**The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics, by Peter J. Katzenstein, editor**

# 5. Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention

Martha Finnemore

---

Since the end of the Cold War, states have increasingly come under pressure to intervene militarily and, in fact, have intervened militarily to protect citizens other than their own from humanitarian disasters. Recent efforts to enforce protected areas for Kurds and no-fly zones over Shiites in Iraq, efforts to alleviate starvation and establish some kind of political order in Somalia, the huge un military effort to disarm parties and rebuild a state in Cambodia, and to some extent even the military actions to bring humanitarian relief in Bosnia are all instances of military action whose primary goal is not territorial or strategic but humanitarian.

Realist and liberal theories do not provide good explanations for this behavior. The interests that these theories impute to states are geostrategic and/or economic, yet many or most of these interventions occur in states of negligible geostrategic or economic importance to the interveners. Thus, no obvious national interest is at stake for the states bearing the burden of the military intervention in most if not all of these cases. Somalia is perhaps the clearest example of military action undertaken in a state of little or no strategic or economic importance to the principal intervener. Similarly, the states that played central roles in the un military action in Cambodia were, with the exception of China, not states that had any obvious geostrategic interests there by 1989; China, which did have a geostragetic interest, bore little of the burden of intervening. Realism and liberalism offer powerful explanations for the Persian Gulf war but have little to say about the extension of that war to Kurdish and Shiite protection through the enforcement of un Resolution 688. The United States, France, and Britain have been allowing abuse of the Kurds for centuries. Why they should start caring about them now is not clear.

The recent pattern of humanitarian interventions raises the issue of what interests intervening states could possibly be pursuing. In most of these cases, the intervention targets are insignificant by any usual measure of geostrategic or economic interest. Why, then, do states intervene?

This essay argues that the pattern of intervention cannot be understood apart from the changing normative context in which it occurs. Normative context is important because it shapes conceptions of interest. Standard analytic assumptions about states and other actors pursuing their interests tend to leave the sources of interests vague or unspecified. The contention here is that international normative context shapes the interests of international actors and does so in both systematic and systemic ways. Unlike psychological variables that operate at the individual level, norms can be systemic-level variables in both origin and effects.[1] Because they are intersubjective, rather than merely subjective, widely held norms are not idiosyncratic in their effects. Instead, they leave broad patterns of the sort that social science strives to explain.

In this essay I examine the role of humanitarian norms in shaping patterns of humanitarian military intervention over the past 150 years.[2] I show that shifts in intervention behavior correspond with changes in normative standards articulated by states concerning appropriate ends and means of military intervention. Specifically, normative understandings about which human beings merit military protection and about the way in which such protection must be implemented have changed, and state behavior has changed accordingly. This broad correlation establishes the norms explanation as plausible. The failure of alternative explanations to account for changing patterns of intervention behavior increases the credibility of the norms approach. I conclude with a discussion of ways to move beyond this plausibility probe.

The analysis proceeds in five parts. The first shows that realist and liberal approaches to international politics do not explain humanitarian intervention as a practice, much less change in that practice over time, because of their exogenous and static treatment of interests. A constructivist approach that attends to the role of international norms can remedy this by allowing us to problematize interests and their change over time. The next section examines humanitarian action in the nineteenth century. It shows that humanitarian action and even intervention on behalf of Christians being threatened or mistreated by the Ottoman Turks were carried out occasionally throughout the nineteenth century. However, only Christians appear to be deserving targets of humanitarian intervention; mistreatment of other groups does not evoke similar concern.

The third section investigates the expansion of this definition of "humanity" by examining efforts to abolish slavery, the slave trade, and colonization. Protection of nonwhite non-Christians did become a motivation for military action by states, especially Great Britain, in the early nineteenth century, when efforts to stop the slave trade began in earnest. But the scope of this humanitarian action was limited. Britain acted to stop commerce in slaves on the high seas; she did not intervene militarily to protect them inside other states or to abolish slavery as a domestic institution of property rights. It was not until decolonization that this redefinition of "humanity" in more universal terms (not just Christians, not just whites) was consolidated.

The fourth section briefly reviews humanitarian intervention as a state practice since 1945, paying particular attention to the multilateral and institutional requirements that have evolved for humanitarian intervention. Contemporary multilateralism differs qualitatively from previous modes of joint state action and has important implications for the planning and execution of humanitarian interventions. The essay concludes by outlining questions about the role and origins of norms that are not treated here but could be addressed in future research.

## Using Norms to Understand International Politics

Humanitarian intervention looks odd from conventional perspectives on international political behavior because it does not conform to the conceptions of interest that they specify. Realists would expect to see some geostrategic or political advantage to be gained by intervening states. Neoliberals might emphasize economic or trade advantages for interveners.

As I discussed in the introduction, it is difficult to identify the advantage for the intervener in most post-1989 cases. The 1989 U.S. action in Somalia is a clear case of intervention without obvious interests. Economically Somalia was insignificant to the United States. Security interests are also hard to find. The U.S. had voluntarily given up its base at Berbera in Somalia because advances in

communications and aircraft technology made it obsolete for the communications and refueling purposes it once served. Further, the U.S. intervention in that country was not carried out in a way that would have furthered strategic interests. If the U.S. had truly had designs on Somalia, it should have welcomed the role of disarming the clans. It did not. The U.S. resisted un pressures to "pacify" the country as part of its mission. In fact, U.S. officials were clearly and consistently interested not in controlling any part of Somalia but in getting out of the country as soon as possible--sooner, indeed, than the un would have liked. The fact that some administration officials opposed the Somalia intervention on precisely the grounds that no vital U.S. interest was involved underscores the realists' problem.

Intervention to reconstruct Cambodia presents similar anomalies. The country is economically insignificant to the interveners and, with the end of the Cold War, was strategically significant to none of the five on the un Security Council except China, which bore very little of the intervention burden. Indeed, U.S. involvement appears to have been motivated by domestic opposition to the return of the Khmers Rouges on moral grounds--another anomaly for these approaches--rather than by geopolitical or economic interests.

Liberals of a more classical and Kantian type might argue that these interventions have been motivated by an interest in promoting democracy and liberal values. After all, the un's political blueprint for reconstructing these states is a liberal one. But such arguments also run afoul of the evidence. The U.S. consistently refused to take on the state-building and democratization mission in Somalia that liberal arguments would have expected to be at the heart of U.S. efforts. Similarly, the un stopped short of authorizing an overthrow of Saddam Hussein in Iraq even when it was militarily possible and supported by many in the U.S. armed forces. The un, and especially the U.S., have emphasized the humanitarian rather than the democratizing nature of these interventions, both rhetorically and in their actions on the ground.

None of these realist or liberal approaches provides an answer to the question, What interests are intervening states pursuing? In part this is a problem of theoretical focus. Realism and most liberals do not investigate interests; they assume them. Interests are givens in these approaches and need to be specified before analysis can begin. In this case, however, the problem is also substantive. The geostrategic and economic interests specified by these approaches appear to be wrong.

Investigating interests requires a different kind of theoretical approach. Attention to international norms and the way they structure interests in coordinated ways across the international system provides such an approach. Further, a norms approach addresses an issue obscured by approaches that treat interests exogenously: it focuses attention on the ways in which interests change. Since norms are socially constructed, they evolve with changes in social interaction. Understanding this normative evolution and the changing interests it creates is a major focus of a constructivist research program and of this analysis.

A constructivist approach does not deny that power and interest are important. They are. Rather, it asks a different and prior set of questions: it asks what interests are, and it investigates the ends to which and the means by which power will be used. The answers to these questions are not simply idiosyncratic and unique to each actor. The social nature of international politics creates normative understandings among actors that, in turn, coordinate values, expectations, and behavior. Because norms make similar behavioral claims on dissimilar actors, they create coordinated patterns of behavior that we can study and about which we can theorize.[3] Before beginning the analysis, let me clarify the relationship postulated here among norms, interests, and actions. In this essay I understand norms to shape interests and interests

to shape action. Neither connection is determinative. Factors other than norms may shape interests, and certainly no single norm or norm set is likely to shape a state's interests on any given issue. In turn, factors other than state interests, most obviously power constraints, shape behavior and outcomes. Thus, the connection assumed here between norms and action is one in which norms create permissive conditions for action but do not determine action. Changing norms may change state interests and create new interests (in this case, interests in protecting non-European non-Christians and in doing so multilaterally through an international organization). But the fact that states are now interested in these issues does not guarantee pursuit of these interests over all others on all occasions. New or changed norms enable new or different behaviors; they do not ensure such behaviors.

I should also offer a rationale for examining justifications for intervention as an indicator of norms and norm change. The conventional wisdom is that justifications are mere fig leaves behind which states hide their less savory and more self-interested reasons for actions. Motivation is what matters; justification is not important.

It is true that justification does not equal motivation. Humanitarian justifications have been used to disguise baser motives in more than one intervention. More frequently, motives for intervention are mixed; humanitarian motives may be genuine but may be only one part of a larger constellation of motivations driving state action.[4] Untangling precise motivations for intervention is difficult and would be impossible in an essay of this length and historical breadth.

The focus here is justification, and for the purposes of this study justification is important because it speaks directly to normative context. When states justify their interventions, they are drawing on and articulating shared values and expectations held by other decision makers and other publics in other states. It is literally an attempt to connect one's actions to standards of justice or, perhaps more generically, to standards of appropriate and acceptable behavior. Thus through an examination of justifications we can begin to piece together what those internationally held standards are and how they may change over time.

My aim here is to establish the plausibility and utility of norms as an explanation for international behavior. States may violate international norms and standards of right conduct that they themselves articulate. But they do not always--or even often--do so. Aggregate behavior over long periods shows patterns that correspond to notions of right conduct over time. As shared understandings about who is "human" and about how intervention to protect those people must be carried out change, behavior shifts accordingly in ways not correlated with standard conceptions of interests.

We can investigate these changes by comparing humanitarian intervention practice in the nineteenth century with that of the twentieth century. The analysis is instructive in a number of ways. First, the analysis shows that humanitarian justifications for state action and state use of force are not new.

Second, the analysis shows that while humanitarian justifications for action have been important for centuries, the content and application of those justifications have changed over time. Specifically, states' perceptions of which human beings merit intervention has changed. I treat this not as a change of identity, as other essays in the volume use that term, but as a change of identification. Nonwhite non-Christians always knew they were human. What changed was perceptions of Europeans about them. People in Western states began to identify with non-Western populations during the twentieth century, with profound political consequences, for humanitarian intervention, among other things. Perhaps one

could argue that the identity of the Western states changed, but I am not sure how one would characterize or operationalize such a change. Certainly Western states have not taken on an identity of "humanitarian state." Far too many inhumane acts have been committed by these states in this century to make such a characterization credible--nor do Western states themselves proclaim any such identity. Besides, these states were "humanitarian" on their own terms in the nineteenth century. What has changed is not the fact of the humanitarian behavior but its focus. Identification emphasizes the affective relationships between actors rather than the characteristics of a single actor.[5] Further, identification is an ordinal concept, allowing for degrees of affect as well as changes in the focus of affect. Identification--of Western Europeans with Greeks and of Russians with their fellow Slavs--existed in the nineteenth century. The task is to explain how and why this identification expanded to other groups.

Third, the analysis highlights contestation over these normative justifications and links it to change. Ironically, while norms are inherently consensual (they exist only as convergent expectations or intersubjective understandings), they evolve in part through challenges to that consensus. Some challenges succeed, some fail. The analysis traces the challenges posed by humanitarian claims, noting where they succeed and where they have failed. It also points to instances of continued contestation, even over norms that appear to be gaining wider acceptance. Humanitarian norms have risen in prominence, but their acceptance is still limited and contested; certainly there are many forms of intervention, particularly unilateral intervention, that apparently cannot be justified even by humanitarian norms.

Fourth, the analysis relates evolving humanitarian intervention norms to other normative changes over the past century. When humanitarian intervention is viewed in a broader normative context, it becomes clear that changes in this particular norm are only one manifestation of the changes in a larger set of humanitarian norms that have become more visible and more powerful in the past fifty or one hundred years. Particularly prominent among these changing norms are the norms of decolonization and self-determination, which involved a redefinition and universalization of "humanity" for Europeans that changed the evolution of sovereignty and of humanitarian discourse (both of which are essential components of humanitarian intervention). Thus mutually reinforcing and consistent norms appear to strengthen each other; success in one area (such as decolonization) strengthens and legitimates claims in logically and morally related norms (such as human rights and humanitarian intervention). The relationship identified between decolonization and humanitarian intervention suggests the importance of viewing norms not as individual "things" floating atomistically in some international social space but rather as part of a highly structured social context. It may make more sense to think of a fabric of interlocking and interwoven norms rather than individual norms of this or that--as current scholarship, my own included, has been inclined to do.[6] Finally, the analysis emphasizes the structuring and organization of the international normative context. Examination of humanitarian norms and intervention suggests that norm institutionalization, by which I mean the way norms become embedded in international organizations and institutions, is critical to patterns of norm evolution. Institutionalization of these norms or norm-bundles in international organizations (such as the un) further increases the power and elaboration of the normative claims.

## Humanitarian Intervention in the Nineteenth Century

Before the twentieth century virtually all instances of military intervention to protect people other than the intervener's own nationals involved protection of Christians from the Ottoman Turks.[7] In at least four instances during the nineteenth century, European states used humanitarian claims to influence

Balkan policy in ways that would have required states to use force--in the Greek War for Independence (1821-1827); in the Lebanon/Syria conflict of 1860-1861; during the Bulgarian agitation of 1876-1878; and in response to the Armenian massacres (1894-1917). Although full-scale military intervention did not result in all these instances, the claims made and their effects on policy in the other cases shed light on the evolution and influence of humanitarian claims during this period.

## Greek War for Independence (1821-1827)

Russia took an immediate interest in the Greek insurrection and threatened to use force against the Turks as early as the first year of the war. Part of her motivation was geostrategic: Russia had been pursuing a general strategy of weakening the Ottomans and consolidating control in the Balkans for years. But the justifications that Russia offered were largely humanitarian. Russia had long seen herself as the defender of Orthodox Christians under Turkish rule. Atrocities such as the wholesale massacres of Christians and the sale of women into slavery, coupled with the sultan's order to seize the Venerable Patriarch of the Orthodox Church after mass on Easter morning and hang him and three archbishops, then have the bodies thrown into the Bosporus, formed the centerpiece of Russia's complaints against the Turks and the justification of her threats of force.[8] Other European powers, with the exception of France, opposed intervention largely because they were concerned that weakening Turkey would strengthen Russia.[9] Although the governments of Europe seemed little affected by these atrocities, significant segments of their publics were. A philhellenic movement spread throughout Europe, especially in the more democratic societies of Britain, France, and parts of Germany. The movement drew on two popular sentiments: the European identification with the classical Hellenic tradition and the appeal of Christians oppressed by the infidel. Philhellenic aid societies in Western Europe sent large sums of money and even volunteers to Greece during the war.[10] Russian threats of unilateral action against the sultan eventually forced the British to become involved, and in 1827 the two powers, together with Charles X of France in his capacity as "Most Christian King," sent an armada that roundly defeated Ibrahim at Navarino in October 1827.

It would be hard to argue that humanitarian considerations were decisive in this intervention; geostrategic factors were far too important. However, the episode does bear on the evolution of humanitarian norms is several ways.

First, it illustrates the circumscribed definition of who was "human" in the nineteenth-century conception of that term. The massacre of Christians was a humanitarian disaster; the massacre of Muslims was not. This was true regardless of the fact that the initial atrocities of the war were committed by the Christian insurgents (admittedly after years of harsh Ottoman rule). The initial Christian uprising at Morea "might well have been allowed to burn itself out 'beyond the pale of civilization'"; it was only the wide-scale and very visible atrocities against Christians that put the events on the agenda of major powers.[11] Second, intervening states, particularly Russia and France, placed humanitarian but also religious reasons at the center of their continued calls for intervention and application of force. As will be seen in other cases from the nineteenth century, religion seems to be important in both motivating humanitarian action and defining who is human. Notions about Christian charity supported general humanitarian impulses, but specific religious identifications had the effect of privileging certain people over others. In this case Christians generally were privileged over Muslims. Elsewhere, as later in Armenia and Bulgaria, denominational differences within Christianity appear to be important both in motivating action and in

restraining it.

Third, the intervention was multilateral. The reasons in this case were largely geostrategic (restraining Russia from temptation to use this intervention for other purposes), but, as subsequent discussion will show, multilateralism as a characteristic of legitimate intervention becomes increasingly important.

Fourth, mass publics were involved. It is not clear that they influenced policy making as strongly as they would in the second half of the century, but foreign civilians did become involved both financially and militarily on behalf of the Greeks. Indeed, it was a British Captain Hastings who commanded the Greek flotilla that destroyed a Turkish squadron off Salona and provoked the ultimate use of force at Navarino.[12]

## Lebanon/Syria (1860-1861)

In May 1860 conflict between Druze and Maronite populations broke out in what is now Lebanon but at the time was Syria under Ottoman rule. Initial rioting became wholesale massacre of Maronites, first by the Druze and later by Turkish troops.

The conflict sparked outrage in the French popular press. As early as 1250, Louis IX had signed a charter with the Maronite Christians in the Levant guaranteeing protection as if they were French subjects and, in effect, making them part of the French nation.[13] Since then, France had styled itself as the "protector" of Latin Christians in the Levant.[14] Napoleon III thus eagerly supported military intervention in the region, at least in part to placate "outraged Catholic opinion" at home.[15] Russia was also eager to intervene, and Britain became involved in the intervention to prevent France and Russia from using the incident to expand.[16] On August 3, 1860, the six great powers (Austria, France, Britain, Prussia, Russia, and Turkey) signed a protocol authorizing the dispatch of twelve thousand European troops to the region to aid the sultan in stopping violence and establishing order. A letter from French foreign minister Thouvenal to the French ambassador in Turkey stressed that "the object of the mission is to assist stopping, by prompt and energetic measures, the effusion of blood, and [to put] an end to the outrages committed against Christians, which cannot remain unpunished." The protocol further emphasized the lack of strategic and political ambitions of the powers acting in this matter.[17] France supplied half the twelve thousand troops immediately and dispatched them in August 1860. The other states sent token warships and high-ranking officers but no ground troops, which meant that in the end the six thousand French troops were the sum total of the intervention force.

The French forces received high marks for their humanitarian conduct while they were in the region, helping villagers to rebuild homes and farms. They left when agreement was reached for Christian representation in the government.[18] This case repeats many of the features of the Greek intervention. Again, saving Christians was central to the justification for intervention. Public opinion seems to have had some impact, this time on the vigor with which Napoleon pursued an interventionist policy. The multilateral character of the intervention is somewhat less clear, however. There was multilateral consultation and agreement on the intervention plan, but the execution of that plan was essentially unilateral.

## The Bulgarian Agitation (1876-1878)

In May 1876 Ottoman troops massacred unarmed and poorly organized agitators in Bulgaria. A British government investigation put the number killed at twelve thousand, with fifty-nine villages destroyed and an entire church full of people set ablaze after they had already surrendered to Turkish soldiers. The investigation confirmed that Turkish soldiers and officers were promoted and decorated rather than punished for these actions.[19] Accounts of the atrocities, gathered by American missionaries and sent to British reporters, began appearing in British newspapers in mid-June. The reports inflamed public opinion, and protest meetings were organized around the country, particularly in the north, where W. T. Stead and his paper, the Northern Echo, were a focus of agitation.[20] The result was a split in British politics. Prime Minister Disraeli publicly refused to change British policy of support for Turkey over the matter, stating that British material interests outweighed the lives of Bulgarians.[21] However, Lord Derby, the Conservative foreign secretary, telegraphed Constantinople that "any renewal of the outrages would be more fatal to the Porte than the loss of a battle."[22] More important, former prime minister Gladstone came out of retirement to oppose Disraeli on the issue, making the Bulgarian atrocities the centerpiece of his anti-Disraeli campaign.[23] While Gladstone found a great deal of support in various public circles, he did not have similar success in government. The issue barely affected British policy. Disraeli was forced to carry out the investigation mentioned above, and he did offer proposals for internal Turkish reforms to protect minorities--proposals that were rejected by Russia as being too timid.[24] Russia was the only state to intervene in the wake of the Bulgarian massacres. The 1856 treaty that ended the Crimean War was supposed to protect Christians under Ottoman rule. Russia justified her threats of force on the basis of Turkey's violation of these humanitarian guarantees. In March 1877 the great powers issued a protocol reiterating demands for the protection of Christians in the Ottoman Empire that had been guaranteed in the 1856 treaty. After Constantinople rejected the protocol, Russia declared war in April 1877. She easily defeated the Ottoman troops and signed the Treaty of San Stefano, which created a large, independent Bulgarian state--an arrangement that was drastically revised by the Congress of Berlin.

As in the previous cases, saving Christians was an essential feature of this incident, and Gladstone and Russia's justifications for action were framed in that way. But military action in this case was not multilateral.[25] Perhaps the most remarkable feature of this episode is its demonstration of the strength of public opinion and the media. While they were not able to change British policy they were able to make adherence to that policy much more difficult for Disraeli in domestic terms.

## Armenia (1894-1917)

The Armenian case offers some interesting insights into the scope of Christianity requiring defense by European powers in the last century. Unlike the Orthodox Christians in Greece and Bulgaria and the Maronites in Syria, the Armenian Christians had no European champion. The Armenian Church was not in communion with the Orthodox Church, hence Armenian appeals had never resonated in Russia; the Armenians were not portrayed as "brothers" to the Russians, as were the Bulgarians and other Orthodox Slavs. Similarly, no non-Orthodox European state had ever offered protection or had historical ties as the French did with the Maronites. Thus some of the justifications that were offered for intervention in other cases were lacking in the Armenian case.

The fact that the Armenians were Christians, albeit of a different kind, does seem to have had some

influence on policy. The Treaty of Berlin explicitly bound the sultan to carry out internal political reforms to protect Armenians, but the nature, timing, and monitoring of these provisions were left vague and were never enforced. The Congress of Berlin ignored an Armenian petition for an arrangement similar to that set up in Lebanon following the Maronite massacres (a Christian governor under Ottoman rule). Gladstone took up the matter in 1880 when he came back to power but dropped it when Bismarck voiced opposition.[26] The wave of massacres against Armenians beginning in 1894 was far worse than any of the other atrocities examined here, in terms of both the number killed and the brutality of their executions. Nine hundred people were killed, and twenty-four villages burned in the Sassum massacres in August 1894. After this, the intensity increased. Between fifty thousand and seventy thousand people were killed in 1895. In 1896 the massacres moved into the capital, Constantinople, where on August 28-29, six thousand Armenians were killed.[27] These events were well known and highly publicized in Europe.[28] Gladstone came out of retirement yet again to denounce the Turks and called Abd-ul-Hamid the "Great Assassin." French writers denounced him as "the Red Sultan." The European powers demanded an inquiry assisted by Europeans, which submitted to European governments and the press extensive documentation of "horrors unutterable, unspeakable, unimaginable by the mind of man."[29] Public opinion pressed for intervention, and both Britain and France used humanitarian justifications to threaten force. But neither acted. Germany by this time was a force to be reckoned with, and the kaiser was courting Turkey. Russia was nervous about nationalist aspirations in the Balkans in general and had no special affection for the Armenians, as noted above. The combined opposition of Germany and Russia made the price of intervention higher than either the British or the French were willing to pay.[30] These four episodes are suggestive in several ways. First, humanitarian justifications for uses of force and threats of force are not new in the twentieth century.

Second, humanitarian action was rarely taken when it jeopardized other stated goals or interests of a state. Humanitarians were sometimes able to mount considerable pressure on policy makers to act contrary to stated geostrategic interests, as in the case of Disraeli and the Bulgarian agitation, but they never succeeded. Humanitarian claims did, however, provide states with new or intensified interests in an area and new reasons to act where none had existed previously. Without the massacre of Maronites in Syria, France would almost certainly not have intervened. Further, she left after her humanitarian mission was accomplished and did not stay on to pursue other geostrategic goals, as some states had feared she would. It is less clear whether there would have been intervention in the Greek war for independence without humanitarian justifications for such interventions. Russia certainly had other reasons to intervene, but she was also probably the state with the highest level of identification with the Orthodox Christian victims of these massacres. Whether the former would have been sufficient for intervention without the latter is impossible to know. Once Russia did intervene, the British certainly had an interest in restraining Russian activities in the area and joining the intervention. At the same time Britain had consistently articulated a strong doctrine of nonintervention. It may be that humanitarian claims made by important sectors of domestic opinion were necessary to override this doctrine, but it would be impossible to be certain.

Third, humanitarian action could be taken in a variety of forms. Action could be multilateral, as in the case of Greek independence. It could be unilateral, as when Russia intervened in Bulgaria. Action might also be some mixture of the two, as in Lebanon/Syria, where several states planned the intervention but execution was essentially unilateral. As will be shown below, this variety of forms for intervention shrinks over time. Specifically, the unilateral option for either planning or executing humanitarian

intervention appears to have disappeared in the twentieth century.

Fourth, interveners identified with the victims of humanitarian disasters in some important and exclusive way. At a minimum, the victims to be protected by intervention were Christians; there were no instances of European powers' considering intervention to protect non-Christians. Pogroms against Jews did not provoke intervention. Neither did Russian massacres of Turks in Central Asia in the 1860s.[31] Neither did mass killings in China during the Taipings rebellion against the Manchus.[32] Neither did mass killings by colonial rulers in their colonies.[33] Neither did massacres of Native Americans in the United States. Often there was some more specific identification or social tie between intervener and intervened, as between the Orthodox Slav Russians and Orthodox Slav Bulgarians. In fact, the Armenian case suggests, lack of such an intensified identification may contribute to inaction.

## The Expansion of "Humanity" and Sovereignty

This last feature of nineteenth-century intervention, the ways in which interveners identify with victims to determine who is an appropriate or compelling candidate for intervention, changed dramatically over the twentieth century as the "humanity" deserving of protection by military intervention became universalized.[34] The seeds of this change lie in the nineteenth century, however, with efforts to end slavery and the slave trade. With the abolition of slavery in the nineteenth century and decolonization in the twentieth, a new set of norms was consolidated that universalized "humanity" and endowed it with rights, among them self-determination, which came to be equated with sovereign statehood. These processes are obviously complex and cannot be treated adequately here. What follows is a brief discussion showing how these larger normative developments contributed to the evolution of humanitarian intervention norms.[35]

## Abolition of Slavery and the Slave Trade

The abolition of slavery and the slave trade in the nineteenth century was an essential part of the universalization of "humanity." European states generally accepted and legalized these practices in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but by the nineteenth century the same states proclaimed them "repugnant to the principles of humanity and universal morality."[36] Human beings previously viewed as beyond the edge of humanity--as, in fact, property--came to be viewed as human, and with that status came certain, albeit minimal, privileges and protections.[37] Further, military force was used by states, especially Britain, to suppress the slave trade. Britain succeeded in having the slave trade labeled as piracy, thus enabling her to seize and board ships sailing under non-British flags that were suspected of carrying contraband slaves.[38] While this is in some ways an important case of a state using force to promote humanitarian ends, the way the British framed and justified their actions also says something about the limits of humanitarian claims in the early to mid-nineteenth century. First, the British limited their military action to abolishing the trade in slaves, not slavery itself. There was no military intervention on behalf of Africans as there was on behalf of Christians. While the British public and many political figures contributed to a climate of international opinion that viewed slavery with increasing distaste, the abolition of slavery as a domestic institution of property rights was accomplished in each state where it had previously been legal without military intervention by other states.[39] Further, the British government's strategy for ending the slave trade was to have such trafficking labeled as

piracy, thus making the slaves "contraband," i.e., still property. The government justified its actions on the basis of maritime rights governing commerce. Slavery and slaveholding themselves did not provoke the same reaction as Ottoman abuse of Christians did.

This may be because the perpetrators of the humanitarian violations were "civilized" Christian nations (as opposed to the infidel Turks).[40] Another reason was probably that the targets of these humanitarian violations were black Africans, not "fellow Christians" or "brother Slavs." It thus appears that by the 1830s black Africans had become sufficiently "human" that enslaving them was illegal inside Europe, but enslaving them outside Europe was only distasteful. One could keep them enslaved if one kept them at home, within domestic borders. Abuse of Africans did not merit military intervention inside another state.

## Colonization, Decolonization, and Self-determination

Justifications for both colonization and decolonization also offer interesting lenses through which to examine changing humanitarian norms and changing understandings of who is "human." Both processes--colonization and its undoing--were justified, at least in part, in humanitarian terms, but the understanding of what constituted humanity was different in the two episodes in ways that bear on the current investigation of humanitarian intervention norms.

The vast economic literature on colonization often overlooks the strong moral dimension perceived and articulated by many of the colonizers. Colonization was a crusade. It would bring the benefits of civilization to the "dark" reaches of the earth. It was a sacred trust, it was the white man's burden, it was mandated by God that these Europeans go out into unknown (to them) parts of the globe, bringing what they understood to be a better way of life to the inhabitants. Colonization for the missionaries and those driven by social conscience was a humanitarian mission of huge proportions and consequently of huge importance.

Colonialism's humanitarian mission was of a particular kind, however: it was to "civilize" the non-European parts of the world--to bring the "benefits" of European social, political, economic, and cultural arrangements to Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Until these peoples were "civilized," they were savages, barbarians, something less than human. Thus in an important sense the core of the colonial humanitarian mission was to create humanity where none had previously existed. Non-Europeans became human in European eyes by becoming Christian, by adopting European-style structures of property rights, by adopting European-style territorial political arrangements, by entering the growing European-based international economy.[41] Decolonization also had strong humanitarian justifications.[42] By the mid-twentieth century, however, normative understandings about humanity had shifted. Humanity was no longer something one could create by bringing savages to civilization. Rather, humanity was inherent in individual human beings. It had become universalized and was not culturally dependent, as it has been in earlier centuries. Asians and Africans were now viewed as having human "rights," and among those rights was the right to determine their own political future--the right to self-determination.

There is not space here to investigate in detail the origins of decolonization and accompanying human rights norms. I would, however, like to highlight three features of the decolonization process that bear on the evolution of humanitarian intervention.[43] First, as international legal scholars have long noted,

logical coherence among norms greatly enhances their legitimacy and power.[44] Decolonization norms benefited greatly from their logical kinship with core European norms about human equality. As liberal norms about the "natural" rights of man spread and gained power within Europe, they influenced Europe's relationship with non-European peoples in important ways. The egalitarian social movements sweeping the European West in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were justified with universal truths about the nature and equality of human beings. These notions were then exported to the non-European world as part of the civilizing mission of colonialism. Once people begin to believe, at least in principle, in human equality, there is no logical limit to the expansion of human rights and self-determination.[45] The logical expansion of these arguments fueled attacks on both slavery and colonization. Slavery, more blatantly a violation of these emerging European norms, came under attack first. Demands for decolonization came more slowly and had to contend with the counterclaims for the beneficial humanitarian effects of European rule. In both cases, former slaves and Western-educated colonial elites were instrumental in change. Having been "civilized" and Europeanized, they were able to use Europe's own norms against these institutions. These people undermined the social legitimacy of both slaveholders and colonizers not simply by being exemplars of "human" non-Europeans but also by contributing to the arguments undercutting the legitimacy of slavery and colonialism within a European framework of proclaimed human equality.

Although logic alone is not the reason that slavery and colonialism were abolished, there does appear to be some need for logical consistency in normative structures. Changes in core normative structure (in this case, changes toward recognition of human equality within Europe) tended to promote and facilitate associated normative changes elsewhere in society. Mutually reinforcing and logically consistent norms appear to be harder to attack and to have an advantage in the normative contestations that go on in social life. Thus, logic internal to the norms shapes their development and consequently social change.

Second, as Neta Crawford and others have noted, formal international organizations, particularly the United Nations, played a significant role in the decolonization process and the consolidation of anticolonialism norms. The self-determination norms laid out in the charter, the trusteeship system it set up, and the one-state-one-vote voting structure that gave majority power to weak, often formerly colonized states, all contributed to an international legal, organizational, and normative environment that made colonial practices increasingly illegitimate and difficult to carry out.[46] Third, decolonization enshrined the notion of political self-determination as a basic human right associated with a now universal humanity. Political self-determination, in turn, meant sovereign statehood. Once sovereign statehood became associated with human rights, intervention, particularly unilateral intervention, became more difficult to justify. Unilateral intervention certainly still occurs, but, as will be seen below, it cannot now be justified even by high-minded humanitarian claims.

## Humanitarian Intervention Since 1945

Unlike humanitarian intervention practices in the nineteenth century, virtually all of the instances in which claims of humanitarian intervention have been made in the post-1945 period concern military action on behalf of non-Christians and/or non-Europeans. In that sense, the universalizing of the "humanity" that might be worth protecting seems to have widened in accordance with the normative changes described above.

What is interesting in these cases is that states that might legitimately have claimed humanitarian

justifications for their intervention did not do so. India's intervention in East Pakistan in the wake of Muslim massacres of Hindus, Tanzania's intervention in Uganda toppling the Idi Amin regime, Vietnam's intervention in Cambodia ousting the Khmers Rouges--in every case intervening states could have justified their actions with strong humanitarian claims. None did. In fact, India initially claimed humanitarian justifications but quickly retracted them. Why?

The argument here is that this reluctance stems not from norms about what is "humanitarian" but from norms about legitimate intervention. While the scope of who qualifies as human has widened enormously and the range of humanitarian activities that states routinely undertake has expanded,[47] norms about intervention have also changed, albeit less drastically. Humanitarian military intervention now must be multilateral to be legitimate.

As we saw in the nineteenth century, multilateralism is not new; it has often characterized humanitarian military action. But states in the nineteenth century still invoked humanitarian justifications, even when intervention was unilateral (for example, Russia in Bulgaria during the 1870s and, in part, France in Lebanon). That has not happened in the twentieth century. Without multilateralism, states will not and apparently cannot claim humanitarian justification.[48] Multilateralism had (and has) important advantages for states. It increases the transparency of each state's actions to others and so reassures states that opportunities for adventurism and expansion will not be used. Unilateral military intervention, even for humanitarian objectives, is viewed with suspicion; it is too easily subverted to serve less disinterested ends of the intervener. Further, multilateralism can be a way of sharing costs, and thus it can be cheaper for states than unilateral action.

Multilateralism carries with it significant costs of its own, however. Cooperation and coordination problems involved in such action have been examined in detail by political scientists and can make it difficult to sustain.[49] Perhaps more important, multilateral action requires sacrifice of power and control over the intervention. Further, it may seriously compromise the military effectiveness of those operations, as recent debates over command and control in un military operations suggest.

There are no obvious efficiency reasons for states to prefer either multilateral or unilateral intervention to achieve humanitarian ends. Each has advantages and disadvantages. The choice depends in large part on perceptions about the political acceptability and political costs of each, which, in turn, depend on normative context. As will be discussed below, multilateralism in the twentieth century has become institutionalized in ways that make unilateral intervention, particularly intervention not justified as self-defense, unacceptably costly.

The next two sections of the paper compare post-World War II interventions in situations of humanitarian disaster with nineteenth-century practice to illustrate these points. The first section provides a brief overview of unilateral intervention in the post-1945 period in which humanitarian justification could have been claimed to illustrate and elaborate these points but was not. Following that is an even briefer discussion of recent multilateral humanitarian actions that contrast with the previous unilateral cases.[50]

## Unilateral Intervention in Humanitarian Disasters

### *India in East Pakistan (1971)*

Pakistan had been under military rule by West Pakistani officials since partition. When the first free elections were held in November 1970, the Awami League won 167 out of 169 parliamentary seats reserved for East Pakistan in the National Assembly. The Awami League had not urged political independence for the East during the elections, but it did run on a list of demands concerning one-person-one-vote political representation and increased economic autonomy for the east. The government in West Pakistan viewed the Awami electoral victory as a threat. In the wake of these electoral results, the government in Islamabad decided to postpone the convening of the new National Assembly indefinitely, and in March 1971 the West Pakistani army started indiscriminately killing unarmed civilians, raping women, burning homes, and looting or destroying property. At least one million people were killed, and millions more fled across the border into India.[51] Following months of tension, border incidents, and increased pressure from the influx of refugees, India sent troops into East Pakistan. After twelve days the Pakistani army surrendered at Dacca, and the new state of Bangladesh was established.

As in many of the nineteenth-century cases, the intervener here had an array of geopolitical interests. Humanitarian concerns were not the only reason or even, perhaps, the most important reason to intervene. It is, however, a case in which intervention could have been justified in humanitarian terms, and initially the Indian representatives in both the General Assembly and the Security Council did articulate such a justification.[52] These arguments were widely rejected by other states, including many with no particular interest in politics on the subcontinent. States as diverse as Argentina, Tunisia, China, Saudi Arabia, and the U.S. all responded to India's claims by arguing that principles of sovereignty and noninterference should take precedence and that India had no right to meddle in what they all viewed as an "internal matter." In response to this rejection of her claims, India retracted her humanitarian justifications, choosing instead to rely on self-defense to justify her actions.[53] Tanzania in Uganda (1979).

This episode began as a straightforward territorial dispute. In the autumn of 1978 Ugandan troops invaded and occupied the Kagera salient--territory between the Uganda-Tanzania border and the Kagera River in Tanzania.[54] On November 1 Idi Amin announced annexation of the territory. Julius Nyerere considered the annexation tantamount to an act of war and on November 15 launched an offensive from the south bank of the Kagera River. Amin, fearing defeat, offered to withdraw from the occupied territories if Nyerere would promise to cease support for Ugandan dissidents and not to attempt to overthrow his government. Nyerere refused and made explicit his intention to help dissidents topple the Amin regime. In January 1979 Tanzanian troops crossed into Uganda, and by April Tanzanian troops, joined by some Ugandan rebel groups, had occupied Kampala and installed a new government headed by Yusef Lule.

As in the previous case, there were nonhumanitarian reasons to intervene, but if territorial issues were the only ones that mattered, the Tanzanians could have either stopped at the border, having evicted Ugandan forces, or pushed them back into Uganda short of Kampala. The explicit statement of intent to topple the regime seems out of proportion to the low-level territorial squabble. Fernando Tesón makes a strong case that Nyerere's intense dislike of Amin's regime and its practices influenced the scale of the response. Nyerere had already publicly called Amin a murder and refused to sit with him on the Authority of the East African Community.[55] Tesón also presents strong evidence that the lack of support or material help for Uganda in this intervention from the un, the oau, or any state besides Libya suggests tacit

international acceptance of what would otherwise be universally condemned as international aggression because of the human rights record of the target state.[56] Despite evidence of humanitarian motivations, Tanzania never claimed humanitarian justification. In fact, Tanzania went out of her way to minimize responsibility for the felicitous humanitarian outcome of her actions, saying only that she was acting in response to Amin's invasion and that her actions just happened to coincide with a revolt against Amin inside Uganda. When Sudan and Nigeria criticized Tanzania for interfering in another state's internal affairs in violation of the oau charter, it was the new Ugandan regime that invoked humanitarian justifications for Tanzania's actions. It criticized the critics, arguing that members of the oau should not "hide behind the formula of non-intervention when human rights are blatantly being violated."[57] Vietnam in Cambodia (1979)

In 1975 the Chinese-backed Khmers Rouges took power in Cambodia and launched a policy of internal "purification" entailing the atrocities and genocide now made famous by the 1984 movie The Killing Fields. This regime, under the leadership of Pol Pot, was also aggressively anti-Vietnamese and engaged in a number of border incursions during the late 1970s. Determined to end this border activity, the Vietnamese and an anti-Pol Pot army of exiled Cambodians invaded the country in December 1978 and by January 1979 had routed the Khmers Rouges and installed a sympathetic government under the name People's Republic of Kampuchea (prk).

Again, humanitarian considerations may not have been central to Vietnam's decision to intervene, but humanitarian justifications would seem to have offered some political cover to the internationally unpopular Vietnamese regime. Like Tanzania, however, Vietnam made no appeal to humanitarian justifications. Instead, its leaders argued that they were only helping the Cambodian people achieve self-determination against the neocolonial regime of Pol Pot, which had been "the product of the hegemonistic and expansionist policy of the Peking authorities."[58] Even if Vietnam had offered humanitarian justifications for intervention, indications are that these would have been rejected by other states. In their condemnations of Vietnam's action, a number of states mentioned Pol Pot's appalling human rights violations but said nonetheless that these violations did not entitle Vietnam to intervene. During the un debate, no state spoke in favor of the existence of a right to unilateral humanitarian intervention, and several states--Greece, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia, and India--that had previously supported humanitarian intervention arguments in the un voted for the resolution condemning Vietnam.[59]

## Multilateral Intervention in Humanitarian Disasters

To be legitimate, humanitarian intervention must be multilateral. The Cold War made such multilateral efforts politically difficult to orchestrate, but since 1989 several large-scale interventions have been carried out claiming humanitarian justifications as their primary raison d'être. All have been multilateral. Most visible among these have been:

- the U.S., British, and French efforts to protect Kurdish and Shiite populations inside Iraq following the Gulf War;
- the untac mission to end civil war and reestablish a democratic political order in Cambodia;
- the large-scale un effort to end starvation and construct a democratic state in Somalia; and current, albeit limited, efforts by un and nato troops to protect civilian, especially Muslim, populations from primarily Serbian forces in Bosnia.

While these efforts have attracted varying amounts of criticism concerning their effectiveness, they have received little or no criticism of their legitimacy. Further, and unlike their nineteenth-century counterparts, all have been organized through standing international organizations--most often the United Nations. Indeed, the un charter has provided the framework in which much of the normative contestation over intervention practices has occurred since 1945. Specifically, the charter enshrines two principles that at times, and perhaps increasingly, conflict. On the one hand, article 2 enshrines states' sovereign rights as the organizing principle of the international system. The corollary for intervention is a near absolute rule of nonintervention. On the other hand, article 1 of the charter emphasizes promoting respect for human rights and justice as a fundamental mission of the organization, and subsequent un actions (adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, among them) have strengthened these claims. Gross humanitarian abuses by states against their own citizens of the kinds discussed in this essay bring these two central principles into conflict.

The humanitarian intervention norms that have evolved within these conflicting principles appear to allow intervention in cases of humanitarian disaster and abuse, but with at least two caveats. First, they are permissive norms only. They do not require intervention, as the cases of Burundi, Sudan, and other states make clear. Second, they place strict requirements on the ways in which intervention, if employed, may be carried out: Humanitarian intervention must be multilateral if states are to accept it as legitimate and genuinely humanitarian. Further, it must be organized under un auspices or with explicit un consent. If at all possible, the intervention force should be composed according to un procedures, meaning that intervening forces must include some number of troops from "disinterested" states, usually midlevel powers outside the region of conflict--another dimension of multilateralism not found in nineteenth-century practice.

Contemporary multilateralism thus differs from the multilateral action of the nineteenth century. The latter was what John Ruggie might call "quantitative" multilateralism and only thinly so.[60] Nineteenth-century multilateralism was strategic. States intervened together to keep an eye on each other and discourage adventurism or exploitation of the situation for nonhumanitarian gains. Multilateralism was driven by shared fears and perceived threats, not by shared norms and principles. States did not even coordinate and collaborate extensively to achieve their goals. Military deployments in the nineteenth century may have been contemporaneous, but they were largely separate; there was virtually no joint planning or coordination of operations. This follows logically from the nature of multilateralism, since strategic surveillance of one's partners is not a shared goal but a private one.

Recent interventions exhibit much more of what Ruggie calls the "qualitative dimension" of multilateralism. They are organized according to and in defense of "generalized principles" of international responsibility and the use of military force, many of which are codified in the United Nations charter, declarations, and standard operating procedures. These emphasize international responsibilities for ensuring human rights and justice and dictate appropriate means of intervening, such as the necessity of obtaining Security Council authorization for action. The difference between contemporary and nineteenth-century multilateralism also appears at the operational level. The Greek intervention was multilateral only in the sense that more than one state had forces in the area at the same time. There was little joint planning and no integration of forces from different states. By contrast, contemporary multilateralism requires extensive joint planning and force integration. un norms require that intervening forces be composed not just of troops from more than one state but of troops from disinterested states, preferably not great powers--precisely the opposite nineteenth-century multilateral

practice.

Contemporary multilateralism is political and normative, not strategic. It is shaped by shared notions about when the use of force is legitimate and appropriate. Contemporary legitimacy criteria for the use of force, in turn, derive from these shared principles, articulated most often through the un, about consultation and coordination with other states before acting and about multinational composition of forces. U.S. interventions in Somalia and Haiti were not made multilateral because the U.S. needed the involvement of other states for military or strategic reasons. The U.S. was capable of supplying the forces necessary and, in fact, did supply the lion's share of the forces. No other great power was particularly worried about U.S. opportunism in these areas, and so none joined the action for surveillance reasons. These interventions were multilateral for political and normative reasons. For these operations to be legitimate and politically acceptable, the U.S. needed un authorization and international participation. Whereas Russia, France, and Britain tolerated each other's presence in the operation to save Christians from the infidel Turk, the U.S. had to beg other states to join it for a humanitarian operation in Haiti.

Multilateral norms create political benefits for conformance and costs for nonconforming action. They create, in part, the structure of incentives facing states. Realists or neoliberal institutionalists might argue that in the contemporary world, multilateral behavior is efficient and unproblematically self-interested because multilateralism helps to generate political support both domestically and internationally for intervention. But this argument only begs the question, Why is multilateralism necessary to generate political support? It was not necessary in the nineteenth century. Indeed, multilateralism as currently practiced was inconceivable in the nineteenth century. As was discussed earlier, there is nothing about the logic of multilateralism itself that makes it clearly superior to unilateral action. Each has advantages and costs to states, and the costs of multilateral intervention have become abundantly clear in recent un operations. One testament to the power of these multilateral norms is that states adhere to them even when they know that doing so compromises the effectiveness of the mission. Criticisms of the un's ineffectiveness for military operations are widespread. The fact that un involvement continues to be an essential feature of these operations despite the un's apparent lack of military competence underscores the power of multilateral norms.[61] Realist and neoliberal approaches cannot address changing requirements for political legitimacy like those reflected in changing multilateral practice any more than they can explain the "interest" prompting humanitarian intervention and its change over time. A century ago, protecting nonwhite non-Christians was not an "interest" of Western states, certainly not one that could prompt the deployment of troops. Similarly, a century ago states saw no interest in multilateral authorization, coordination, force integration, and use of troops from "disinterested" states. The argument of this essay is that these interests and incentives have been constituted socially through state practice and the evolution of shared norms by which states act.

Humanitarian intervention is not new. It has, however, changed over time in some systemic and important ways. First, the definition of who qualifies as human and therefore as deserving of humanitarian protection by foreign governments has changed. Whereas in the nineteenth century European Christians were the sole focus of humanitarian intervention, this focus has been expanded and universalized such that by the late twentieth century all human beings are treated as equally deserving in the international normative discourse. In fact, states are very sensitive to charges that they are "normatively backward" and still privately harbor distinctions. When Boutros Boutros-Ghali, shortly after becoming secretary-general, charged that powerful states were attending to disasters in white, European Bosnia at the expense of nonwhite, African Somalia, the U.S. and other states became

defensive, refocused attention, and ultimately launched a full-scale intervention in the latter but not the former.

Second, while humanitarian intervention in the nineteenth century was frequently multilateral, it was not necessarily so. Russia, for example, claimed humanitarian justifications for its intervention in Bulgaria in the 1870s; France was similarly allowed to intervene unilaterally, with no companion force to guard against adventurism. These claims were not contested, much less rejected, by other states, as the claims of India, Tanzania, and Vietnam were (or would have been, had they made such claims) a century later, despite the fact that Russia, at least, had nonhumanitarian motives to intervene. By the twentieth century, not only does multilateralism appear to be necessary to claim humanitarian justifications but sanction by the United Nations or some other formal organization is also required. The U.S., Britain, and France, for example, went out of their way to find authority in un resolutions for their protection of Kurds in Iraq.

The foregoing account also illustrates that these changes have come about through continual contestation over norms related to humanitarian intervention. The abolition of slavery, of the slave trade, and of colonization were all highly visible, often very violent, international contests about norms. Over time some norms won, others lost. The result was that by the second half of the twentieth century norms about who was "human" had changed, expanding the population deserving of humanitarian protection. At the same time norms about multilateral action had been strengthened, making multilateralism not just attractive but imperative.

Finally, I have argued here that the international normative fabric has become increasingly institutionalized in formal international organizations, particularly the United Nations. As recent action in Iraq suggests, action in concert with others is not enough to confer legitimacy on intervention actions. States also actively seek authorization from the United Nations and restrain their actions to conform to that authorization (as the U.S. did in not going to Baghdad during the Gulf war).[62] International organizations such as the un play an important role in both arbitrating normative claims and structuring the normative discourse over colonialism, sovereignty, and humanitarian issues.[63] Changes in norms create only permissive conditions for changes in international political behavior. One important task of future research will be to define more specifically the conditions under which certain kinds of norms might prevail or fail in influencing action. A related task will be to clarify the mechanisms whereby norms are created, changed, and exercise their influence. I have suggested a few of these here--public opinion, the media, international institutions. More detailed study of individual cases is needed to clarify the role of each of these mechanisms. Finally, the way in which normative claims are related to power capabilities deserves attention. The traditional Gramscian view would argue that these are coterminous; the international normative structure is created by and serves the most powerful. Humanitarian action generally, and humanitarian intervention specifically, do not obviously serve the powerful. The expansion of humanitarian intervention practices since the last century suggests that the relationship between norms and power may not be so simple.

---

This essay benefited from comments by Michel Girard, James Goldgeier, Richard Hermann, Peter Katzenstein, Elizabeth Kier, Stephen Krasner, Joseph Lepgold, James Lee Ray, Henry Shue, Nina Tannenwald, Stephen Walt, Alexander Wendt, two anonymous reviewers for Columbia University Press, and the participants at the third Social Science Research

Council/MacArthur Workshop at Stanford University, October 1994. Research assistance and insightful comments by Darel Paul are gratefully acknowledged.

**Note 1:** One could have subsystemic normative contexts as well, as illustrated by several essays in this volume. Back.

**Note 2:** The term military intervention in this essay refers to the deploying of military forces by a foreign power or powers for the purpose of controlling domestic policies or political arrangements in the target state in ways that clearly violate sovereignty. Humanitarian intervention is used to mean military intervention with the goal of protecting the lives and welfare of foreign civilians.

Note that interventions to protect a state's own nationals from abuse are excluded from this analysis. Such intervention was once categorized as humanitarian by international legal scholars, but it does not present the same intellectual puzzles about interests, since protecting one's own nationals is clearly connected to conventional understandings of national interest. Further, scholars of interna-tional law are increasingly making the distinction that I make here and reserving the term humanitarian intervention for military protection of foreign citizens, as I do, to follow changing state practice. See Anthony Clark Arend and Robert J. Beck, *International Law and the Use of Force: Beyond the UN Charter Paradigm* (New York: Routledge, 1993), esp. ch. 8; and Fernando Tesón, *Humanitarian Intervention: An Inquiry Into Law and Morality* (Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.: Transnational Publishers, 1988). Back.

**Note 3:** For a more extended discussion, see Martha Finnemore, Defining National Interests in *International Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), ch. 1. There is not space here to discuss the various sociological and psychological links between norms and behavior. For one set of sociological arguments, see Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio, eds., *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). For a somewhat different view, see James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics (New York: *Free Press*, 1989). For psychological arguments, see Henri Tajfel, *Human Groups and Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). Back.

**Note 4:** The U.S. intervention in Grenada is one such case, in which humanitarian justifications were offered (and widely rejected) for action of doubtful humanitarian motivation. See discussion in Tesón, *Humanitarian Intervention*, pp. 188-200. The Spanish-American War is a slightly different case, in which the U.S. offered humanitarian justifications as part of what were genuinely very complex motives for intervention. See Marc Trachtenberg, "Intervention in Historical Perspective," in Laura Reed and Carl Kaysen, eds., *Emerging Norms of Justified Intervention*, pp. 15-36 (Cambridge, Mass.: Committee on *International Security* Studies, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1993).It should also be noted that humanitarian justifications are often not offered by states that might legitimately claim them. Tanzania's invasion against Amin's Uganda and Vietnam's invasion of Pol Pot's Cambodia were both justified on security grounds. India initially offered humanitarian reasons for her 1971 intervention after massacres in East Pakistan but quickly dropped those in favor of self-defense and security justifications. See discussion below. Back.

**Note 5:** Obviously, single-actor characteristics may be defined in relation to or by comparison with those of others, but identification makes affective relationship central in ways that identity does not. Back.

**Note 6:** The intellectual orientation of the regimes literature probably had much to do with this atomized treatment of norms. Norms were incorporated as a definitional part of regimes, but regimes were always

conceived of as pertaining to individual issue areas. Scholars wrote about norms pertaining to specific issues without addressing either the larger context in which these norms exist or the ways in which they may be related one to another.

Arguments about interrelationships among norms and the nature of an overarching social normative structure have been made by both sociological institutionalists like John Meyer and, to a lesser extent, English School scholars like Gerrit Gong, in his discussion of standards of "civilization." See George Thomas, John Meyer, Francisco Ramirez, and John Boli, eds., *Institutional Structure: Constituting State, Society, and the Individual* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1987), esp. ch. 1; also Gerrit Gong, *The Standard of "Civilisation" in International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984). For an extended discussion of normative fabrics and social structures, see Finnemore, *Defining National Interests in International Society* . Back.

**Note 7:** Intervention in the Boxer Rebellion in China (1898-1900) is an interesting related case. I omit it from the analysis here because the primary goal of the intervenors was to protect their own nationals, not the Chinese. But the intervention did have the happy result of protecting a large number of mostly Christian Chinese from slaughter. Back.

**Note 8:** J. A. R. Marriott, *The Eastern Question: An Historical Study in European Diplomacy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1917), pp. 183-85. There were plenty of atrocities on both sides in this conflict. Many of the early Turkish massacres were in response to previous insurgent massacres of Muslims at Morea and elsewhere in April 1821. For example, Greek Christians massacred approximately eight thousand Turkish Muslims in the town of Tripolitza in 1821. In all, about twenty thousand Muslims were massacred during the war in Greece without causing the great powers concern. Since, under the law of the Ottoman Empire, the patriarch of Constantinople was responsible for the good behavior of his flock, his execution was viewed as justified. See Eric Carlton, Massacres: An Historical Perspective (Aldershot, Hants, Eng.: Scolar Press, 1994), p. 82; Marriott, *The Eastern Question*, p. 183; *Cambridge Modern History* (New York: Macmillan, 1911), 10:178-83.

Atrocities continued throughout the five-plus years of the conflict and fueled the Russian claims. Perhaps the most sensational of these were the atrocities committed by Egyptian troops under Ibrahim when they arrived to quell the Greek insurrection in 1825 for the sultan (to whom they were vassals). Egyptian troops began a process of wholesale extermination of the Greek populace, apparently aimed at recolonization of the area by Muslims. This fresh round of horrors was cited by European powers as the reason for their final press toward a solution. Back.

**Note 9:** France had a long-standing protective arrangement with Eastern Christians, described below, and had consistently favored armed intervention (*Cambridge Modern History*, 10:193). Back.

**Note 10:** William St. Clair, That Greece Might Still Be Free (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 81; C. W. Crawley, *The Question of Greek Independence* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1973), p. 1; *Cambridge Modern History*, 10:180. Back.

**Note 11:** *Cambridge Modern History*, 10:178-79. Back.

**Note 12:** Ibid., p. 196. Back.

**Note 13:** R. W. Seton-Watson, *Britain in Europe*, 1789 to 1914 (New York: Macmillan, 1937), p. 419;

also Trachtenberg, "Intervention in Historical Perspective," p. 23. Back.

**Note 14:** Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, pp. 419-20; Trachtenberg, "Intervention in Historical Perspective," p. 23. Back.

**Note 15:** Seton-Watson, *Britain in Europe*, p. 421. Back.

**Note 16:** Ibid., p. 420. Back.

**Note 17:** Louis B. Sohn and Thomas Buergenthal, *International Protection of Human Rights* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1973), pp. 156-60. Back.

**Note 18:** A. L. Tiwabi, *A Modern History of Syria* (London: Macmillan, 1969), p. 131; Seton-Watson, *Britain in Europe*, p. 421. Back.

**Note 19:** Mason Whiting Tyler, *The European Powers and the Near East*, 1875-1908 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1925), p. 66 n.; Seton-Watson, Britain in Europe, pp. 519-20; Marriott, *The Eastern Question*, pp. 291-92; *Cambridge Modern History*, 12:384. Back.

**Note 20:** Seton-Watson, *Britian in Europe*, p. 519. Back.

**Note 21:** Mercia MacDermott, *A History of Bulgaria*, 1393-1885 (New York: Praeger, 1962), p. 280. Back.

**Note 22:** *Cambridge Modern History*, 12:384. Back.

**Note 23:** Tyler, European Powers and the Near East, p. 70. Gladstone even published a pamphlet on the subject, The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East, which sold more than 200,000 copies; Seton-Watson, *Britian in Europe*, p. 519; Marriott, *The Eastern Question*, p. 293. Back.

**Note 24:** MacDermott, A History of Bulgaria, p. 277; Tyler, *European Powers and the Near East*, p. 21. Back.

**Note 25:** Arguably, too, the action was not intervention, since the Russians actually declared war. Since the war aims involved reconfiguring internal Ottoman arrangements of rule, however, the incident seems to have properties sufficiently similar to those of intervention to merit consideration in this study. Back.

**Note 26:** *Cambridge Modern History*, 12:415-17; Marriott, *The Eastern Question*, pp. 349-51. Back.

**Note 27:** Of course, these events late in the nineteenth century were only the tip of the iceberg. More than a million Armenians were killed by Turks during World War I, but the war environment obviates discussions of military intervention for the purposes of this essay. Back.

**Note 28:** Indeed, there were many firsthand European accounts of the Constantinople massacres, since execution gangs even forced their way into the houses of foreigners to execute Armenian servants (*Cambridge Modern History*, 12:417). Back.

**Note 29:** Quotation is from Lord Rosebery, as cited in *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, 3:234. Back.

**Note 30:** *Cambridge Modern History*, 12:417-18; Sohn and Buergenthal, *International Protection of Human Rights*, p. 181. Back.

**Note 31:** For more on this, see Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. 2, *Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977). Back.

**Note 32:** Christopher Hibbert, *The Dragon Wakes: China and the West*, 1793-1911 (Newton Abbot, Devon, Eng.: Readers Union, 1971). Hibbert estimates that the three-day massacre in Nanking alone killed more than 100,000 people (p. 303). Back.

**Note 33:** In one of the more egregious incidents of this kind, the Germans killed sixty-five thousand indigenous inhabitants of German Southwest Africa (Namibia) in 1904. See Barbara Harff, "The Etiology of Genocides," in Isidor Wallimann and Michael N. Dobkowski, eds., *Genocide and the Modern Age: Etiology and Case Studies of Mass Death*, pp. 46, 56 (New York: Greenwood, 1987). Back.

**Note 34:** The expansion of conceptions of humanity is also relevant to the development of international human rights and has been discussed by international legal scholars interested in such issues. See, for example, Louis Henkin, *The Age of Rights* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), ch. 1. The legal literature on international human rights, however, does not attend to the connection emphasized here between these expanding notions of humanity and the international use of organized military force. Back.

**Note 35:** One might argue that the current plight of the Bosnian Muslims suggests that "humanity" is not as universal as we would like to think. They, after all, are Muslims being slaughtered by Christians, and the Christian West is standing by. Countering this would be the case of Somalia, where the West *did* intervene to save a largely Muslim population. I would argue that the explanation for different intervention behaviors in these cases does not lie in humanitarian norms. Strong normative claims to intervene have been made in both cases and have met with different results, for old-fashioned geostrategic reasons. As is discussed elsewhere in this essay, humanitarian norms create only permissive conditions for intervention. They create an "interest" in intervention where none existed. They do not eliminate other competing interests, such as political or strategic interests. Back.

**Note 36:** The quotation comes from the Eight Power Declaration concerning the universal abolition of the trade in Negroes, signed February 8, 1815, by Britain, France, Spain, Sweden, Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Portugal (as quoted in Leslie Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970], p. 14). Back.

**Note 37:** I do not mean to minimize the abuses suffered by freed slaves after emancipation, as Europeans tried in various ways to subvert the emancipation guarantees. I only wish to stress that emancipation entailed formal guarantees of a minimal kind (e.g., freedom against forced labor, freedom of movement) and that subversion was now necessary if whites were to obtain what had previously been available through overt methods. Back.

**Note 38:** Bethell, *Abolition of Brazilian Slave Trade*, ch. 1. In 1850 Britain went so far as to fire on and board ships in Brazilian ports to enforce antislave trafficking treaties (ibid., pp. 329-31). One might argue that such action was a violation of sovereignty and thus qualified as military intervention, but if so, it was

intervention of a very peripheral kind. Back.

**Note 39:** The United States is a possible exception. One could argue that the North intervened militarily in the South to abolish slavery. Such an argument would presume that (a) there were ever two separate states such that the North's action could be understood as "intervention," rather than civil war and (b) abolishing slavery rather than maintaining the Union was the primary reason for the North's initial action. Both assumptions are open to serious question. (The Emancipation Proclamation was not signed until 1863, when the war was already half over.) Thus, while the case is suggestive of the growing power of a broader conception of "humanity," I do not treat it in this analysis. Back.

**Note 40:** For an extended treatment of the importance of the categories civilized and barbarian on state behavior in the nineteenth century, see Gong, *The Standard of "Civilisation" in International Society* . Back.

**Note 41:** Gerrit Gong provides a much more extensive discussion of what "civilization" meant to Europeans from an international legal perspective (see ibid.). Uday Mehta investigates the philosophical underpinnings of colonialism in Lockean liberalism and the strategies aimed at the systematic political exclusion of culturally dissimilar colonized peoples by liberals professing universal freedom and rights. One of these strategies was civilizational infantilization; treating peoples in India, for example, like children allowed liberals to exclude them from political participation and, at the same time, justified extensive tutelage in European social conventions in the name of civilizing them and preparing them for liberal political life. See Uday S. Mehta, *"Liberal Strategies of Exclusion," Politics and Society* 18 (1990): 427-54.

Of necessity, this very abbreviated picture of colonialism obscures the enormous variety in European views of what they were doing. Some social reformers and missionaries no doubt had much more generous notions of the "humanity" of the non-Europeans with whom they came in contact and treated them with respect. In the view of some more-racist participants in the colonialist project, no amount of Christian piety or Europeanization would ever raise these non-Europeans up to a level of humanity comparable to that of Europeans. My goal in this sketch is to emphasize the effort to create humanity so that connections with decolonization can be seen. Back.

**Note 42:** To reiterate, I am making no claims about the causes of decolonization. These causes were obviously complex and have been treated extensively in the vast literature on the subject. I argue only that humanitarian norms were central in the justification for decolonization. Back.

**Note 43:** Neta Crawford makes similar but not identical arguments in "Decolonization as an International Norm: The Evolution of Practices, Arguments, and Beliefs," in Reed and Kaysen, *Emerging Norms of Justified Intervention*, pp. 37-61. Back.

**Note 44:** For an excellent exposition, see Thomas M. Franck, *The Power of Legitimacy Among Nations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), esp. ch. 10. Back.

**Note 45:** Crawford, "Decolonization as an International Norm," p. 53. David Lumsdaine makes a similar point about the expanding internal logic of domestic welfare arguments that led to the creation of the foreign aid regime in *Moral Vision in International Politics: The Foreign Aid Regime, 1949-1989* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). Back.

**Note 46:** Even veto power on the Security Council could not protect colonial powers from the decolonizing trend, as the Suez incident in 1956 made clear to Britain and France. See Thomas Risse-Kappen's discussion of that case in essay 10 of this volume. Back.

**Note 47:** See, for example, Lumsdaine's excellent discussion of the rise and expansion of foreign aid in Moral Vision in International Politics. See also the discussion of humanitarian intercession in Sohn and Buergenthal, *International Protection of Human Rights*. Back.

**Note 48:** One interesting exception that proves the rule is the U.S. claim of humanitarian justification for its intervention in Grenada. First, the human beings to be protected by the intervention were not Grenadans but U.S. nationals. Protecting one's own nationals can still be construed as protecting national interests and is therefore not anomalous or analytically interesting in the way that state action to protect nationals of other states is. Second, the humanitarian justification offered by the United States was widely rejected in the international community, underscoring the point made here that unilateral humanitarian intervention is generally treated with suspicion by states. See the discussions in Tesón, *Humanitarian Intervention*, pp. 188-200; and Arend and Beck, *International Law and the Use of Force*, pp. 126-28.

The apparent illegitimacy of unilateral humanitarian intervention is probably related to two broad issues that cannot be treated in this limited space--namely, the expansion of multilateralism as a practice and the strengthening of juridical sovereignty norms, especially among weak states. On multilateralism, see John G. Ruggie, ed., *Multilateralism Matters: The Theory and Praxis of an Institutional Form* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). Concerning the strengthening of sovereignty norms among weak states, see Stephen D. Krasner, *Structural Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). Back.

**Note 49:** Significantly, those who are Thomas Risse-Kappen's discussion of that case in essay 10 of more optimistic about solving these problems and about the utility of multilateral action rely on norms to overcome the problems. Norms are an essential part of both regimes and multilateralism in the two touchstone volumes on these topics. See Stephen D. Krasner, ed., *International Regimes* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), and Ruggie, *Multilateralism Matters*. Back.

**Note 50:** These synopses are drawn in large part from Tesón, Humanitarian Intervention, ch. 8; Michael Akehurst, "Humanitarian Intervention," in Hedley Bull, ed., Intervention in *World Politics*, pp. 95-118 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984); and Arend and Beck, *International Law and the Use of Force*, ch. 8. Back.

**Note 51:** Estimates of the number of refugees vary wildly. The Pakistani government put the number at two million; the Indian government claimed ten million. Independent estimates have ranged from five to nine million. See Tesón, *Humanitarian Intervention*, p. 182, including n. 163, for discussion. Back.

**Note 52:** See ibid., p. 186 n. 187, for the text of a General Assembly speech by the Indian representative articulating this justification. See also Akehurst, "Humanitarian Intervention," p. 96. Back.

**Note 53:** Akehurst concludes that India actually had prior statements concerning humanitarian justifications deleted from the Official Record of the un (Akehurst, "Humanitarian Intervention," pp. 96-97). Back.

**Note 54:** Amin attempted to justify this move by claiming that Tanzania had previously invaded Ugandan territory. Back.

**Note 55:** Tesón, *Humanitarian Intervention*, p. 164. Back.

**Note 56:** Ibid., pp. 164-67. Back.

**Note 57:** As quoted in Akehurst, "Humanitarian Intervention," p. 99. Back.

**Note 58:** As quoted in ibid., p. 97 n. 17. Back.

**Note 59:** One reason for the virtual absence of humanitarian arguments in this case, as compared with the Tanzanian case, may have been the way in which the intervention was conducted. Tanzania exerted much less control over the kind of regime that replaced Amin, making the subsequent Ugandan regime's defense of Tanzania's actions as "liberation" less implausible than were Vietnam's claims that it, too, was helping to liberate Cambodia by installing a puppet regime that answered to Hanoi. Back.

**Note 60:** John G. Ruggie, "Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution," in Ruggie, *Multilateralism Matters*, p. 6. Back.

**Note 61:** Contemporary multilateralism is not, therefore, "better" or more efficient and effective than the nineteenth-century brand. My argument is only that it is different. This difference in multilateralism poses a particular challenge to neoliberal institutionalists. Those scholars have sophisticated arguments about why international cooperation should be robust and about why it might vary across issue-areas. They cannot, however, explain these qualitative changes in multilateralism, nor can they explain changes in the amount of multilateral activity over time, without appealing to exogenous variables (such as changes in markets or technology). Back.

**Note 62:** Inis Claude's classic discussion of this collective legitimation function of the un is well worth a second reading in the current political environment; see Inis L. Claude Jr., "Collective Legitimization as a Political Function of the United Nations," *International Organization* 20, no. 3 (Summer 1966): 367-79. Back.

**Note 63:** For more on the role of ios in creating and disseminating norms, see Martha Finnemore, "*International Organization* s as Teachers of Norms: The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization and Science Policy," *International Organization* 47, no. 4 (Autumn 1993): 599-628. Back.

---

The Culture of National Security