Military Intervention and Political Violence
(Pol. 3 Module, 2015-16)

Lectures by Dr. Stefano Recchia

1. Why seek multilateral approval? Justice and legitimacy in contemporary uses of force

Sample questions:
- Does military intervention have to be authorized by the United Nations Security Council in order to be legitimate?
- Why do powerful states value multilateral approval and the resulting legitimacy?
- Can the approval of regional international organizations such as NATO substitute for the lack of UN approval?

Core reading:


Alexander Thompson, ‘Coercion Through IOs: The Security Council and the Logic of Information Transmission’, International Organization 60:1, 2006, pp. 1-34. [Powerful states such as the USA seek multilateral approval in order to reassure foreign citizens and leaders.]
**Supplementary reading:**


Robert Pape, ‘Soft Balancing against the United States’, *International Security* 30: 1, 2005. [Even powerful states need to legitimize their actions if they want to avert potentially harmful ‘soft balancing’ by their international partners].

Stefano Recchia, ‘The Payoffs of Multilaterally Authorized Intervention: Averting Issue Linkage vs. Appeasing Congress’, *International Relations*, forthcoming. [Critique of Alex Thompson’s argument; the USA seeks multilateral approval for domestic political reasons.]


Richard K. Betts, ‘Confused Interventions’, in Betts, *American Force* (Columbia UP, 2012), pp. 50-80. [If you choose to intervene, avoid half-measures and support one side decisively—unilaterally if needed. Hard-nosed analysis by a leading realist scholar.]

Katharina P. Coleman, *International Organizations and Peace Enforcement* (Cambridge UP, 2007). [Intervening states, whether Nigeria, South Africa, or the US, seek international organization approval to legitimize their actions and avoid international opprobrium.]

Bruce Cronin, ‘The Paradox of Hegemony: America’s Ambiguous Relationship With the United Nations’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 7:1 (2001), pp. 103-130. [America has the ‘hardware’ to intervene abroad—yet hegemony requires more than that.]


2. NATO’s humanitarian war over Kosovo

Sample questions:
- Did the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo meet the threshold for military intervention?
- NATO’s military intervention worsened the plight of Kosovar civilians. Discuss.
- What were the costs of channeling the Kosovo intervention through NATO?

Core reading:

Adam Roberts, ‘NATO’s “Humanitarian War” Over Kosovo’, Survival, 41:3 (1999), pp. 102-123. [Excellent overview of the principal ethical and legal challenges].


David N. Gibbs, First Do No Harm: Humanitarian Intervention and the Destruction of Yugoslavia (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2009), chapter. 7 [Trenchant critique; argues that NATO’s military intervention probably made matters worse].


Nicholas Wheeler, Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society, chapter 8. [Focuses especially on the role of the UN Security Council].

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Supplementary reading:

Alex J. Bellamy, *Kosovo and International Society* (London: Palgrave, 2002), chaps. 3-6. [Detailed analysis of European and U.S. diplomatic initiatives in the run-up to the war].


Independent International Commission on Kosovo (IICK), *The Kosovo Report* (Oxford: OUP, 2000). [Influential report, concluded that the intervention was ‘illegal but legitimate’].

Katharina P. Coleman, *International Organizations and Peace Enforcement* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), chapter 6. [Argues that the U.S. sought NATO’s endorsement to legitimize the use of force in international society.]


3. The U.S. invasion of Iraq, 2003: Was it a just war?

Sample questions:
- Why did the United States and Britain invade Iraq?
- Why did Washington and London fail to secure UN approval for the Iraq War?
- Is preventive war ever justified?

Core reading:
Alex J. Bellamy, Just Wars: From Cicero to Iraq (London: Polity, 2006), esp. chapter 8 on the legitimacy of pre-emptive and preventive war.


Robert Jervis, ‘Understanding the Bush Doctrine’, Political Science Quarterly, 118: 3 (2003), pp. 365-388. [Excellent analysis of the belief system behind the U.S. invasion of Iraq, by one of America’s foremost international relations scholars.]

Adam Roberts, ‘Law and the Use of Force After Iraq’, Survival, 45: 2 (Summer 2003), pp. 31-56. [Reviews various possible justifications for the Iraq War].


Supplementary reading:


America’s peculiar reception of the liberal Enlightenment tradition leads it to over-estimate international threats and consequently to over-react.


Christopher Dickey and Evan Thomas, ‘How Saddam Happened: America helped make a monster’, Newsweek, 23 September 2002. [How the demonization of Saddam Hussein came to severely limit U.S. policy options on Iraq.]


Christian Enemark and Christopher Michaelson, ‘Just War Doctrine and the Invasion of Iraq’, Australian Journal of Politics and History, 51: 4 (2005), pp. 545-563. [Using traditional just war theory, the authors conclude that the 2003 Iraq War was unjust.]


Terry Nardin, ‘Humanitarian Imperialism’, Ethics & International Affairs, 19: 2 (September 2005), pp. 21-26. [Critique of Nardin’s argument that the Iraq War can be justified as a humanitarian intervention].


Bob Woodward, excerpts from his book Plan of Attack: Cheney Was Unwavering in Desire to Go to War, The Washington Post, April 20, 2004. [Fascinating account that takes us inside the Bush administration leading up to the war].
4. After war: Jus post bellum and international trusteeship (Bosnia, 1995-present)

Sample questions:

- Is international trusteeship a necessary evil to stabilize war-torn countries?
- Is the imposition of democracy likely to help or hinder postwar peacebuilding?
- Was Bosnia a ‘genocidal state’ in 1995, and if so, does it matter?

Core reading:


Stefano Recchia, ‘Just and Unjust Postwar Reconstruction: How much external interference can be justified?’ Ethics & International Affairs, 23:2 (2009), pp. 165-187. [The degree of external interference needs to be strictly proportional to local impediments to self-rule.]


Elizabeth M. Cousens, ‘From Missed Opportunities to Overcompensation: Implementing the Dayton Agreement on Bosnia,’ in Stephen J. Stedman, Donald Rothchild and E. Cousens, Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements (Lynne Rienner, 2002).

Supplementary reading:


Richard Caplan, International Authority and State Building: The Case of Bosnia (OUP, 2004). [Detailed analysis of the international state-building operation in Bosnia].

David Chandler, Faking Democracy After Dayton (London: Pluto, 2000). [The international state-building project in Bosnia is a not-so-veiled instance of neo-imperialism].


Oisin Tansey, ‘Democratic Regime-Building in Bosnia’, in Tansey, Regime-Building: Democratization and International Administration (OUP, 2009). [Explores the role of international territorial administration in promoting democratic governance].


Philip G. Roeder and Donald Rothchild, ‘Power Sharing as an Impediment to Peace and Democracy’, in Roeder and Rotchild eds., Sustainable Peace: Power and Democracy after Civil Wars (Cornell UP, 2005), pp. 29-50. [Ethnic power sharing is part of the problem.]

Dominik Zaum, The Sovereignty Paradox: The norms and politics of international statebuilding (OUP, 2007), chaps. 2, 3. [Detailed analysis of the socially constructed norms underpinning international state-building projects, with a focus on Bosnia].
5. Strike and Retreat? Supporting local insurgents from the air (Libya, 2011)

Sample questions:

- Does humanitarian intervention require military occupation in its aftermath?
- Was the Libya intervention legitimate? Was it legal?
- What does the Libya experience tell us about the future of humanitarian intervention?

Core reading:


Christopher Chivvis, ‘Libya and the light footprint’, in Chivvis Toppling Qaddafi. Libya and the Limits of Liberal Intervention. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. [Argues that the Libya intervention was a success—up to a point.]

Richard Andres, Craig Wills, Thomas Griffith, ‘Winning With Allies: The Strategic Value of the Afghan Model’, International Security 30: 3 (Winter 2005): 124-160. [Claim that Western reliance on air power and special forces, rather than large contingents of ground troops, facilitates the transition to stability and democracy by empowering indigenous allies].


Derek Chollet and Ben Fishman, ‘Who Lost Libya? Obama’s Intervention in Retrospect’, Foreign Affairs 93:2 (May/June 2015): 154-59. [Response to Kuperman. Cautious defense of the intervention, argues there were no ‘good’ alternative options.]

Supplementary reading:


Erica D. Borghard and Costantino Pischedda, ‘Allies and Airpower in Libya’, Parameters 42 (Spring 2012): 63-74. [Argue that although precision airpower by itself is unlikely to bring about regime change, its ‘cumulative attrition effect’ can enable rebel victories.]

Ramesh Thakur, ‘R2P after Libya and Syria: Engaging Emerging Powers’, *The Washington Quarterly*, 36:2 (2013): 61-76. [Explains why emerging powers will play a growing role in decisions of whether and when the ‘international community’ should intervene on humanitarian grounds.]

Luke Glanville, ‘Intervention in Libya: From Sovereign Consent to Regional Consent’, *International Studies Perspectives* 14: 3 (August 2013): 325-342. [Highlights the support of regional multilateral bodies as a key factor legitimating the intervention.]

Justin Morris, ‘Libya and Syria: R2P and the spectre of the swinging pendulum’, *International Affairs* 89: 5 (September 2013), 1265-1283. [Argues that NATO’s expansive interpretation of UNSC Resolution 1973 over Libya subsequently made it more difficult to invoke the R2P doctrine effectively over Syria.]


Paul D. Williams and Alex J. Bellamy, ‘Principles, Politics, and Prudence: Libya, the Responsibility to Protect, and the Use of Military Force’, *Global Governance* 18:3 (Summer 2012), pp. 273-297. [Claim that the R2P norm ‘produced’ intervention in Libya.]


### 6. Freedom fighters or terrorists? The ethics of guerrilla warfare

**(Iraq, 2003-present)**

**Sample questions:**

- Is ‘just guerrilla warfare’ an oxymoron?
- Can there ever be exceptions to the rule against attacking civilians?
- Does foreign intervention create insurgencies?
Core reading:


Robert A. Pape and James K. Feldman, *Cutting the Fuse: The Explosion of Global Suicide Terrorism and How to Stop It* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), chaps. 1-2, pp. 19-86. [Suicide terrorism as a form of resistance to foreign military occupation.]

Supplementary reading:


Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Grove/Atlantic, 2007). [Influential, qualified defense of anticolonial violence from a Marxist standpoint].


Toby Dodge, ‘What were the causes and consequences of Iraq’s descent into violence after the initial invasion?’ Analysis submitted to the UK Iraq Inquiry, 2009. Available at: http://www.iraqinquiry.org.uk/media/37045/dodge-submission.pdf
James D. Fearon, ‘Iraq’s Civil War’, *Foreign Affairs* 86 (March/April 2007), pp. 2-16 [Iraq’s civil war can only be ended by Iraqis themselves, but it will take a long time to reach a viable ethnic power-sharing arrangement and it will be bloody].


Dipak K. Gupta, *Understanding Terrorism and Political Violence* (Routledge, 2008), chap. 3 [Highlights the desire to belong to a group as a motivating factor for terrorists.]


**Questions for practice essays:**

1. Was NATO’s aerial bombing in Kosovo an acceptable means of humanitarian military intervention?

2. Would the 2003 Iraq war have been justified, had it been authorized by the UN Security Council?

3. Can military intervention without the approval of relevant multilateral organizations like the UN Security Council or NATO approval ever be legitimate?

4. Should liberal countries support just insurgencies through military intervention?