mutability of affairs and the caducity of political achievement. When he records the defeat and deposition of the last Macedonian king, he recalls a treatise on Tyche by Demetrius of Phalerum, who a hundred and fifty years earlier, when the Macedonian kingdom was in its heyday, had been astonished to think that the very name of the Persians had perished—the Persians who were masters of almost the whole world—and that the Macedonians, whose names were previously unknown, were now the predominant Power. Polybius sees it as a mark of supernatural prescience when Demetrius adds that it was the nature of

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[11] Polybius, book i, chapter 4.
[12] *Il Principe*, the last sentence of the Dedicatory Epistle and chapter 26.
[13] Polybius, book xxxi, chapters 23–5.
[14] Polybius, book i, chapters 4 (4), 58 (1). Cf. book xxxviii, chapter 18 (8).

Tyche to grant these advantages to the Macedonians until she chose to deal differently with them.[15]

The same idea appears in the supreme dramatic moment of Polybius's history, when Scipio, watching Carthage go up in flames, turns and grasps Polybius's hand, saying he has a foreboding that one day the same sentence will be passed upon his own country.

> It would not be easy to say anything showing a deeper sense of political aware-
> ness than this. At the moment of one's own supreme triumph and the enemy's
> misfortune, to reflect on one's own position and on the possible reversal of
> things,—to bear in mind at the moment of success the mutability of fortune—
> this shows a great man, a completed character, a man worthy to be remembered.[16]

But Polybius by no means explains everything in terms of Tyche. He emphasises that the value and fascination of history is to ascertain natural causes. The First Punic War was won by the discipline and valour of the Romans; the success of the Achaean League was due to its being based on the principles of democracy, equality and fraternity; the depopulation of Greece was due to the moral deterioration of the Greeks themselves; the most powerful cause of the success or failure of a state is its constitution.[17]

Indeed, Polybius reverses Burke's judgment on the scope of causal explanation in politics. The downfall of states, he says, may be due either to external or internal processes; and while the internal processes obey fixed laws of constitutional change, the external process is not amenable to scientific study.[18] It might almost be said that if for Burke Fortune is manifest especially in domestic affairs, for Polybius (and for Machiavelli) she is the queen of international politics. The contrast is not due to any of them having reflected more profoundly on politics within states than relations between states. It is due rather to Polybius, and Machiavelli, having had a simple conception of states following a cycle of growth and decline, but insufficient data for extending any such theory to inter-state politics, while for Burke the state was a mysterious moral community, a partnership for pursuing the ultimate ends of man, and a necessary figure in the pattern of the cosmic design. Perhaps today the study of international

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[15] Polybius, book xxix, chapter 21.

[16] Polybius, book xxxviii, chapter 21. Plutarch attributes reflections of this kind to the conqueror of Macedon, Aemilius Paulus. *Life of Aemilius Paulus*, chapter 36. Scipio's involuntarily repeating some lines of Homer on the fall of Troy, as he watched Carthage burning, is recorded by Appian, book viii, chapter 132.

[17] Polybius, book i, chapter 63; book ii, chapter 38; book xxxvi, chapter 17; book vi, chapter 2. On Polybius' concept of Tyche in general see Kurt von Fritz, *The Theory of the Mixed Constitution in Antiquity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), appendix ii. Cf. F.W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), volume I, pp. 16–26.

[18] Polybius, book vi, chapter 57.

relations has approached the point where international society itself could begin to be seen in a similar light.

We can trace in Greek literature the divinisation of the idea of the fortuitous. Tyche, the success allotted a man by the gods, was transformed by the brooding genius of Euripides into the likelihood of ill luck, and developed into the Hellenistic goddess of Chance. Her Italian country-cousin Fors, the bringer of fertility or increase, developed into Fortuna, whom the Romans, morally stout and religiously naïve, worshipped under innumerable aspects.[19] It was largely the influence of Polybius that identified Fortuna with Tyche, and the conjoined goddess presided over the united Graeco-Roman world.

There were, and are, degrees of depth in the idea of Fortune. At the shallowest, Tyche or Fortuna is a fickle and capricious goddess,

> that with malicious joy
> Does Man her slave oppress,
> Proud of her Office to destroy,
> Is seldome pleas'd to bless:
> Still various, and unconstant still,
> But with an inclination to be ill,
> Promotes, degrades, delights in strife,
> And makes a Lottery of life.[20]

This is the conception for which we have the words Chance and Luck, with a certain pessimistic bias towards the notion of Bad Luck. She was sometimes depicted as a winged figure advancing tiptoe upon a ball or globe, symbol of perpetual instability. "Disposer of the affairs of men and gods, Chance, displeased by any power that feels itself secure, always loving novelty and quickly discarding what you have seized," wrote Petronius two generations after Horace.[21]

Four hundred years later, in the time of Theodosius, this Tyche underwent a symbolical dethronement, and suffered the treatment she had subjected others to. The Christians turned her temple in Alexandria into a tavern. "The world's turned upside-down: now we see Fortune in misfortune," wrote the pagan poet Palladas in half-regretful mockery. "You who once had a temple have become a café-proprietor in your old age, and serve hot drinks to humans. You must admit, you unreliable goddess, that it is right that you should reverse your own luck like that of mortals."[22]

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[19] Cf. Cicero, *De Legibus*, ii. 28; Plutarch, *De Fortuna Romanorum*, 10.
[20] Dryden, "The Twenty-Ninth Ode of the Third Book of Horace, paraphrased in Pindaric Verse, and Inscribed to the Right Honourable Laurence Earl of Rochester," ix.
[21] *Satyricon*, cxx, 79–81.   [22] *Anthologia*, ix. 181, 183.

The capricious Tyche was historically the last, decadent and most popular manifestation of the goddess. But there were earlier, deeper levels of understanding; glimpses of Fortune as something more purposive than Chance.

In Hellenistic times we find city-Tyches, Fortune as the tutelary goddess of a particular place. We find also the Fortune of the individual, generally the important individual. The multiplication of Fortunes is sometimes spoken of as evidence of religious retrogression. It might be taken as evidence also of intellectual development; at least, it began to provide more flexible terms for political explanation. A British prime minister of the 1960s, wanting to explain decline and mismanagement to his people, says, "We have done very well, but not quite well enough." A Greek politician would say, "The Tyche of our city is good, but unfortunately the world's general Tyche is for the moment unfavourable." Demosthenes says this, and adds, as a third factor in the assessment, his personal Tyche.[23]

But at a deeper level, Fortune is something more purposive than Chance: she is the incomprehensible power that regulates the changes and phases of human experience. Thus she becomes an aspect of destiny. Plutarch, in his essay *On the Fortune of the Romans*, written to flatter the imperial people, depicts Fortune deserting the Assyrians and Persians, flitting lightly over Macedonia and Carthage, but when she approaches the Palatine and crosses the Tiber, taking off her wings and abandoning her precarious globe.[24]

Plutarch's Tyche has the providential overtones of the Tyche of Polybius. This conception of Fortune joins hand with, but is never quite merged in, the conception of Destiny, Necessity, Fate. With Tyche goes Ananke, Necessity; with Fortuna go the Fates, whom Plato calls the daughters of Necessity.[25] Horace in his ode to Fortune boldly calls Necessity her servant, stalking always in front of her.[26] Virgil links them: it is "Fortuna omnipotens et ineluctabile fatum" that have brought Evander from Greece to found the first city on the site of Rome, it is Fortune and the Fates that have permitted the rival Latins to prosper.[27] But for Virgil, at the extreme range of his historical thinking, Fortune *is* merged in Fate: it is Fate that has led Aeneas from Troy to Latium.[28] And this Fate is identified with the will of Jupiter.[29] Here a pagan writer completed the evolution of thought from Fortune through Fate to Providence, and anticipated Christian categories.

There are several reasons why Machiavelli did not reinstate the classical notion of Fate or Necessity along with Fortune. For one, he was not a systematic philosopher, and was content with a single word to cover all the inexplicable and

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[23] *De Corona*, 253–5.   [24] *De Fortuna Romanorum*, 317–18.   [25] *Republic*, 617C.
[26] *Odes*, i.35, line 17. (The figure is so bold that many editors, despite manuscript authority, prefer the reading *saeva* to *serva*.) Macrobius speaks of Tyche and Ananke as presiding over a child's birth (*Saturnalia*, i.19, ad fin).
[27] *Aeneid*, viii.334, xii.147.   [28] *Aeneid*, i.205, viii.477; cf. viii.533.
[29] *Aeneid*, i.254–296, x.111–3, 621–7.

impenetrable aspects of politics.[30] For another, he was a passionate patriot in a country occupied and partitioned, and instinctively preferred language suggesting a future flexible and open to one inexorable and closed.[31] For a third, the conception of Providence he overthrew was unitary, and it was a unitary conception with which he replaced it. "Fortuna reminds one in some respects of the Biblical God. She takes the place of the Biblical God."[32]

Machiavelli's Fortune comprises both Tyche and Ananke, both Fortuna and Necessitas. So does, in normal usage, the modern English word Fortune. He (or more likely she) who tells your fortune tells what fate has in store for you. Here is the first paradox or ambiguity inherent in the idea of Fortune. It is the association of Fate with Chance, of the determined with the accidental, the inevitable with the contingent, the predictable with the unforeseen.

The spectator of politics, a person like the historian, analysing the game without having to play it, sometimes believes that this is a false antithesis; that the appearance of contradiction between Chance and Necessity arises from the limitations of our knowledge. Chance is nothing but the unpredictable collision of two different lines of fate, the intersection of two causal sequences. This is the view of a Marxist like Plekhanov, of a rationalist like Bury in his essay on "Cleopatra's Nose."[33] What we experience as accident, the contingent, the unpredictable, we see in retrospect to be part of the unbroken web of cause and effect. Thus to the historian it is natural that when Pope Alexander VI and his son Cesare Borgia go to the same dinner-party, they are both poisoned; or, if this vulgar legend be discarded, that they should both succumb in the same hot Roman August to the same outbreak of malaria.[34]

But Machiavelli records how Cesare said to him that he, Cesare, had thought of everything that might happen when his father died, and had made every provision for the continuation of his own power, except that he had not foreseen what actually happened—that when the Pope died he himself should also be desperately ill.[35]

An untimely death similarly ended the ministerial career of Bolingbroke, an inferior Machiavellian politician. The historian may judge that the national interests which had secured the Act of Settlement were still strong enough at the end

[30] Federico Chabod, *Machiavelli and the Renaissance* (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1958), pp. 69–70.

[31] *Necessità* is an important concept in the *Discorsi*, but always as a subjective experience of the coercion of events, never as objective causality.

[32] Leo Strauss, *Thoughts on Machiavelli* (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1958), p. 214.

[33] See G.V. Plekhanov, *The Role of the Individual in History* (Lawrence and Wishart, 1940), p. 43; *Selected Essays of J.B. Bury*, ed. Harold Temperley (Cambridge University Press, 1930), p. 61; J.B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into Its Origin and Growth* (London: Macmillan, 1920), pp. 303–4. Bury's argument is criticised by Michael Oakeshott, *Experience and Its Modes* (Cambridge University Press, 1933), pp. 133–41.

[34] Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, book vi, chapter 4; W. H. Woodward, *Cesare Borgia* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1913), pp. 323–4, 330–2.

[35] *Il Principe*, chapter vii (Burd edition, pp. 226–7).

of Queen Anne's reign to make the restoration of James III improbable. But for
Bolingbroke and his Whig opponents, the decisive circumstance was that after he
had secured the dismissal of his rival Oxford, he enjoyed only three days of power
before the Queen's fatal illness led to a new Lord Treasurer being appointed. He
told a French agent after her death that if he had had six weeks he would have had
nothing to fear. "The Earl of Oxford was removed on Tuesday; the Queen died on
Sunday," he wrote to Swift. "What a world is this and how does Fortune banter
us…I have lost all by the death of the Queen, but my spirit."[36]

Thus again a Russian diplomatist wrote, when he was negotiating the Three
Emperors' League with Bismarck in Berlin in 1880:

> History only produces philosophy after it is all over, arranging in a system that
> which, in its origin, was only the product of the fortuitous clash of individual
> wills. History will endeavour to show that the unification of Germany came
> about because it was fated to come about in virtue of a higher law which governs
> human affairs. But the contemporaries think otherwise. They know that this
> event was the fortuitous product of the genius of a German, combining with the
> mistakes of a Frenchman.[37]

"The contemporaries think otherwise." The political actor, especially, is on the
side of the fortuitous against the necessitous, because he has the experience of
being a contingency himself. If Fortune is the arbiter of half his actions, she leaves
him to direct the other fifty or perhaps forty-five per cent. Besides Fate and
Chance there is a third element, namely Will. At a deeper level than the antithesis
of Fate and Chance lies the antithesis of Necessity and Freedom.

There are certain conjunctures in the historical processes of which the political
actor says, "the time is ripe," "the moment has come," "let us strike while the iron
is hot," or again, "this is the last chance." These are moments when the politician
believes he can impose his will so as to mould the raw material of politics and
direct the flux of events. Such moments do not, of course, arrive ready labeled.
Their discernment requires trained judgment; and though there is sometimes a
consensus of trained judgment—as perhaps when North Korea invaded South
Korea in 1950—temperament and strength of purpose are equally important.

Machiavelli attributes more to temperament than to discernment of the
decisive moment. Fortune, he says, is a woman: if you want to control her, it is
necessary to beat her and ill-use her. She allows herself to be mastered by the
adventurous rather than by those "who go about it coldly."[38]

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[36] William Lecky, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (new impression, 1907), i.202.n.3;
Correspondence of Jonathan Swift, ed. Ball, ii. 214. Cf. George Macaulay Trevelyan, *England under Queen
Anne*, vol. III, *The Peace and the Protestant Succession* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1934).
[37] *Saburov Memoirs*, ed. J. Y. Simpson (Cambridge University Press, 1929), p. 136.
[38] *Il Principe*, chapter 25 (Burd edition, p. 365).

Certain political temperaments, at a time when circumstances are fluid, can enjoy the sensation of a complete ascendancy of will over fate. We may call this voluntarism; which in theology means the doctrine that God is absolute will rather than absolute being or absolute reason, and in philosophy means the theory that will is the ultimate constituent of reality, and in politics means the belief that will is, or can be, the ultimate master of events.

At its simplest, unaccompanied by theories about destiny or the historical process, it may be seen in the self-confidence of the warrior-ruler. "I thirst not for the calm pleasures of a country life, the charms of society, or a career of ease and comfort," wrote Hodson of Hodson's Horse,[39] "but for the maddening excitement of war, the keen contest of wits involved in dealing with wilder men, and the exercise of power over the many by the force of the will of the individual."[40] Revolutionary politicians may speak less of coercing men than of moulding circumstances. "In times of crisis, it is necessary to dominate the position," wrote Cavour as the war of 1859 approached; "one gets results in the degree that one exerts an energy of iron and knows how to inspire complete confidence."[41] Hitler used similar language. "The principle, by which one evades solving the problems by adapting oneself to circumstances, is inadmissible. Circumstances must rather be adapted to aims."[42] But a revolutionary politician of religious temper may give a glimpse of the self-discipline behind the inflexibility of will. Ricasoli, Cavour's lieutenant in Tuscany, justified his own obstinacy by the sentence, "He who walks on the blade of a knife should not let himself be distracted to the right hand or to the left."[43]

The voluntarism of the politician increases in intensity with his egoism. The two are sublimely expressed by Marlowe's Tamburlaine, who is probably not so far from the historical original:

> I hold the Fates bound fast in iron chains,
> And with my hand turn Fortune's wheel about;…
> The god of war resigns his room to me,
> Meaning to make me general of the world:

[39] [Ed.] William Stephen Raikes Hodson (1821–1858), a Brevet Major in Great Britain's Bengal Army, played a central role in suppressing the Indian Rebellion of 1857. He founded a cavalry regiment that became known as Hodson's Horse.

[40] Barry Joynson Cork, *Rider on a Grey Horse: A Life of Hodson of Hodson's Horse* (London: Cassell, 1958), p. 61.

[41] Letter to Nigra, 9 January 1859, *Carteggio Cavour-Nigra*, i.291, no. 218.

[42] [Ed.] Conference with his commanders, 23 May 1939, *Trials of War Criminals before the Nuernberg Military Tribunals, Nuernberg, October 1946–April 1949* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1949), vol. II, p. 388. Wight indicated that one source for this statement by Hitler was the record of the Nuernberg tribunals, and left space to fill in the reference, here completed by the editor. Wight also provided the following source for this statement: *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1946–1947), vol. vii, p. 848.

[43] W.K. Hancock, *Ricasoli and the Risorgimento in Tuscany* (London: Faber and Faber, 1926), pp. 264–5.

> Jove, viewing me in arms, looks pale and wan,
> Fearing my power should pull him from his throne:
> Where'er I come the Fatal Sisters sweat,
> And grisly Death, by running to and fro,
> To do their ceaseless homage to my sword…[44]

This is the intoxication of the conqueror riding the crest of the wave. It is echoed by Mussolini, opening a campaign for colonial settlement in Tripoli in 1926: "It is Destiny that is bringing us back to this land. No one can arrest Destiny, and, above all, no one can break our impregnable will."[45] Fascist political language habitually resembled Marlowe's bombast. Hitler's style was less Roman, more Lutheran, but the content was the same: "Providence," he said in 1939, "has had the last word and brought me success. On top of that, I had a clear recognition of the probable course of historical events, and the firm will to make brutal decisions."[46]

But this kind of voluntarism seems itself to be under the dominion of Fortune, when we note the ease with which it swings over into its apparent opposite, fatalism. The leader who most deliberately asserts his will in politics is he who most readily identifies his will with fate: who follows his star, or walks the way Providence has dictated with the assurance of a sleepwalker.[47] When Napoleon in 1808 was trying to seduce the Tsar with a grandiose scheme for partitioning the Ottoman Empire and marching jointly through the Middle East upon India, he wrote: "It is wisdom in politics to do what destiny commands us and to advance whither the irresistible march of events conducts us."[48]

Here voluntarism dressed itself in the language of fatalism in order to make itself more persuasive. But sometimes voluntarism is forced into fatalism through having to submit to a stronger will. This was Mussolini's position in 1938, when he was compelled to acquiesce in the Anschluss. Four years before, when the Nazis had murdered Dollfuss, he had constituted himself protector of Austrian independence, and moved four divisions to the Brenner. Now, he carried off his change of front with one of his more memorable speeches in the Chamber of Deputies:

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[44] *Tamburlaine the Great*, lines 369–70, 2232–8.

[45] Speech at Tripoli, 11 April 1926, cited in Arnold J. Toynbee, *Survey of International Affairs, 1927* (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), p. 118.

[46] Speech to his commanders, 23 November 1939 (*Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg, 1945–1946;* proceedings and documents in evidence, xxvi.328; *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, iii.580).

[47] [Ed.] In a speech in Munich on 15 March 1936, Hitler said, 'I go with the assurance of a sleepwalker on the way which Providence dictates.' Wight described this as 'perhaps the most terrifying sentence he ever uttered, expressing the menace of a resistless revolutionary tread that was itself one of the causes of demoralization in his adversaries'. Hitler quoted in Martin Wight, 'Germany', in Arnold Toynbee and Frank T. Ashton-Gwatkin (eds), *The World in March 1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 347.

[48] Letter to Alexander I, 2 February 1808 (*Correspondance de Napoleon Ier*, 1864, xvi.499).

"To the superstitious votaries of a decadent machiavellianism which we despise, it may be observed that when an event is fated, it is better that it should happen with you rather than in spite of you, or, still worse, against you." It is a pity to omit the stage directions: "*Acclamazioni vivissime*. The Chamber leaps to its feet. Repeated cries of 'Duce! Duce!' *Nuovi ardentissimi applausi*, in which the platform joins."[49]

Political voluntarism has many shades. There are gradations in the admixture of will and circumstance, and there are also qualitative differences between the wills of politicians. There are examples of a politician mastering a situation, of the sudden conjunction of his will and abilities with a purposeful destiny, which are likely to evoke our sympathy: Pitt's saying in 1756, "I know that I can save this country, and that nobody else can;"[50] Franklin Roosevelt's saying in 1933, "The people of the United States…have asked for discipline and direction under leadership. They have made me the present instrument of their wishes. In the spirit of the gift I take it;"[51] Churchill's sense of relief on attaining power in 1940: "At last I had the authority to give directions over the whole scene. I felt as if I were walking with Destiny, and that all my past life had been but a preparation for this hour and for this trial."[52]

Here the egoism, if indeed that is the right word, is tinged with a sense of vocation. And if we ask why Roosevelt and de Gaulle may be thought to have had a vocation while Tamburlaine and Mussolini may be thought not to have, the answer can only be, not in any subjective consciousness they themselves may have had about their political role, but in the consonance of their purposes with the common business of humanity as we understand it.

Statesmen are concerned, partly with what is said about them by their contemporaries, partly with what is said by posterity. There must always have been public men in Greece who could repeat Hector's prayer, that he might not die without doing some great deed to be heard about by those that come afterwards.[53]

But Cicero, who said that he feared what the histories would say of him a thousand years hence much more than the petty gossip of his own day,[54] is perhaps the earliest politician of whom it is known that he reflected with anxiety upon his own place in history.

It may be that, since antiquity, the politician's concern for present fame has yielded to his desire for historical fame. In modern times a politician who

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[49] *Corriere della Sera*, 17 March 1938.
[50] [Ed.] Pitt quoted in Edward Pearce, *Pitt the Elder: Man of War* (London: Pimlico, 2011), p. 116.
[51] [Ed.] President Franklin D. Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address, 4 March 1933.
[52] [Ed.] Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War*, vol. I, *The Gathering Storm* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948), p. 667.
[53] *Iliad*, xxii.305; applied by Polybius, book v, chapter 38, to Cleomenes of Sparta.
[54] *Ad Att.*, ii.5. Cf. ii.17, xii.18.

confesses an interest in seeing his name in the gazette, as Frederick the Great did in 1740,[55] is self-condemned as a cynic; while the concern for historical reputation, attributed alike to President Kennedy and Mr. Macmillan, is regarded as a mark of statesmanship. For a sense of historical responsibility is paradoxically different from a belief in one's *historical* role, which means a belief that one can mould the future; it rather goes with a belief in one's *political* role, which means making the best choices in the present, and implies moderation and a knowledge of the limits of political action.

This concern with the living present, as against dead past and unknown future, has sometimes been seen as the essence of political realism. It has been seen as central to the statesmanship of Caesar:

> Caesar embraces decision. It is as though he felt his mind to be operating only when it is interlocking itself with significant consequences. Caesar shrinks from no responsibility. He heaps more and more upon his shoulders. It may be that he lacks some forms of imagination. It is very certain that he gives little thought to the past and does not attempt to envisage the future clearly. He does not cultivate remorse and does not indulge in aspiration.[56]

The future is the opposite of Machiavelli's Fortune: she smiles most kindly on those who have done their duty without trying to force her. In the nineteenth century there appeared a new attitude among politicians: the desire, not simply to acquire merit in the eyes of posterity, but to manage history, to create the future, to dominate posterity.

> A well-balanced mind, that would hold in just equipoise the past and future, must preserve its centre of gravity at the present. With Louis Napoleon this centre of gravity was permanently shifted towards the future, to the prejudice at times of that present on which the future depends.[57]

The tendency culminated in the totalitarianism of the twentieth century. "Fascism lives today in terms of the future, and regards the new generations as forces destined to achieve the ends appointed by our will."[58]

One might venture the generalisation, that most of the statesmen we are inclined to call great—when we use the word "great" to imply a moral valuation,

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[55] [Ed.] Thomas Carlyle, *History of Friedrich the Second called Frederick the Great* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1862) vol. 3, Book XII, pp. 154–156.

[56] Thornton Wilder, *The Ides of March* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), pp. 173–4. Cf. Mommsen, *History of Rome* (Everyman ed.), iv.428: "With him nothing was of value in politics but the living present and the law of reason."

[57] F. A. Simpson, *The Rise of Louis Napoleon* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1925), p. 233.

[58] From *The Preamble to the Statuto of 20 December 1929*, in Michael Oakeshott, ed., *The Social and Political Doctrines of Contemporary Europe* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1939), p. 179.

not simply the technical virtuosity of a Napoleon or Hitler—see themselves as instruments rather than makers of destiny. They have retained a certain ultimate humility, which tends to get lost when they come to think of themselves as playing, not simply a political role but a historical role.

> "I attempt no compliment to my own sagacity," wrote Lincoln in 1864. "I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me. Now, at the end of three years' struggle, the nation's condition is not what either party, or any man, devised or expected. God alone can claim it."[59]

There is an element in Bismarck's political philosophy curiously similar. He was accustomed to remark that the Almighty is capricious, that one cannot anticipate Divine Providence, that he himself had been content to follow where the Lord had led. Though it was partly for effect, it reflected his deep sense that certain results in politics cannot be assured.

> "We can neither ignore the history of the past," he said to the North German Reichstag in 1869, "nor can we make the future. It is a mistake I should like to warn you against, to imagine that we can hasten the passage of time by putting our clocks forward. My influence on the events I have handled is greatly overrated; but certainly nobody would expect me to *make* history. That, gentlemen, I could not do even in alliance with you—an alliance which nevertheless would be strong enough for us to defy a world in arms. But history we cannot make. We can only wait for it to take place. We cannot make fruit ripen more quickly by putting a lamp under it. And if we pluck fruit before it is ripe, we can only prevent its growth and spoil it."[60]

To describe the impact of the politician's will upon political fatality, we resort to the word "opportunism." This can mean several different things:

1. The distinction has sometimes been made between an "opportunism of ends" and an "opportunism of means."[61]

Opportunism about ends, if we are to take the phrase literally, would mean a quest for something that is uncertain, which will be decided by chance, and then may be redecided in a different sense by a subsequent chance. But if we seek to apply such a conception to political life, it immediately becomes apparent that

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[59] Letter to A.G. Hodges, 4 April 1864 (*Life and Writings of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Philip van Doren Stern, Modern Library, 1942). (*Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy P. Basler (Rutgers University Press, 1953), vii.282).
[60] Speech of 16 April 1869 (*Politischen Reden*, iv.192).
[61] E.g., C. Grant Robertson, *Bismarck* (London: Constable and Company, 1918), pp. 128–9.

there is a suppressed premiss. An unchanging end lurks beneath these shifts, and is the purpose of which they are transient embodiments.

At its lowest, it is self-preservation, more likely, it is the extension of power. The opportunism of Napoleon may afford an example.

> "Perhaps it is most true to say", Professor Butterfield has written, "that one straightforward purpose is not sufficient to account for any of his great strokes of policy. In his mind everything was astonishingly interwoven. A number of expedients dovetailed into one another, a number of plans worked into one great design, a mosaic of problems solved by one sweep of thought—that is how one is compelled to envisage a Napoleonic master-move. We are guilty of a kind of Hegelian fallacy, we are imputing to Napoleon too much of the mind of a philosopher intent on unifying his thought, we are forgetting how much he made his decisions with the mind of a strategist, if we assume that his policy had one central running purpose, to which all his actions can ultimately find reference. He had no fixed star in his sky, no definite plan for the day after to-morrow to be an obsession to his mind, and if he had a vision of the future he purposely kept it vague and fluid and essentially contingent. At a crisis like that of Tilsit such an opportunist does not merely reorganise his policy in the light of one all-consuming purpose; he changes his actual purposes and we must make a new map of his mind. Napoleon merely saw in an alliance with Russia a solution to more of his immediate problems and an opening to larger schemes of aggrandisement than he could discover in any alternative method of dealing with the Czar at that moment. In the most literal meaning of the words he changed one bag of tricks for another, with his eye upon the contingencies of the passing day."[62]

If this is opportunism of ends, we may expect to find it especially in the great unprincipled conquerors and political adventurers. And it tends to be allied, paradoxically, with extreme assertions of political voluntarism. But it is a way of overpowering Fortune that usually has only temporary efficacy, and leads her to retaliate vindictively as soon as she can. Machiavelli illustrates his argument in favour of a bold handling of Fortune from Julius II's conquest of Bologna in 1506.[63] If he had written *The Prince* after rather than before the Sack of Rome, he might have seen the first expulsion of the Bentivogli from Bologna in a less prosperous perspective, as little more than a small-town brawl. The value of political successes of this sort tends to vary inversely with distance from the event.

2. Opportunism of ends seems, in modern times, like a survival of the opportunism prevalent in antiquity. All other kinds of opportunism are

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[62] Herbert Butterfield, *The Peace Tactics of Napoleon, 1806–1808* (Cambridge University Press, 1929), p. 274.
[63] *Il Principe* (Burd edition), chapter xv, pp. 364–5.

opportunisms of means. There is, first, the opportunism that consists in creating opportunities, in manipulating events so as to produce a favourable moment for advancing towards the end that is clearly held in view. But the interaction of ends and means is so close that this opportunism of means is not always distinguishable from the opportunism of ends, and the same politician may be seen in different lights, as exemplifying either. Caesar is a supreme example. He was clearly confident that he was on good terms with Fortune: "Come, good man, be bold and fear nothing. You carry Caesar and Caesar's Fortune in your boat."[64] If we see in Caesar primarily the motive of ambition, the second Sulla, the natural tyrant, his opportunism will probably appear as an opportunism of ends. If we see primarily the desire for reform, the successor to Gracchus, the heir of the *populares*, we shall see an opportunism that created opportunities for promoting defined ends—in the making of the First Triumvirate, in the conquest of Gaul, in the crossing of the Rubicon. The ambiguity is well expressed in his novel about Caesar by Mr. Rex Warner:

No wonder that with such officers and men I conquered Gaul. Yet, as I look back on those campaigns, I can see more clearly than I did at the time that every year, almost, we might have been destroyed. I was invariably, as it were, slightly in advance of my fortune. I was always compelled by events whether in Gaul or Rome to take risks. Something new was always happening and I had to move faster and faster in order to keep ahead of danger and to impose my own selection of alternatives upon necessity. Was I pursued or pursuing? Was I shaping or being shaped by events? To these questions there is no perfectly satisfactory answer, yet any answer that is given should, to be accurate, emphasize what is active in me rather than what is passive. I cannot refuse an opportunity.[65]

We are speaking of an opportunism that does not simply await the favourable moment, but seeks to create it. It directs events so as to produce the desired opportunity. It is rigging the historical process. It is "framing" Fate, or more probably framing one's political opponents. It is seen at its crudest in promoting disturbances within a country intended for seizure in order to justify intervention. Such is the kind of opportunism generally attributed to Bismarck.[66] And though he liked to say that you cannot hasten events, you must wait till the fruit is ripe before you pluck it, he used other political metaphors which implied a more active patience: if you are hunting do not shoot at the first doe but wait till the whole herd is feeding, if you are stalking woodcock in marshy ground test every

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[64] Plutarch, *Caesar*, xxxciii. Cf. Thomas Rice Holmes, *Caesar's Conquest of Gaul*, 2nd edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), p. 41, n. 3.

[65] Rex Warner, *Imperial Caesar* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960), p. 59.

[66] "It was Bismarck's deepest conviction that true opportunism consisted as much in creating opportunities as in seizing them when they occurred." Grant Robertson, *Bismarck*, pp. 220–1.

foothold carefully before you take another step. Mr. Kennan has urged that "we must be gardeners and not mechanics in our approach to world affairs."[67] Bismarck, as befitted a Junker, was a huntsman. It is interesting that Bismarck's great opposite, Gladstone, also confessed to an opportunism that created opportunities, though characteristically in the context of moulding public opinion. In an autobiographical fragment written at the end of his life, he said that he could not be sure that he had any distinctive political gift.

> But if there be such a thing entrusted to me it has been shown at certain political junctures, in what may be termed appreciations of the general situation and its result. To make good the idea, this must not be considered as the simple acceptance of public opinion, founded upon the discernment that it has risen to a certain height needful for a given work, like a tide. It is an insight into the facts of particular eras, and their relation one to another, which generates in the mind a conviction that the materials exist for forming a public opinion and for directing it to a particular end.[68]

3. The opportunism that creates the favourable moment shades without clear distinction into the opportunism that awaits the favourable moment and seizes it. It is one difference between Bismarck's statecraft and Cavour's, that Bismarck manufactured his opportunities (although he liked to pretend he had not), while Cavour awaited his, "adapting himself instantly to a new phase of the situation and being ready to use whichever of two or more lines of action promised the greatest success."[69]

To a large extent it is the difference between the opportunism of the strong and the opportunism of the weak. At the lowest level, opportunism of this kind is simply the art of timing, the capacity to jump on to a moving bus. Seizing your chance easily slides over into "taking a chance," or even "taking chances."

At a more reflective level, it embodies a conception of the *kairos*, the transient opportunity—that youngest son of Zeus who had an altar at Olympia, and was later pictured with a long forelock but a bald back to his head.[70]

> Who lets slip Fortune, her shall never find.
> Occasion once pass'd by, is bald behind.[71]

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[67] George F. Kennan, *Realities of American Foreign Policy* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1954), p. 93.

[68] John Morley, *The Life of William Ewart Gladstone* (New York: Macmillan, 1903), ii.240–1.

[69] A. J. Whyte, *The Political Life and Letters of Cavour, 1848–1861* (London: Oxford University Press, 1930), p. 387. For a less favourable statement of the same point, D. Mack Smith, *Cavour and Garibaldi: A Study in Political Conflict* (Cambridge University Press, 1954), pp. 103–4, 131–2, 152, 211, 436.

[70] Pausanias, v.14.9. Cf. Arthur Bernard Cook, *Zeus: A Study in Ancient Religion* (Cambridge University Press, 1925), ii.859–68.

[71] Abraham Cowley, *Pyramus and Thisbe*, xv. "Fronte capillata, post est occasio calva." Dionysius Cato, *Disticha de Moribus*, ii.26.

The conception is seen in terms of stark force in Hitler's principle of exploiting the *Höhepunkt der Macht*, the moment of maximum relative strength.[72]

> Our legions are brim-full, our cause is ripe;
> The enemy increaseth every day;
> We, at the height, are ready to decline.[73]

But there are more congenial examples. The Scottish and English Unionists who carried through the Union of the Kingdoms in 1707, the Founding Fathers who made the American Federation in 1787–1788, were prompted by a consciousness of dangers which, if not averted now, might become overmastering. The Allied statesmen who inherited the ruins of victory in 1919 and 1945 were equally conscious of the transience of opportunity. It appealed especially to Lloyd George's mobile and intuitive genius. "The country is molten just now," he said in a speech in June 1918, "and you can direct the lava to whatever channel you choose. Once let it harden again, and it will take another earthquake to break it up." A year later he said to Weizmann, "You have no time to waste. Today the world is like the Baltic before a frost. For the moment it is still in motion. But if it gets set, you will have to batter your hands against the ice blocks and wait for a second thaw."[74]

> The mistakes we might make through entering on peace without preparation would be even more disastrous than the mistakes you might make by entering into war without preparation. The things that you will do will be more permanent; you will give direction and shape to things and though the world will be very molten at that moment, it will cool down very quickly and the shape which you give to it will remain.[75]

Later statesmen have had a similar sense of the *kairos*. In 1954, Adenauer said,

> "There is a great danger in continually delaying the realisation of plans for European integration", said Adenauer in 1954. "Certain favourable constellations do not last indefinitely in history and return only rarely. I address myself now far beyond this Chamber to all those of good will in a free Europe—let us realise the gravity of this time and show ourselves equal to its requirements lest future generations condemn us as weak and frivolous."[76]

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[72] Speech at a meeting of industrialists, 20 February 1933 (*Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal*, Nuremberg, xxxv.46). Cf. Martin Wight, "Germany," in Arnold Toynbee and Frank T. Ashton-Gwatkin, eds., *The World in March 1939* (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), pp. 341–2.

[73] Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, iv.3, lines 214–16.

[74] Address at the Flower Service at the Castle Street Welsh Baptist Chapel, London, 23 June 1918, *The Times*, 24 June 1918, quoted in a letter to the *Manchester Guardian*, 2 April 1945, by T. Lloyd Roberts; Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error* (New York: Harper, 1949), p. 260.

[75] [Ed.] Address at the Welsh Baptist Church, London, 23 June 1918, quoted in 'Must Have a New World By a Just Peace, and All Share It, Says Lloyd George', *New York Times*, 24 June 1918.

[76] Speech in the Chamber at Bonn, 29 April 1954, *Manchester Guardian*, 30 April 1954.

Seizing the opportunity can have moral overtones, when it means not letting an issue slide, not neglecting the call to duty. This appears in perhaps the most famous statement of opportunist principle in international politics since the Second World War:

> You have to take chances for peace, just as you must take chances in war. Some say that we were brought to the verge of war. Of course we were brought to the verge of war. The ability to get to the verge without getting into the war is the necessary art. If you cannot master it, you inevitably get into war. If you try to run away from it, if you are scared to go to the brink, you are lost. We've had to look it square in the face—on the question of enlarging the Korean war, on the question of getting into the Indochina war, on the question of Formosa. We walked to the brink and we looked it in the face. We took strong action.[77]

It is the most celebrated of Mr. Dulles's indiscretions, which, being crossed with the vocabulary of Stephen Potter,[78] has given to international politics the useful word "brinkmanship." It is a vivid restatement of the Machiavellian philosophy of politics, combining the traditional ideas of Fate, which leads along the verge of war; of chance, which must be mastered; of taking chances; of imposing the political will by strong action; of politics as the necessary art, as *virtù*.

Consequently it caused a shock, being an eloquent statement of a view of the nature of international politics which American and British opinion are reluctant to admit. Yet it is a view which most of the great international statesmen of the past, not only Truman and Churchill, but Bismarck, Palmerston, and Metternich, would accept as a straightforward description of their own experience. Perhaps the most skilful exponent of this kind of opportunism since Mr. Dulles's death has been found not among his political heirs in the Pentagon, but in Mr. Khrushchev.

4. But there is another kind of opportunism, which consists in selecting and consecrating, so to speak, the contingencies which rank as opportunity. This kind of opportunism sees these events as more significant than others, for the purpose in hand; it relates them to a providential tendency; it can even designate them in advance, and await them. In Shaw's *Saint Joan*, Joan and Dunois are waiting before Orleans, unable to bring their forces upstream because of a contrary wind. Then Dunois sees the pennon on his lance begin to stream eastwards. "The wind has changed. God has spoken."[79]

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[77] John Foster Dulles, as reported in James Shepley, "How Dulles Averted War," *Life*, 16 January 1956, quoted in Coral Bell, *Survey of International Affairs, 1954*, p. 26n.

[78] [Ed.] Stephen Potter (1900–1969) won recognition as a humorist by writing *The Theory and Practice of Gamesmanship* (1947), *Lifemanship* (1950), and *One-Upmanship* (1952).

[79] George Bernard Shaw, *Saint Joan*, scene iii, p. 38.

Cromwell believed that God's purpose was discovered in what He permitted or caused to happen. "As to outward dispensations, if we may so call them, we have not been without our share of beholding some remarkable providences, and appearances of the Lord…My dear Friend, let us look into the providences; surely they mean somewhat."[80] "Providences" or "dispensations," then, were special occurrences marvellously wrought by God, different from mere events. He rebuked the Scots for blindness to the meaning of Dunbar.[81]

> Ought not you and we to think, with fear and trembling, of the hand of the Great God in this mighty and strange appearance of His; instead of slightly calling it an 'event'? Were not both your and our expectations renewed from time to time, whilst we waited upon God, to see which way He would manifest Himself upon our appeals? And shall we, after all these our prayers, fastings, tears, expectations and solemn appeals, call these bare 'events'? The Lord pity you.[82]

Gustavus Adolphus seems to have seen the victory of Breitenfeld in the same light.[83] Similarly, Gladstone was accustomed to interpret victory at the polls as a divine mandate, a confirmation of his mission.[84] Such opportunism can even designate in advance the event that shall rank as a "dispensation." When a deputation from the religious denominations of Chicago urged Lincoln to commit himself to emancipation of the slaves, he replied, "I hope it will not be irreverent for me to say that if it is probable that God would reveal his will to others on a point so connected with my duty, it might be supposed he would reveal it directly to me; for, unless I am more deceived in myself than I often am, it is my earnest desire to know the will of Providence in this matter." In the same week the bloody battle of Antietam was won,[85] and five days later he told his cabinet that "he had made a vow—a covenant—that if God gave us the victory in the approaching battle, he would consider it an indication of the Divine will," and issue the Emancipation Proclamation.[86]

This kind of opportunism is characteristic of politicians of a religious temper. It is related to a belief, not in Fortune, but in Providence, in a purposive ordering of history.

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[80] Letter to Hammond, 25 November 1648 (Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, letter 79).

[81] [Ed.] On 3 September 1650 English troops led by Oliver Cromwell defeated the Scots under Sir David Leslie in the Battle of Dunbar.

[82] Letter to the Governor of Edinburgh Castle, 12 September 1650 (Carlyle, *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches*, letter 135).

[83] Cf. Schiller, *Geschichte des Dreissigjahrigen Kriegs*, book iii, ad init. [Ed. In the September 1631 battle at Breitenfeld, Sweden and Saxony defeated troops from Croatia, Hungary, and the Holy Roman Empire.]

[84] Cf. Morley, *Life of Gladstone*, ii.252, 610, iii.1, 275–6.

[85] [Ed.] The Battle of Antietam, known also as the Battle of Sharpsburg, was fought on 17 September 1862.

[86] Nicolay and Hay, *Life of Lincoln*, vi.155, 160.

> Es gibt keinen Zufall;
> Und was uns blindes Ohngefähr nur dünkt,
> Gerade *das* steigt aus den tiefsten Quellen.[87]

These conceptions of Fortune—of Fate, Chance, and Will in politics—have probably found their most elaborate expression in the literature of German Romanticism. Political education owes a place, beside the political writings of the great philosophers, to Schiller's *Wallenstein*. This is the greatest political drama in literature. Shakespeare or the Greeks wrote greater dramas, but none so concentrated upon the process, the texture, the concatenations of political action. Moreover, Schiller himself was historian as well as poet, and although few original sources for the life of Wallenstein were available to him, and his portrait contains errors of fact and interpretation, nevertheless the play is in many respects a historically satisfying and penetrating picture of its enigmatic baroque hero, the only Napoleonic figure of the Thirty Years War. The play is a dramatic essay upon the consciousness of Fate, inexorable and mutable, of Chance, incalculable yet manipulable, and of political Will dominating and directing, analysing the nature of its own responsibility, and in the end destroyed. Indeed, it adds another dimension to fatalism, for Wallenstein was sustained by that comprehensive and practical predecessor of the social sciences, astrology. His original astrologer was Kepler, who drew him a horoscope when a young man which was remarkably accurate. His astrologers could furnish him with predictive power more accurate and apposite than that of the Marxian dialectic, and demonstrate in advance misfortunes that could be averted and opportunities that could be seized. There is a moment both of drama and of fine intellectual veracity, when Wallenstein is told that his principal supporter has gone over to the other side. One of his companions reproaches him, "Now can't you see astrology is false?" But Wallenstein's spirit soars above mere empirical refutation, and his answer is noble:

> The stars lie not; but we have here a work
> Wrought counter to the stars and destiny.
> The science is still honest: this false heart
> Forces a lie on the truth-telling heaven.
> On a divine law divination rests;
> Where nature deviates from that law, and stumbles
> Out of her limits, there all science errs.[88]

Thus it was that Professor Irving Fisher, the Yale economist, who in the summer of 1929 had predicted that "stock prices have reached what looks like a

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[87] Schiller, *Wallensteins Tod*, ii.3, lines 943–945. [Ed. 'There's no such thing as chance / And what to us seems merest accident/Springs from the deepest source of destiny.' Coleridge translation.]
[88] *Wallensteins Tod*, iii.9, lines 1666–74 (Coleridge translation, Bohn Library, pp. 356–7).

permanently high plateau," a couple of months later explained that "the price level of the market" had not been "unsoundly high," and that the fall in the market had been due to mob psychology.[89] Thus it is, to take a loftier example of a political belief incapable of falsification, that President de Gaulle sees his country:

> I imagine France as the princess of the fairy tales or as the madonna of the frescoes—as devoted to an exalted and exceptional destiny. I have the instinctive impression that Providence has created France for complete successes or exemplary disasters. If it should happen nevertheless that mediocrity should mark her deeds and gestures, I feel that it would be an absurd anomaly—attributable to the shortcomings of the French people, not to the genius of France.[90]

It seems to be somewhere here, at the zenith of German romanticism, or in the more general reaction against the French Revolution, that the conception of irony in history and politics first takes shape. Bury published *The Idea of Progress* in 1919, at the very end of the liberal period of European history whose religion progress had been. A corresponding book might be written, for our own age, on the idea of the irony of history, which is the converse of the belief in progress. It appears, so to speak, as the minority report against the idealist, historicist and positivist orthodoxies of the nineteenth century, and in the twentieth century has tended to replace them. Irony as a literary mode, of course, goes back through European literature, and some of the greatest writers of the Augustan age—Swift, Voltaire, Fielding, Gibbon—are laden with a sense of cosmic irony. But though they illustrate how dramatic irony may be experienced in public and private life, they do not yet formulate the irony of fate as a principle.[91]

The notion of an irony in history and politics is almost formulated in de Maistre's reflections upon revolutions.[92] Implicit in Marx's repeated applications to bourgeois history of the terms tragi-comedy, parody, caricature, ridiculous, it becomes also in him explicit: "The irony of history made Bastide, the ex-editor for foreign affairs of the *National*, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, so that he might refute every one of his articles in every one of his despatches."[93] In English writing it may not have appeared much before the end of the nineteenth century.[94]

[89]   J. K. Galbraith, *The Great Crash 1929* (Penguin edition, 1961), pp. 95, 164–5.

[90]   Charles de Gaulle, *Mémoires de Guerre*, vol. I, *L'Appel 1940–1942* (Paris: Plon, 1954), p. 1.

[91]   To confirm the negative statement, see Norman Knox, *The Word Irony and its Context, 1500 to 1755* (Duke University Press, Durham, North Carolina, 1951); and Harold L. Bond, *The Literary Art of Edward Gibbon* (Clarendon Press, 1960), chapter vi.

[92]   Joseph de Maistre, *Considérations sur la France*, chapter i.

[93]   Karl Marx, *The Class Struggles in France, 1848–1850* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1945), p. 69.

[94]   The *New English Dictionary* has three nineteenth century examples of "irony" in the sense of the irony of fate, from Thirlwall, 1833, Wilkie Collins, 1860, and Morley, 1878.

Hardy was deeply imbued with a sense of life's irony, of the satires of circumstance, and there is an Ironic Spirit among the mythological cast of *The Dynasts*, which began to appear in 1904; though it must be admitted that the Ironic Spirit is a pallid figure, who only faintly flavours the cosmic fatalism of the drama.[95]

Such a book, to be complete, should have a wider scope than history and politics. It would trace the rise of the ideas associated with irony which are part of our mental equipment, such as paradox and ambiguity, from the Kierkegaardian absurd to the ambitendency of Bleuler and the ambivalence of Freud and Jung.[96] It would embrace the development of the idea of irony in literary criticism, from Friedrich von Schlegel's doctrine of irony as the principle of art, which Hegel derived from the philosophical egotism of Fichte,[97] down to the Empsonian ambiguities, which are offspring of linguistic analysis.[98]

And it would show how, in historical and political writing since the First World War, irony has become a regular category of description, if not of interpretation, so that as early as 1926 Fowler could condemn it as a hackneyed phrase.[99] In this field it belongs especially perhaps to the kind of writers called realist, and it is their patriarch, Reinhold Niebuhr, who has written a book entitled *The Irony of American History*.[100]

With the ironic idea comes the Greek tragedy interpretation of politics. It might be thought odd that this does not belong to the period when education meant a knowledge of the Classics. But in that period, which lasts in Europe into the second half of the nineteenth century, it was (apart from the models of classical history itself) the epic rather than the tragic that coloured political and historical comment. Statesmen found their typical situations in Homer and especially Virgil, and (in England) could see their opponents as characters from the earlier books of Milton. The boom in Greek tragedy begins in the later nineteenth century, and this may indicate that the ironic idea was not imposed upon events by

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[95] [Ed.] Thomas Hardy, *The Dynasts: An Epic-Drama of the War with Napoleon, in Three Parts, Nineteen Acts, and One Hundred and Thirty Scenes, The Time Covered by the Action Being About Ten Years* (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1918).

[96] [Ed.] Paul Eugen Bleuler (1857–1939), a Swiss psychiatrist, coined the terms *autism*, *schizoid*, and *schizophrenia*. According to Carl G. Jung, Bleuler distinguished between *ambitendency*, 'which causes every impulse to be accompanied simultaneously by a counter-impulse', *ambivalence*, 'which gives two contradictory feeling-tones to the same idea and makes the same thought appear positive and negative at once', and 'Schizophrenic splitting of the psyche, which prevents conclusions from being drawn from contradictory psychisms, so that the most unsuitable impulse can be translated into action just as easily as the right one, and the right thought accompanied, or replaced, by its negative.' C. G. Jung, *Collected Works*, ed. Sir Herbert Read, Michael Fordham, and Gerhard Adler, vol. 3, *The Psychogenesis of Mental Disease*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (New York: Pantheon Books for the Bollingen Foundation, 1960), pp. 197–198.

[97] G. W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of Fine Art*, introduction, section iv.3, translated by F.P.B. Osmaston (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1920), vol. I, pp. 88–94.

[98] [Ed.] William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, 2nd edn, revised (London: Chatto and Windus, 1947).

[99] H. W. Fowler, *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926).

[100] Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History* (New York: Scribner, 1952).

men with a particular literary culture, but was in some sense suggested by the events themselves. Thus Wickham Steed, the greatest correspondent whom *The Times* ever sent to Central Europe, left Vienna in 1913, after living there nine years, penetrated with the sense that the Habsburg Empire was involved in a doom resembling a Greek tragedy, "and that its peoples and even its Head, while conscious of the fate which hung over them, were unable or unwilling to avert it."[101] Sir Edward Grey, when he looked back on the events of the 1914 crisis, wrote that they were

> like the deliberate, relentless strokes of Fate, determined on human misfortune, as they are represented in Greek tragedy. It was as if Peace were engaged in a struggle for life, and, whenever she seemed to have a chance, some fresh and more deadly blow was struck.[102]

Mr. Stimson remarked to Dr. Bruening in Geneva on 17th April 1932 that

> the situation in the world seemed to me like the unfolding of a great Greek tragedy, where we could see the march of events, and know what ought to be done, but [seemed] powerless to prevent its marching to its grim conclusion.[103]

This was an un-American observation; one could not expect an American statesman to remain satisfied with so unpragmatic a judgment. And in 1947, looking back, Stimson repudiated it. In his considered retrospective view, the tragedy of Europe was not the tragedy of inevitability, but of foolish nations and timid statesmen; though in this Stimson perhaps did not extricate himself from the tragic category, but only substituted the Shakespearean for the Greek. Sir Nevile Henderson said he experienced the diplomacy of the summer of 1939 in terms of Greek tragedy, and was castigated for it by Namier, as if lacking the moral dignity that the tragic interpretation requires.[104]

And Mr. Deutscher's incomparable biography of Trotsky is presented as "a reproduction of classical tragedy in secular terms of modern politics."[105]

The idea of historic irony seems to comprehend, but more organically and with richer connotations, the old naked naïve idea of fortune. It broadens the idea of fortune from a theory of politics into a theory of history. Irony in literature has

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[101] Wickham Steed, *The Doom of the Hapsburgs* (London: Arrowsmith, 1937), preface, p. vii.

[102] Viscount Grey of Fallodon, *Twenty-Five Years 1892–1916* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925), i.325.

[103] Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War* (London: Hutchinson, 1949), p. 112.

[104] Sir Nevile Henderson, *Failure of a Mission* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1940), pp. vii, 112, 183, 252, 255. Cf. Sir Lewis B. Namier, *Diplomatic Prelude, 1938–1939* (London: Macmillan, 1948), pp. 62, 261n.

[105] Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Armed* (Oxford University Press, 1954), p. vii.

been defined by an American critic as "the *obvious* warping of a statement by the context."[106] Irony in politics might be defined as the warping of political intention by the historical context—the warping of the less-than-one-half of our action which we direct by the more-than-one-half of which fortune is arbiter. And in politics, if not in literature, the irony varies inversely with the obviousness of it. Irony is manifested in peripeteia. This is the word Aristotle uses for the reversal of situation which provides the hinge of tragic drama. It is a train of action intended to bring about a certain end, but resulting in something different. The situation swings round and recoils against the agent who is attempting to deal with it. Aristotle uses the same word more broadly in the *Historia Animalium* to describe the revolution of circumstance—one might almost say, the law of retribution— illustrated by the relations between crawfish and other fish. The crawfish can overpower large fishes, including the conger; the conger can eat the octopus; but the octopus is the one animal which outmatches the crawfish, and inspires in the crawfish such terror (according to Aristotle) that when crawfish find themselves in the same fishing-net as an octopus they die of fright.[107] This might be a parable of international politics.

Peripeteia, irony in action, the warping of political intention by the historical context, is the regular, repeated, one is tempted to say fundamental experience of international politics. One need go no further back in history than to recall how, when Hitler came to power in 1933, the Franco-Polish alliance proved useless against the danger for which it had been designed, and Poland signed her non-aggression pact with Hitler, freeing his hands to conquer Austria and Czechoslovakia, and herself joined in the partition of Czechoslovakia, the ally of her French ally; how Hitler then made a secret treaty with his worst enemy, Russia, to enable him to attack Poland, whom they partitioned together; how Britain, who had protested for twenty years that she had no vital interest in Eastern Europe, now went to war with Germany on Poland's account, and nearly went to war with Russia on Finland's account; how Germany then made a surprise attack on her criminal partner Russia, who was overnight embraced as an ally by Britain; how Britain signed a twenty years treaty of alliance with Russia, and failed to prevent her from enslaving Poland, to free whom the war was begun; how, Germany in due course having been crushed and permanently disarmed, the Western Powers and Russia at once fell quarrelling, the Anglo-Soviet Treaty was forgotten, the heroic Soviet ally became the Communist menace, and Germany was within a few years rearmed against Russia. This is the chain of linked peripeties at the end of which the world now dangles.

Let a few more recent examples be suggested.

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[106] Cleanth Brooks, in Morton Dauwen Zabel (ed.), *Literary Opinion in America* (New York: Harper, revd edn, 1951), p. 730; italics in the original.
[107] *Historia Animalium*, viii.2, 590 b14.

1. From 1945 to 1949 it was an official article of Western belief that the guarantee of peace lay in America's monopoly of atomic weapons. In 1949 Russia exploded her bomb, and it immediately became an official article of Western faith, in the mouths of the self-same spokesmen, that the guarantee of peace lay in atomic weapons being possessed by both sides, so as to produce a balance of terror.

2. In 1949 Britain sent an ultimatum to Israel, that if Israeli troops were not withdrawn from Sinai within 48 hours, Britain would enter the war against Israel on the side of Egypt. In 1956, Britain took advantage of the Israeli attack on Sinai (with or without collusion) to launch an attack of her own on Egypt.

3. In March 1954, at the Caracas Conference of the O.A.S. [Organization of American States], Dulles warned the Latin American states of the danger of a doctrine of non-intervention in the face of international Communism: "The slogan of non-intervention can plausibly be invoked and twisted to give immunity to what is in reality flagrant intervention."[108] In July 1954 the United States plausibly twisted the slogan of non-intervention to give immunity to her own intervention in Guatemala, by arming the rebels and the country which afforded them a base, by preventing the UN from dealing with the Guatemalan government's appeal, and by allowing the United States ambassador in Guatemala to dictate the peace terms.

4. In 1954 Dulles complained that Britain was not prepared to back the Americans up in Indo-China, and Eden, the great conciliator, played a part, albeit a minor part, in persuading the Americans not to intervene by force. In 1956 Eden complained that Dulles was not prepared to back Britain up against Egypt, and Dulles failed to prevent the great conciliator from intervening in Suez by force.

5. In 1956 there was a Hungarian refugee who said that the only people towards whom the Hungarians could feel gratitude were the Russians, because some Russian soldiers at least had come over to the Hungarian rebels and risked their lives alongside of them.

6. In 1953 the Southern Rhodesian settlers imposed the Central African Federation against the wishes of the African majority in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and thenceforward deplored any suggestion that Nyasaland might be given the right to secede. By 1960 the Southern Rhodesian settlers were becoming anxious about the Federation being dominated by nationalist African regimes in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and thinking that they might wish to secede themselves.

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[108] [Ed.] Dulles speech of 8 March 1954, *New York Times*, 9 March 1954, cited in Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, ed. Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad (London: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978), p. 199.

7. In 1956 the British Government regarded Nasser as the disturber of the peace in the Middle East and were prepared to try to overthrow him by force. By 1961 the Foreign Office tended to regard Nasser as a stabilising influence in the Middle East and was worried by the break-up of the United Arab Republic.

This is a handful of examples. Many more instances of the irony of events could be culled from contemporary politics; many more could be provided by any volume of diplomatic history, of any age.

We are accustomed to recognise the ironies and peripeties of politics in the particular case, when they illustrate the backwardness of the Germans or the Russians, the imbecility of the Foreign Office, the perversity of Mr. Dulles or Dr. Salazar or Dr. Nkrumah and so confirm our special political dislikes.[109] After all, they provide half the ammunition of political debate in a free society. But we are reluctant to recognise them in general. They affront our belief in the rational control of our affairs and our consciousness of moral rectitude. Of students of politics, it is perhaps only the journalists, especially perhaps the foreign correspondents, of whom the best are among the true contemporary historians, who are characteristically imbued with an awareness of the ironies of politics; which is what we mean when we say, inaccurately, that the occupational disease of newspapermen is cynicism. Academic students of politics, being usually wedded to schemes of political improvement, tend to neglect the phenomenology of political experience.

Historians, moreover, may say that it is not their business to notice irony in history; that irony, like tragedy, belongs to literature, not to historiography; that the concept of irony is incompatible with the nature of historical explanation. One kind of historian may say that he seeks rational explanation in the study of history; that is to say, he makes generalisations importing regular and comprehensible process or development; but irony implies irregularity and only partial comprehension. Another kind of historian may say that he does not explain by generalising at all, but only by establishing greater and more complete detail. Both arguments, however, seem untrue to the looseness and elasticity of the notion of explanation. Neither argument takes account of the great variety of explaining seen in the actual practice of historians. And it is doubtful whether explanation, even in its widest and vaguest meaning, covers the whole of the

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[109] [Ed.] António de Oliveira Salazar, Prime Minister of Portugal from 1932 to 1968, remains controversial, criticized for his authoritarian rule and alignment with Franco, and praised for certain economic and foreign policy choices, notably with reference to World War II. Kwame Nkrumah, the first Prime Minister of the Gold Coast (1952–1957) and of Ghana (1957–1960) and the first President of Ghana (1960–1966), won recognition for his idealism and leadership in the struggle for national independence. Resistance to his authoritarian methods and economic setbacks led to his removal in a military *coup d'état* in 1966.

historian's activity. Over and above explaining, historians are accustomed to offer observations and reflections upon the affairs they have tried to explain. Such observations, whereby the historian relates the description and explanation he offers to the general experience of his readers, are not the least element in our judgment of historical writing.

The concept of irony is a function of European languages; the reversals and incongruities of life are common experience. The sense of irony, at its simplest, is aroused by the recognition that in politics intentions are seldom fulfilled, and consequences elude reckoning; at a deeper level, it is an intimation that there may be a kind of rough justice, an unforeseen harmony, in the way things work out. Historians like other people express this sense, this intimation.

Octavian defeated Antony, obliterated his memory, and established his own absolute power under the forms of the Principate. But the discarded Antony became ancestor of more Roman emperors than the triumphant Augustus: "posthumous and ironical justice."[110]

In the late thirteenth century, the Mameluke sultans of Egypt conquered what remained of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, at a time when the Mongol Khan of Persia was trying to get the Pope and the kings of France and England to co-operate against them in a massive pincer-movement.[111]

When the French occupied the Papal town of Ancona in 1831, against Papal protests, in order to discourage Austrian intervention in the Papal States, one of the strongest opponents of the adventure was Talleyrand, renegade bishop and now French ambassador in London. (Palmerston remarked that Talleyrand "has evidently a deep-rooted fear of the Pope. This is the only remaining trace of the imposition of hands."[112])

These are three random examples of historians acknowledging historical irony, from the spheres of dynastic succession, of international politics, and of the inconsistencies in the successive views of an individual. But why, it might be asked, does Powicke describe the second example as "one of the ironies of history"? What is ironical about the attempts of an aggressive Power's neighbours to combine against it? This might be seen, not as an incongruity between an event and its context, but rather as a direct relationship of cause and effect. Perhaps the student of international politics is apt to see as an illustration of a political law or of a recurring pattern of events what to a wider view seems ironical. This may be

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[110] Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 495. Cf. his *Tacitus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), i.379–80: "Time would show many a paradox."

[111] F. M. Powicke, *King Henry III and the Lord Edward: The Community of the Realm in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947), ii.730.

[112] Charles K. Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston* (London: G. Bell, 1951), i.211. The words irony and paradox are not in the vocabulary of this austerely positivist historian; it is the more strange that he says "strangely enough" the ex-priest was more disturbed than anyone else at the occupation of Papal territory.

true of most kinds of specialism: perhaps the first example is not ironical to the genealogist, nor the third to the psychologist.

Hence the persuasive view that irony is an illusion engendered by simply not knowing enough about the matter in hand. But more detailed knowledge of a part is often bought at the price of a less clear apprehension of the whole. The more attentively we cultivate our allotments, the less we observe the undulations of the skyline. Political reporting and historical writing which lack the sense of irony are apt to remain as naïve as painting without chiaroscuro, as abstract as Newtonian physics in the universe of Planck and Einstein. The ironic is a category of practical experience, and it is often the case that if irony is not detected in one aspect of a story it will be seen in another. A straightforward account of the fall of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, in terms of internal dissensions and divided purposes, ends with the words: "It was a mockery of fate that for centuries to come the phantom title of King of Jerusalem was claimed by princes whose predecessors had failed to defend its reality."[113]

Some historians are less attuned to irony than others; and it is an interesting question whether some branches of history, and some departments of human activity, lend themselves less than others to ironic reflection. And it is the experience of irony, not the word, that we are concerned with. The word can be loosely and tritely employed, and the ironies of history can be acknowledged under other names. Moreover, as Bacon observes, "All wise history is indeed pregnant with political rules and precepts, but the writer is not to take all opportunities of delivering himself of them."[114]

The word peripeteia does not appear in Thucydides, and it is used many times by Polybius. But Thucydides' narrative has such an architecture of irony that many have seen in it a resemblance to Aeschylean drama; in Polybius the reversals of fortune have become mechanical.

Carlyle's writing is impregnated with a deeper sense of irony than Macaulay's. Carlyle saw the irony of events as a mode of the divine guidance of the world, as the way in which reality triumphs over formulas, truth over lies, fact over quackery and sham. "They that would make grass be eaten do now eat grass, in *this* manner?"[115] (of Foulon's head on a pike, the mouth filled with grass).[116] "After long dumb-groaning generations, has the turn suddenly become thine?—To such

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[113] Charles Lethbridge Kingsford, "The Kingdom of Jerusalem, 1099–1291," in J. R. Tanner, C. W. Previté-Orton, and Z. N. Brooke, eds., *The Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. V, *Contest of Empire and Papacy* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1926), p. 319.

[114] Francis Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, book ii, chapter x.

[115] [Ed.] Thomas Carlyle, *The French Revolution* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1902), vol. I, p. 244; italics in the original.

[116] [Ed.] Joseph Foulon de Doué (1715–1789), a Controller-General of Finances under Louis XVI, was reported to have said during a famine that people without bread should eat hay. Shortly after the storming of the Bastille, he was beheaded by a mob that paraded his head on a pike, his mouth stuffed with grass.

abysmal overturns, and frightful instantaneous inversions of the centre of gravity, are human Solecisms all liable, if they but knew it; the more liable, the falser (and top-heavier) they are!"[117] But seldom does he directly refer to the irony of history, and never (I think) under that name. "A restless, ostentatious, far-grasping, strong-handed man," he says of the blind king John of Bohemia, whose crest the Black Prince adopted on the field of Crécy; "who kept the world in a stir wherever he was. All which has proved voiceless in the World's memory; while the casual Shadow of a Feather he once wore has proved vocal there. World's memory is very whimsical now and then."[118]

Macaulay's attitude to history was cruder, simpler and incidentally less ironic than Carlyle's, but a notable sensitiveness to the ironies and peripeties of history helped to shape his peculiar antithetical style. "Fifty years after the Lutheran separation, Catholicism could scarcely maintain itself on the shores of the Mediterranean. A hundred years after the separation, Protestantism could scarcely maintain itself on the shores of the Baltic."[119] "So rapid was the progress of the decay that, within eight years after the time when Oliver [Cromwell] had been the umpire of Europe, the roar of the guns of De Ruyter was heard in the Tower of London."[120]

Perhaps it is in the realm of irony that a reconciliation can be made between fate and chance in their aspects as the predictable and the unpredictable. There are some who assert the possibility of political prediction.

> "A great and advanced society," wrote Mackinder in 1919, "has…a powerful momentum; without destroying the society itself you cannot suddenly check or divert its course. Thus it happens that years beforehand detached observers are able to predict a coming clash of societies which are following convergent paths in their development."[121]

Sometimes we agree with him, and resign ourselves as best we may to the extreme likelihood of war between America and Russia. Then Mr. Kennan replies:

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[117] [Ed.] Carlyle, *French Revolution*, vol. I, p. 244.

[118] [Ed.] Thomas Carlyle, *History of Friedrich II of Prussia, Called Frederick the Great* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1886), vol. I, p. 123. King John of Bohemia was killed fighting the English in the Battle of Crécy in 1346. Following the battle, according to popular tradition, Edward of Woodstock, Prince of Wales, better known as the Black Prince, adopted King John's motto 'Ich dien' ('I serve') and crest, which includes a gold coronet and three ostrich feathers. This has remained the heraldic badge of the Prince of Wales.

[119] [Ed.] Thomas Babington Macaulay, 'Von Ranke', in *Critical and Historical Essays Contributed to 'The Edinburgh Review'* (London: Longman, Green, and Co., 1883), p. 553.

[120] [Ed.] Thomas Babington Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James II* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1856), vol. III, p. 48. Michiel De Ruyter was perhaps the most famous admiral in Dutch history.

[121] Halford John Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1919), p. 5.

It seems to me that in the field of international affairs one should never be so sure of his analysis of the future as to permit it to become a source of complete despair. The greatest law of human history is its unpredictability.[122]

Which are we to believe? The answer is both, if we remember the ironic variable. Predictions can come true, if you allow for the ironic transformation of what is predicted as our own attitudes towards it change. Non-prediction can be right and wise, if you allow for the ironic ocean-drift bearing the non-predictor in the direction of that which he cannot or dare not predict. By the time that what was correctly predicted has arrived, we find that though extrinsically the same it is yet qualitatively different from what we expected, and that we ourselves are different from the us who first feared or hoped for it. Something may be learned from the predictions made to Macbeth.[123]

> Think now
> History has many cunning passages, contrived corridors
> And issues, deceives with whispering ambitions,
> Guides us by vanities. Think now
> She gives when our attention is distracted
> And what she gives, gives with such supple confusions
> That the giving famishes the craving. Gives too late
> What's not believed in, or is still believed,
> In memory only, reconsidered passion. Gives too soon
> Into weak hands, what's thought can be dispensed with
> Till the refusal propagates a fear.[124]

Or as William Morris put it, in words that Sir Llewellyn Woodward has often quoted:

I pondered all these things, and how men fight and lose the battle, and the thing that they fought for comes about in spite of their defeat, and when it comes turns out not to be what they meant, and other men have to fight for what they meant under another name.[125]

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[122] G. F. Kennan, *Realities of American Foreign Policy* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1954), p. 92.

[123] [Ed.] When the predictions initially made to Macbeth—notably that he would become Thane of Cawdor and King of Scotland—came true, he mistakenly assumed that these predictions and the subsequent ones—that 'none of woman born / Shall harm Macbeth' and that 'Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be, until / Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill / Shall come against him'—would be to his benefit; in fact, they led to his ruin and death.

[124] [Ed.] T. S. Eliot, 'Gerontion', in T. S. Eliot, *Selected Poems* (New York: Gramercy Books, 2006), p. 42.

[125] *A Dream of John Ball*, chapter iv. [Ed. William Morris (1834–1896) was an artist and author. His 1888 novel, *A Dream of John Ball*, concerns the unsuccessful English Peasants' Revolt of 1381 and one of the rebellion's leaders, a priest named John Ball. Sir Llewellyn Woodward quoted this passage to great effect in 'Some Reflections on British Policy, 1939–45', *International Affairs*, 31(3) (July 1955), pp. 289–290.]

Review of Hugh Ross Williamson, *Charles and Cromwell* (London: Duckworth, 1946)

Mr. Williamson has interpreted the history of the early Stuarts in a trilogy of biographical studies.* The first two were on Buckingham and Hampden; this is the third. It is highly readable narrative with no academic pretensions, the kind of history that depends on psychological insights instead of critical method, and need be none the worse for that.

In an artless introduction Mr. Williamson asserts the romantic view of history as "the relationship or interaction of characters." His story is "a tragedy of circumstance and character in which there were, in fact, two victims." It shows a good dramatic sense in the external interweaving of Charles's and Cromwell's lives, but what is lacking is the deeper dialectic of conservative and revolutionary psychology. It illuminates neither the particular clash between the Anglicanism of the King and the Independency of the Lieutenant-General, nor the general problem of political morals in a revolutionary situation.

Charles's statesmanship was beneath contempt, but Cromwell's was not in the long run more successful. And it was in success that Cromwell, like Napoleon and the Bolsheviks after him, found the mark of divine approbation. The perfidy of Charles and the "hypocrisy" of Cromwell were two sides of the same medal. Both were good men, better indeed than their French and Russian counterparts, but compelled to political methods which in private circumstances they would have condemned. It was Charles, perhaps, who was more conscious of the tension, and rose nearer to the language of Lincoln when he wrote of "God's just judgment upon this nation by a furious civil war, both sides hitherto being almost equally guilty."

Mr. Williamson skims pleasantly along the surface of these waters before the breeze of a life-long Cromwellian fervour, like Mr. Belloc in reverse.[1] In what is

* [Ed.] Hugh Ross Williamson's *Charles and Cromwell* was published by Duckworth in London in 1946, and Wight composed this incisive review of the book. It has not been possible, however, to identify the periodical or date of publication of this review or to determine whether it was in fact published. The page proofs, corrected in Wight's distinctive handwriting, were found among his papers in the Archives of the British Library of Political and Economic Science at the London School of Economics and Political Science. The digital archives of *The Guardian*, *The Observer*, and *International Affairs* do not include this review. Nor has it been possible to locate it in JSTOR, Google, Google Scholar, or various ProQuest databases.

[1] [Ed.] Hilaire Belloc (1870–1953) published a critical biography, *Oliver Cromwell* (London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1931).

perhaps the naïvest passage of his introduction he says, "It is the people that matter, and the principles are important only as far as they further an understanding of the people. One might have fought either for Charles or for Cromwell; but if it had been a matter of fighting for the Divine Right of Kings, or for the Principle of Toleration, one would have absented oneself from Naseby and got on with the hay-making." This smock-frocked approach is not on a high level of political literacy, and does not make for much more profound history than Old Kaspar's observations on the Battle of Blenheim.[2]

[2] [Ed.] Robert Southey's poem, 'After Blenheim', also known as 'Battle of Blenheim' (1796), reports a conversation between Old Kaspar and his grandchildren about the Duke of Marlborough's victory in 1704, part of the War of the Spanish Succession, a conversation that concludes as follows:

> "And everybody praised the Duke
>
> Who this great fight did win."
>
> "But what good came of it at last?"
>
> Quoth little Peterkin.
>
> "Why that I cannot tell," said he,
>
> "But 'twas a famous victory."

Wight quoted Southey's poem to illustrate the attitude of people who see war as uniformly futile and meaningless. Wight set out examples of what he termed 'positive or constructive functions of war in international society' in his paper, 'On the Abolition of War: Observations on a Memorandum by Walter Millis', and even referred in this paper to 'broad agreement among intelligent men that…it was a good thing that Louis XIV did not win the War of the Spanish Succession'. By 1820 Southey had changed his opinion of the battle, declaring it the 'greatest victory which had ever done honour to British arms'. He held that, 'had it been lost by the allies, Germany would immediately have been at the mercy of the French, and their triumph would have been fatal to the Protestant Succession in England'. Southey quoted in William Arthur Speck, *Robert Southey: Entire Man of Letters* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), pp. 179–180. Wight's paper 'On the Abolition of War: Observations on a Memorandum by Walter Millis' is included in the present volume, *International Relations and Political Philosophy*, pp. 175–181.

23

Review of E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939* (London: Macmillan, 1946)

This brilliant, provocative and unsatisfying book was first published in the autumn of 1939, and was widely acclaimed in that year of disillusion as a major contribution to political thought.* It now appears, substantially un-altered, in a second edition.

Professor Carr builds his introduction to the science of international politics round the antithesis between what he calls Utopia and reality. "Every political situation contains mutually incompatible elements of Utopia and reality, of morality and power." But the balance is not kept, and the book lacks the fruitful tension of Reinhold Niebuhr's "Moral Man and Immoral Society." Professor Carr is at his weakest in dealing with the principles of political obligation; and at his most powerful in developing the realist critique, which seeps up in every chapter. The choice of the word "Utopia" to describe the ethical side of politics itself shows the questions that the argument is going to beg.

What Professor Carr gives us is the most comprehensive modern restatement, other than Marxist or Fascist, of the Hobbesian view of politics. It is from politics that both morality and law derive their authority. For Hobbes, the kingdom of the fairies was the Roman Catholic Church, seducing mankind with its enchantments. For Professor Carr, it is the League of Nations, which is no other than the ghost of the deceased Pax Britannica, sitting crowned upon the grave thereof; and the principal old wives whom he denounces are President Wilson, Lord Cecil and Professors Toynbee and Zimmern. The pre-1939 Mr. Churchill also appears among them.

This book is indeed the one lasting intellectual monument of the policy of appeasement. The first edition described Mr. Chamberlain's foreign policy as "a reaction of realism against Utopianism," and led up to a defence of Munich. In the second edition these passages are omitted. But the conclusion stands: "a successful foreign policy must oscillate between the apparently opposite poles of force

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* [Ed.] E. H. Carr published *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939* (second edition) with Macmillan in London in 1946. Wight published this review under the title 'The Realist's Utopia' in *The Observer*, 21 July 1946.

and appeasement." Wielding the realist critique at the expense of the moral critique, it is natural that Professor Carr should have moved since 1939 from support of collaboration with Germany to support of collaboration with Russia. But the Teheran-Yalta theory of world relationships is itself being swept from present realism into past Utopianism.

Professor Carr now writes of his book with disarming humility as a *livre de circonstance*, aimed at counteracting "the almost total neglect of the factor of power" in English thinking about international affairs. It is, however, a great deal more than that, as Machiavelli's "Prince" is more than a nationalist tract. The student could have no better introduction to the fundamental problems of politics, provided always that he reads it side by side with Mr. Leonard Woolf's deadly reply in "The War for Peace."[1]

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[1] [Ed.] Wight may have regarded Carr's book as 'unsatisfying' and Woolf's reply to Carr as 'deadly' on various grounds, including the following. First, Carr failed to define clearly terms as basic to his analysis as 'realism' and 'utopia' with respect to means and ends. [Leonard Woolf, *The War for Peace* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1940), pp. 117, 119–121.] Second, contrary to Carr's assumption, the failure of the League of Nations did not prove that it was doomed to fail owing to its supposed origins in 'utopian' ideas and alleged neglect of power realities and competing national interests. [Woolf, p. 122.] Third, to accept Carr's argument 'that no policy which has not succeeded could have succeeded' would imply embracing 'the most rigid and extreme form of historical determinism'. [Woolf, pp. 116–117n.] Fourth, Carr's analysis suggested that 'the relations of states must inevitably be based upon conflict and power and that therefore the conflict of interests must periodically be resolved by totalitarian war.' [Woolf, p. 125.] Fifth, Carr's reasoning ruled out any possibility of a sustainable negotiated peace, owing to the 'idea that conflicting national interests have a peculiar reality which makes them incapable of human control or manipulation and "inevitably" determines the history of twentieth-century Europe'. [Woolf, p. 129.]

24

Review of Friedrich Meinecke, *Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison d'état and its Place in Modern History* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957)

Translating Meinecke is a plum which more than one scholar and publisher have thought of picking; Dr Stark and Messrs Routledge and Kegan Paul have deserved well of all students of international affairs by adding *Die Idee der Staatsräson* to their series of Rare Masterpieces of Philosophy and Science.* It is by any odds the most important and enduring book on international relations published in the 1920s, and perhaps between the wars. Meinecke saw it as an essay in the historiography of human thought, a study of how Machiavelli's principles infiltrated into European statecraft, how thinkers and politicians who most strenuously repudiated him found it necessary to borrow from him, and how the idea of *raison d'état* developed to guide the greatest statesmen from Richelieu to Bismarck, until it was swamped by the ignorant popular passions of 1918. His account of the empirical study of international relations (which preceded the growth of international law) is valuable for students today who sometimes think that the study of international affairs began with Andrew Carnegie, Lionel Curtis, and Sir Montague Burton. Meinecke set himself to avoid exhuming the second-rate; and Boccalini and Campanella, de Rohan and Rousset, as they conduct operations research and analyse national interest, the elements of State power, the foreign policy-making process, the balance of power, and the other idols of the American textbook, reappear with a freshness that makes some more familiar political writers seem musty.

* [Ed.] Friedrich Meinecke's *Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison d'état and its Place in Modern History* was translated from the German by Douglas Scott. With an introduction by Dr. Werner Stark, the editor of the book series Rare Masterpieces of Philosophy and Science, it was published in London by Routledge and Kegan Paul in 1957. Wight published this review in *International Affairs*, 34(1) (January 1958), p. 69.

But there are deeper levels in this book. Meinecke was concerned with 'that tragic duality which came into historical life through the medium of Machiavellism—that indivisible and fateful combination of poison and curative power which it contained' (pp. 50–1). Distilling the permanent element from the historical circumstances of past political writers, the historian passed over into the political scientist, and even attained a prophetic quality. 'All the greatest problems of historical life…are themselves timeless, though the attempts to solve them perish with the passing of time and remain relative' (p. 87). It is true that Meinecke, despite his honourable retirement under the Nazis, was infected with the German heresy of idealizing State power and fatalistically abdicating personal responsibility; and Dr Stark, in his rich and penetrating introduction, chases him into an ultimate indefensible theological inadequacy. Yet it was easier for a Burckhardt or an Acton, in the security of nineteenth-century Switzerland or Britain, to condemn power as evil without qualification. The nations of Munich and Yalta, Hiroshima and Suez must recognize Meinecke's 'tragic duality' as the central experience of international politics. In the present conflict with Russia the English-speaking Powers are driven by necessity as well as governed by their moral traditions; they are committed to the tortuous knife-edge of the 'true' and 'good' *ragione di stato* which Meinecke tried to discern; and this in part is why in 1924 he saw a *pax anglo-saxonica* as providing the least unendurable future for other nations (pp. 431–2).

The translation is fluent, but there are misprints and several blunders or clumsinesses suggesting an unfamiliarity with the subject. It was not Plato who wrote the life of Lysander (p. 60); on p. 127 Meinecke speaks of conventionality, not 'the Convention'; the Age of Enlightenment did not 'terminate' after the Thirty Years War, but began (p. 144); and 'the best interest of the state' (Ch. VI) is not the version of *interessi di stato* made current by Mr Kennan and Professor Morgenthau.

Review of Richard W. Sterling, *Ethics in a World of Power: The Political Ideas of Friedrich Meinecke* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1958; London, Oxford University Press, 1959)

Meinecke was a subtle historian of ideas, not a political philosopher, but in his intellectual odyssey he traversed the deepest issues of political thought.* Born in the year Bismarck became Prussian premier, he grew up to regard Hegel, Ranke, and Bismarck as the three liberators of the German State. There was a certain loftiness and breadth about his conservative nationalism, but until 1918 the tedious polarities of his thought (real and ideal, power and culture, nationalism and cosmopolitanism, etc.) were invariably resolved into a predominance of the harsher component. In the first World War he justified the ultimatum to Serbia and the invasion of Belgium, he approved of unrestricted submarine warfare, and he explained to the minority peoples of the Central Powers that though the nation-state had been the proper goal for the Germans, it was *their* duty to remain content with the multi-national state. The shock of defeat started him on an assiduous criticism of his old beliefs. The moral autonomy of the State, the primacy of foreign policy, international relations as the fruitful competition of vigorously egotistic Powers, all gradually dissolved. He moved nearer to Goethe, and as an old man came to find the ultimate truth of politics not in the ideal, super-individual corporate personality of the nation-state, but in the martyrdom of the individual rebel against Hitler's Reich. This is a valuable study of German political realism, and Professor Sterling, who was Meinecke's student and friend after the second World War, has written it in reverence and love. It is a poignant book too,

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  * [Ed.] Richard W. Sterling published *Ethics in a World of Power: The Political Ideas of Friedrich Meinecke* with Princeton University Press (Princeton, New Jersey, 1958) and Oxford University Press (London, 1959). Wight published this review in *International Affairs*, 35(4) (October 1959), pp. 456–457.

because its political discernment cannot be dissociated from Meinecke's personal tragedy. Was he the bearer of the great tradition of German culture and scholarship through revolution and defeat? Or a learned barbarian, tardily honest, whom the blows of fate compelled painfully to work his passage into the moral climate of European civilization?

26

Review of Hans J. Morgenthau, *Dilemmas of Politics*, and Correspondence (University of Chicago Press; and London, Cambridge University Press, 1958)

Some philosophers are constructive; others eradicate error, disinfect a region of human self-deception, and show that certain beliefs, even if they can still be held, cannot be held in the old way.* It is probably among the latter that posterity will place Professor Morgenthau. From his attempts over the past fifteen years to educate Americans in the elements of foreign policy has arisen a political philosophy more influential than any other on the post-war generation of Anglo-American students of international affairs, cogent without being warming, complex but not subtle. He sees political philosophy as the search for *the perennial truths* of politics, and shows the relevance of Kautilya or of Hamilton's 'Pacificus' Letters, of the wars between Francis I and Charles V, or of the debate on the Bulgarian atrocities between Disraeli and Gladstone. Perhaps the most interesting thing about this book is that it does not mention Morgenthau's colleague at Chicago, Leo Strauss, who has written of political philosophy as the quest for *the final truth* about politics. Agreed in their concern about the retreat of political science into 'the trivial, the formal, the methodological, the purely theoretical, the remotely historical' (p. 31), they are divided by the gulf of natural law. For Morgenthau, this is no longer the reflection of objective standards in politics, but an ideology of the *status quo* (p. 380). In a former book[1] he marked an extreme position by endorsing Hobbes's doctrine that outside the state there is neither morality nor law. An essay here on national interest answers his critics, and establishes the other pole of his thought in Burke's doctrine of political prudence. In a kind of descending series, he argues that the actions of States are subject to universal moral principles (p. 81); that

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* [Ed.] Hans J. Morgenthau published his book *Dilemmas of Politics* in 1958 with University of Chicago Press and Cambridge University Press. Wight published his review in *International Affairs*, 35(2) (April 1959), pp. 199–200, and the review prompted the exchange of correspondence reproduced below.

[1] *In Defense of the National Interest* (New York, Knopf, 1951), p. 35.

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international law has no meaning without reference to the moral principles underlying a civilization or an age (p. 218); that 'on the international scene, the individual nation is by far the strongest moral force, and the limitations which a supranational morality is able to impose today upon international politics are both fewer and weaker than they were almost at any time since the end of the Thirty Years' War' (p. 52); and that the criterion for the validity of a legal or moral rule is an effective sanction (p. 226). But is there a criterion for the validity of a sanction other than its effectiveness? The reviewer asks such a question only to show that Morgenthau's political philosophy has itself become part of the subject-matter for students of international relations.

   Perhaps better than any of his other books, this collection of essays shows the range of Morgenthau's thought. Written over twenty years but now reshaped and woven together, they begin with political science and international relations as academic pursuits, and end with a variety of political writers—Carr, Churchill, de Jouvenel, Laski, Lippmann, Toynbee. In between they cover many substantive questions of international and American politics, everywhere exploring the relations of power and morality. They exaggerate the schematism of his thought, with their tendency to argue by cataloguing enumerated points. The style is saturnine, flickering into a sardonic humour. He quotes a random passage from Lasswell and Kaplan, adding 'This is hardly more meaningful than Gertrude Stein's "Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose", and does not have even its primitive phonetic charm' (p. 20). He remarks that Dr Toynbee is in danger of becoming 'a kind of Billy Graham of the eggheads' (p. 374).

To the Editor, *International Affairs*[2]

   Sir,

   May I call attention to a factual error in Mr Wight's review of my book *Dilemmas of Politics*, published in the April 1959 issue of *International Affairs* (p. 199). Mr Wight states: 'In a former book he marked an extreme position by endorsing Hobbes's doctrine that outside the state there is neither morality nor law.' The passage referred to is in *In Defense of the National Interest*,[3] p. 34. What I said in this passage is this: 'There is a profound and neglected truth hidden in Hobbes's extreme dictum that the state creates morality as well as law and that there is neither morality nor law outside the state. Universal moral principles, such as justice or equality, are capable of guiding political action only to the extent that they have been given concrete content and have been related to political situations by society.'

To say that a truth is 'hidden' in an 'extreme' dictum can hardly be called an endorsement of the dictum. To call a position 'extreme' is not to identify oneself with the position but to disassociate oneself from it. In the quoted passage I was trying to establish the point, in contrast to Hobbes's, that moral principles are universal and, hence, are not created by the state. I was also trying to establish the point, I think in accord with Hobbes, that moral principles, as applied to political issues, receive their concrete meaning from the political situation within which they are called upon to operate. Thus, far from endorsing Hobbes, I was really saying that his statement is in error because it is 'extreme', but that it contains a 'hidden' element of truth.

Sincerely yours,

Hans J. Morgenthau
School of Historical Studies,
The Institute for Advanced Study,
Princeton, New Jersey
22 April I959

Mr Wight writes:

I am sorry to have misinterpreted Professor Morgenthau, but I rejoice that my error has evoked an authoritative exegesis of a disputed passage.[4]

Martin Wight
London School of Economics,
Houghton Street, W.C.1
30 June 1959

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[4] [Ed.] It is noteworthy that Wight and Morgenthau agreed in considering E. H. Carr an example of a thinker holding the Hobbesian view, as Wight put it in his review of Carr's book *The Twenty Years' Crisis*, 'that both morality and law derive their authority' from politics. (Wight published this review under the title 'The Realist's Utopia' in *The Observer*, 21 July 1946.) According to Morgenthau, 'The philosophically untenable equation of utopia, theory, and morality, which is at the foundation of *The Twenty Years' Crisis*, leads of necessity to a relativistic, instrumentalist conception of morality.... Consequently, Mr. Carr, philosophically so ill-equipped, has no transcendent point of view from which to survey the political scene and to appraise the phenomenon of power. Thus the political moralist transforms himself into a utopian of power. Whoever holds seeming superiority of power becomes of necessity the repository of superior morality as well.' Hans Morgenthau, 'The Political Science of E. H. Carr', *World Politics*, 1(1) (October 1948), p. 134.

Review of Kenneth W. Thompson, *Political Realism and the Crisis of World Politics: An American Approach to Foreign Policy* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press; London, Oxford University Press, 1960)

This modest book is offered as a 'primer or introduction' to the American school of political realism.* The first part expounds the doctrines of Niebuhr, Spykman, Morgenthau, Lippmann, and the earlier members of the [State Department] Policy Planning Staff—Kennan, Nitze, Halle. To these are added their European counterparts, Carr, Butterfield, and de Visscher. Mr Thompson is not concerned to reconcile their differences, but emphasizes what they have in common with traditional diplomatic theory, exemplified especially by Churchill. It is interesting to reflect that British interest in the figure who by common consent is the greatest living Englishman remains confined to romantic biography and repetitions of the War Memoirs on television, and that it has been left to Americans to make a serious study of his political philosophy and statesmanship. In the second part of the book, which discusses the limits of principle in politics, isolationism, and collective security, there is original thinking of a high order. A few pages entitled 'Notes on a Theory of International Morality' (pp. 166–73) are as fine a discussion of this intractable theme as can be found anywhere. Mr Thompson brings out more clearly than some realists the limitations of the 'national interest' principle: 'The one thing which saves the idea of the national interest from itself is its essential reciprocity' (p. 169). He is a realist of the centre, likely neither to be accused of disparaging morality, nor to be so emotionally disturbed by the consequences of clear vision that he emigrates for Utopia.

* [Ed.] Kenneth W. Thompson published *Political Realism and the Crisis of World Politics: An American Approach to Foreign Policy* with Princeton University Press (Princeton, New Jersey, 1960) and Oxford University Press (London, 1960). Wight published this review in *International Affairs*, 37(3) (July 1961), p. 344.

Review of J. L. Talmon, *Political Messianism: The Romantic Phase* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1960)

Professor Talmon's first book, *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy*,[1] traced the totalitarian messianism of the French Revolution from its main source in Rousseau.* In the sequel he studies the vast effervescence of utopian political thought between 1815 and 1848, which produced modern nationalism and Communism. A particular aim is to put the origins of Marxism in a wider historical setting than histories of socialism usually supply, against a background not only of Owen and Fourier, Fichte and Hegel, but of the whole romantic range of the Saint-Simonists and Lamennais, Michelet, Mazzini, and Mickiewicz. This is the world we still live in, where national particularities seek to justify themselves in the service of a universal ideal, but revolutionary war makes national frontiers irrelevant; where national uniqueness is the strongest adversary of international revolution, nationalism finds its fulfilment by turning socialist, and socialism cannot establish itself except within national boundaries. Dr Talmon sees political messianism as an aspect of the Judaeo-Christian tradition in European civilization, but he does not relate it to the millennarianism of the Middle Ages and Reformation, nor the pragmatic liberalism of which he is a cautious exponent to medieval theories of political liberty.

It is a rich and overflowing book, nearly twice the length of its predecessor, and in places seeming to overflow its theme. From the history of thought it is diverted, in Part IV, to discuss the social and economic origins of the French Revolution of 1848. Elsewhere the book gives either too little or too much. For example, the entertaining account of *le père* Enfantin refers to his imprisonment without explaining the charge; Mazzini is discussed as if he were a mere ideologue, without reference to his practical conspiratorial activities, let alone the Roman triumvir of 1849, who might have modified the general picture of the political messiah.

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[1] J. L. Talmon, *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1952).

* [Ed.] J. L. Talmon published his book, *Political Messianism: The Romantic Phase*, with Secker and Warburg in London in 1960. Wight published this review in *International Affairs*, 38(2) (April 1962), p. 224.

It is a more practical criticism that nearly half the book is in quotation, but the text carries no reference numbers, and the exasperating hugger-mugger of notes at the back and the absence of a coherent bibliography might have been designed to make reference difficult. This is the one thing likely to mitigate the gratitude of fellow-students for Dr Talmon's labours. His preface has a note of weariness, and does not promise the fulfilment of his study in the third volume mentioned in the preface to the earlier book. A one-volume abridgement of the two books would be valuable.

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Review of Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations* translated by Richard Howard and Annette Baker Fox (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967)

Writing about international relations has been an American preserve since 1945, with a little help from Australia and Britain.* It is inspiriting when a European champion enters the lists, like Bertrand du Guesclin at the Black Prince's tournament, the unfashionable name of Montesquieu blazoned on his shield, and bears away the prize. But the victory is not anonymous, for he is France's leading sociologist.

This is an American translation of Aron's largest and central book, *Paix et Guerre entre les Nations*, first published in 1962. Aron has discreetly revised the translation up to 1966. Although he has been an honorary Anglo-Saxon since his war-time days in London, and the book was indeed largely written at Harvard, it has not had due recognition and influence. This is partly owing to our Anglo-American intellectual insularity. But it is partly owing also to the massiveness of the book itself. It is a 'Tractatus diplomatico-strategicus,' 800 pages long, philosophical in treatment, sceptical in temper. It is not shocking, like Herman Kahn's studies of thermonuclear war. Still less does it contribute to the amiable researches of the peace school. 'The real question,' says Aron in his quietly ironic way, 'is to determine to what degree the prince's adviser has the right to conceive of the world as different from what it really is.'[1]

His inspiration is our simple and universal question: Can mankind continue to live divided into sovereign States armed with nuclear weapons? His principal method is to examine and classify the constants revealed by a study of the past. It

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* [Ed.] Raymond Aron's *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*, translated by Richard Howard and Annette Baker Fox, was published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson in London in 1967. Wight published this review under the title 'Tract for the Nuclear Age' in *The Observer,* 23 April 1967.

[1] [Ed.] Aron, *Peace and War*, p. 699.

is a knowledge of history that provides the statesman with the least misleading models. His title is traditional. It salutes across the centuries the 'Law of War and Peace' of Grotius, and Proudhon's 'La Guerre et La Paix.' It is also concrete. The subtitle has been added to the translation, presumably to reassure American readers.

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The themes are the objects of foreign policy, the stakes of conflict, the nature and assessment of political power, the difficulties of alliances, the conduct and control of war, the Machiavellian question of means in a nuclear world and the Kantian question of attaining universal peace. International relations are carried on by two symbolic individuals: the diplomat and the strategist. 'La diplomatie peut-être dite l'art de convaincre sans employer la force, la stratégie l'art de vaincre aux moindres frais.'[2] It is difficult here for the translation (which must be praised) to keep the play on words.[3]

The book has a subtle intellectual architecture which enables these themes, running all through, to be tested and illustrated in different ways: analysed theoretically, exemplified historically, placed in a causal pattern by historical sociology, judged by the standards of morality and prudence. Rich in historical reference, it abounds equally in acute analysis. Such is the exposition of the supreme strategic alternative as 'to win or not to lose,' or the dissection on the one side of the American theorists of the national interest, and on the other of Bertrand Russell's intellectual confusions.

There is an element of tension, or perhaps of self-correction, in the enormous sweep of the book. At the outset, answering the promptings of our common moral revulsion, Aron suggests in several ways that nuclear weapons have made the lessons of the past irrelevant. Towards the end, after an assiduous examination of a nuclear strategy for the West, he avows that the essence of international relations remains constant down the ages. He begins the book by presenting the famous passage in which Clausewitz, the theoretician of absolute war, declared that real war, historical war, never escalates into absolute war. Cautiously, tentatively, himself a political Clausewitz, Aron accumulates the considerations which may make it possible that a nuclear war would not expand to its fullest violence.

Western policy is to avert a double danger: both of war, and of being smothered by the wave of subversion. The Communist aim is to destroy the Western system; the Western aim only to change the Communist aim. *Survivre, c'est vaincre.*[4] Nevertheless, if war should come, we can still seek to restrict violence:

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[2] [Ed.] 'In this sense, diplomacy might be called the art of convincing without using force (*convaincre*), and strategy the art of vanquishing at the least cost (*vaincre*).' Aron, *Peace and War*, p. 24.

[3] [Ed.] The play on words involves '*convaincre*' (to convince) and '*vaincre*' (to win).

[4] [Ed.] 'To survive is to win.'

'The originality of thermonuclear weapons is qualitative only because of a quantitative change. If we could eliminate the effect of the quantitative change through an appropriate strategy, the originality of the moral problem would disappear.'[5]

Aron's argument here confirms the doctrines of flexible response and damage limitation which have ruled in the Pentagon since Kennedy.

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Aron repeatedly asserts the indeterminacy of politics. Diplomacy is the realm of the contingent and the unforeseen, and the statesman's supreme virtue is prudence, which means acting in accordance with the concrete data of the particular situation. History is not inevitable. Neither is it the source of value. 'Let us acknowledge the vicissitudes of fortune and avoid supposing that the tribunal of history is always as just as it is pitiless.'[6]

The abstract models of the systems theorists are falsified by the complexities and uncertainties of diplomatic action. 'It is possible neither to predict diplomatic events on the basis of a typical system, nor to prescribe policy to princes on that basis.'[7] Nor is it possible to reduce diplomacy to a calculus of rational goals. The aims of States, as of individuals, are various and imponderable, not to be quantified. They desire not only life but honour, not only security but dignity or glory. 'Was the captain who went down with his ship irrational? If so, let us hope that human beings will not cease being irrational!'[8]

On his first page Aron notes how the political classics have been the fruit of meditation in times of political crisis, and that the age of the World Wars has not yet borne such fruit. I have sometimes been tempted to use this as an argument against the existence of international relations as a distinct discipline. So much has been written about it, but where are its Hobbes and Locke, its 'Wealth of Nations'? Aron's noble, temperate and magisterial book makes it impossible to use such an argument any more.

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[5] [Ed.] This appears to be Wight's own translation. According to the Howard-Fox translation, 'the novelty of the thermonuclear weapon is *qualitative* as a result of a quantitative change. We need only eliminate the influence of this quantitative change by an appropriate strategy in order for the originality of the moral problem to disappear.' Aron, *Peace and War*, p. 615; italics in the original.

[6] [Ed.] Aron, *Peace and War*, p. 357.

[7] [Ed.] This appears to be another translation by Wight. According to the Howard-Fox translation, 'It is possible neither to predict diplomatic events from the analysis of a typical system nor to dictate a line of conduct to princes as a result of the type of system.' Aron, *Peace and War*, pp. 131–132.

[8] [Ed.] Aron, *Peace and War*, p. 629.

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