

Chapter 8

Hedley in his Own Words: three essays

What follows are three essays written by Hedley Bull. The first essay, 'Order vs. Justice in International Society', appeared in the journal *Political Studies* (vol. xix, no. 3, September 1971, pp. 269–83). The paper was originally delivered to the Annual Conference of the Political Studies Association at Birmingham on March 1971.

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The final essay 'The Revolt against the West' appeared in *The Expansion of International Society* (eds Hedley Bull and Adam Watson), Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1984.

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(1) Order vs Justice in International Society

Order is not merely an actual or possible condition or state of affairs in world politics, it is also very generally regarded as a value. But it is not the only value in relation to which international conduct can be shaped, nor necessarily an overriding one. At the present time, for example, it is often said that whereas the Western powers, in the justifications they offer of their policies, show themselves to be primarily concerned with order the states of the so-called Third World are concerned with the achievement of justice in the world community, even at the price of disorder. Professor Ali Mazrui, one of the few contemporary writers on international relations to have thought deeply about this question, has said that the Western powers, the principal authors of the United Nations Charter, wrote it in such a way that peace and security are treated as the primary objectives of the organisation, and the promotion of human rights as a secondary objective, whereas the African and Asian states are dedicated to reversing this order of priority.¹

Whether or not Professor Mazrui is correct in characterising in this way the conflicts of policy between the Western powers and the African and Asian states is a matter on which a good deal might be said. My purpose in what follows, however, is not to enter into this question but to consider in general what order

and justice are in world politics and how they are related to one another. In particular, how far are 'order' and 'justice' (in various of the meanings that may be assigned to these terms) compatible or mutually re-inforcing ends of policy and how far are they conflicting or even mutually exclusive? To the extent that 'order' and 'justice' do stand in opposition to one another what is to be made of the view that in international life the former has always had or should have priority over the latter? To make sense of these questions we must first pay attention to the meaning of the terms.

II

To say of a number of things that together they display order is (in the simplest and most general sense of the term) to say that they are related to one another according to some pattern, that their relationship is not purely haphazard but contains some discernible principle. Thus a row of books on a shelf displays order whereas a heap of books on the floor does not. But when we speak of order in social life what we have in mind is not *any* pattern or principle in the relations among individuals or groups, but a pattern that produces a particular result or facilitates the achievement of a particular purpose. Order in this purposive sense is displayed by a row of books that are not merely placed together on a shelf but arranged in alphabetical order so as to facilitate the object of finding a book by a particular author. Augustine defined the term in this relational or purposive way: he spoke of order as 'a *good* disposition of discrepant parts, each in its *fittest* place' (my italics).²

'Good' or 'fittest' for what? A disposition or pattern of social relations that is good for one purpose will not be good for another. What was 'order' in France in this sense for the court of Louis XVI was not for the Jacobins, what is 'order' in the world today in this sense for the United States is not for China or Cuba or North Vietnam. The term 'order' like the term 'stability' is in fact often used in this way in the West today to refer to patterns or dispositions of international or domestic political relations that embody the preferred values of the West.

Our present concern, however, is not to state what is the preferred order of the West or of some other group of powers but to define social order as such, order as opposed to disorder, order that will be found to exist both in the France of the *ancien régime* and in post-revolutionary France, both in an American-preferred world order and in a Soviet-preferred or Chinese-preferred one. By order in social life I mean a pattern or structure of human relationships that sustains not the special purposes of this or that sort of society but the primary or elementary goals of social coexistence; goals that are common to social life at all times and in all places. Social life in any form requires, for example, some restriction on the liberty of members of the society to resort to violence, a presumption that promises will be kept; and a means of securing stability of possession.

International order is a pattern or structure of human relations such as to sustain the elementary or primary goals of social coexistence among states. A number of independent political communities might in principle exist without forming together an international *system* in the sense that they are related to one another as a set of interacting parts, as indeed the independent political communities of pre-Columbian America did not form an international system together with those that existed in Europe. When a number of independent political communities do together comprise an international system they do not necessarily constitute an international *society* in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with each other and to share in the working of a common set of institutions. Turkey, Japan and China, for example, were part of the European-dominated international system before they were in the full sense part of the European-dominated international society. That is to say, they interacted significantly with European powers in war and commerce before they and the European powers came to regard each other as subject to the same set of rules and as cooperating in the operation of common institutions.

The element of international order that exists in the world reflects the fact that sovereign states today constitute, however precariously, an international society as well as an international system. It is difficult to conceive of international order apart from norms or rules: in particular, elementary or primary rules requiring states to limit the violence they bring to bear on one another, to honour undertakings and to respect one another's spheres of jurisdiction. It is true that some of the most important sources of international order are the consequence simply of certain brute facts about the international system that would make for international order even if what I have called international society did not exist: the fact, for example, that military power is distributed in such a way that no one state is preponderant; the fact of the fear of war; the fact of economic inter-dependence. But while these facts provide a basis for the perception by states of common interests in international order, actually to achieve it they must be able to arrive at guidelines or signposts that show them how they must behave if they are to advance these common interests: that is to say, they must articulate norms or rules and agree upon them.

These rules are prior to international law, international morality and international institutions; they may have the status simply of operating procedures or 'rules of the game'. Their existence in some form is a necessary condition of what I have called an international system, as well as of an international society: it is difficult to conceive that sustained military or commercial intercourse could be carried on between independent political communities, without some degree of expectation of conformity to general imperative principles of conduct, however crudely and tentatively formulated. But these rules of the game are strengthened if they are embodied in institutions,

as some of them have been in the institutions of modern international society: international law, the diplomatic system, the principle that there should exist a balance of power and acceptance of the special managerial role of the great powers.

It may be helpful to indicate the relationship between international order, in the sense in which it has been defined, and a number of different although connected concepts. If *international* order pertains to the elementary conditions of social coexistence among states *world* order may be thought of as the patterns of behaviour that sustain elementary social coexistence among mankind as a whole. In the present phase of universal political organisation, the dominant feature of which is the division of mankind and of the earth's surface into separate sovereign jurisdictions, world order may be thought of as the sum of domestic order and international order, the order that is provided within states and the order that exists among them. But of course world order could in principle be achieved by other forms of universal political organisation, and a standing question is whether it does not require other forms.

International order is closely related to what in the language of the UN Charter is called 'peace and security'. It has often been pointed out that peace and security do not necessarily belong together: while in the circumstances of the Soviet–American strategic stalemate there exist both peace and a degree of security, at the time of Munich there was peace in Europe but not security, while at the time of the San Francisco Conference there was security but not peace. The coupling of the two terms together in the Charter reflects the judgements that the requirements of security may conflict with those of peace, and that in this event the latter will not necessarily take priority.

International order cannot be identified with peace in the sense of the absence of war because achievement of the minimum goals of coexistence between states may be found to require the use or threat of force. Nor can international order be identified with security, which may be defined as safety from war and military defeat. The provision of a degree of security or safety from violent attack is one, but only one of the basic goals of international coexistence, which must be taken also to refer to the acceptance by states of one another's rights to a sphere jurisdiction and to engage in peaceful intercourse.

International order is sometimes defined (e.g. by Quincy Wright) in terms of the predictability of future international behaviour.³ As I have defined it, order in international relations bears a close relationship to predictability but should not be identified with it. If there is international order, then to the extent the statesmen understand what the patterns are that sustain coexistence, a consequence will be that some basis for prediction will exist. Moreover, the desire to be able to predict the behaviour of other states, to avoid the anxiety into which we would be plunged if we could not count on others to follow

certain guidelines or signposts, helps to explain why it is that we regard international order as valuable. But order is not the same as predictability for there are patterns or regularities of international behaviour, of which we may be aware and from which we may form expectations about the future, which are in fact patterns of disorder or anarchy: the breakdown of restraints on international violence, the disregard of established undertakings and the infringement of sovereign jurisdiction may occur in a regular and predictable way but international order, as I have argued, is not any pattern or regularity but a pattern of a particular sort.

It is obvious that in taking international order to concern the primary or elementary conditions of international coexistence I am concerning myself with what is sometimes called *minimum* order rather than with *optimum* order, with what, for example, Myres S. MacDougal calls 'minimum world public order' rather than with the more inclusive 'world public order with human dignity'.⁴ The question I am trying to raise here is how 'minimum international order' is related to 'optimum international order', to a framework of international relations that provides for other values besides that of 'order'.

III

Unlike order, justice is a term which can ultimately be given only some kind of private or subjective definition. I do not propose to set out any private vision of what just conduct in world politics would be, nor to embark upon any philosophical analysis of the criteria for recognising it. My starting-point is simply that there are certain ideas or beliefs as to what justice requires in world politics and that demands formulated in the name of these ideas play a large role in the course of events.

Clearly, ideas about justice belong to the class of moral ideas, ideas which treat certain human actions as right in themselves and not merely as a means to an end, as categorically and not merely hypothetically imperative. Considerations of justice, accordingly, are to be distinguished from considerations of law, and from considerations of the dictates of prudence, interest or necessity.

In thinking about justice there are certain familiar distinctions which it is helpful to bear in mind.⁵ First, we may distinguish what has been called 'general' justice, justice as identical with virtuous or righteous conduct from 'particular' justice, justice as one species of right conduct among others. The term 'justice' is sometimes used interchangeably with 'morality' or 'virtue', as if to say an action is just were simply another way of saying that it is morally right. It is often argued, however, that ideas about justice constitute a particular subcategory of moral ideas, as we imply when we say that justice should be tempered with mercy, or that independent political communities in their dealings with one another are capable of justice but not of charity. It has often been contended

that justice is especially to do with equality in the enjoyment of rights and privileges, perhaps also to do with fairness or reciprocity; that whatever the substance of the rights or privileges in question demands for justice are demands for the equal enjoyment of them as between persons who are different from one another in some respect but should be treated in respect of these rights as if they were the same.

Demands for justice in world politics are often of this form: they are demands for the removal of privilege or discrimination, for equality in the distribution or in the application of rights as between the strong and the weak, the large and the small, the rich and the poor, the black and the white or the victors and the vanquished. It is important to distinguish between 'justice' in this special sense of equality of rights or privileges and 'justice' in the wider sense in which we are using it interchangeably with 'morality'. The question needs to be raised whether justice in this larger sense will always be satisfied by equality of rights, whether it does not sometimes require discrimination between great powers and small, Have states and Have Nots, nuclear and non-nuclear, and so on.

Justice may be held to lie in the recognition of certain specified rights or duties—political, social or economic—but the demand for justice in the sense of the equal enjoyment of rights or equal imposition of duties for like individuals and groups is heard irrespective of what the substance of the rights and duties is. Thus another important distinction is between 'substantive' and 'formal' justice, the former lying in the recognition of specified rights or duties and the latter in like application of them to like persons. Demands for 'equality before the law', demands that legal rules be applied in a like manner to like classes of people, are an example of demands for 'formal justice' in this sense, but the latter arise in relation to all rules, legal or non-legal. When Britain and France attacked Egypt in 1956 and President Eisenhower insisted that the duty of member states of the United Nations to refrain from the use or threat of force except in self-defence applied to the allies of the United States as well as to others, he was demanding 'formal justice' in this sense.

Equality may be envisaged as the enjoyment by a like class of persons or groups of *the same* rights or duties. But it is obvious that equality in this sense will often fail to satisfy other criteria of justice. For one thing, given that persons and groups are sometimes unequal in their capacities or in their needs, a rule that provides them with the same rights and duties will have the effect simply of further underlining their inequality: as Aristotle wrote, 'injustice arises when equals are treated unequally and also when unequals are treated equally'.⁶ Thus the distinction is sometimes drawn between 'arithmetical justice' in the sense of equal rights and duties, and 'proportionate justice' in the sense of rights and duties that are distributed proportionately to the object in view. Marx's principle 'from each according to his capacity, to each according to his need' embodies a

preference for 'proportionate' justice over 'arithmetical' in relation to the distribution of wealth. In world politics certain basic rights and duties, such as the right of sovereign jurisdiction and the duty of non-intervention, generally held to apply equally to all states, exemplify 'arithmetical justice', while the doctrine that the use of force in war or reprisals should be in proportion to the injury suffered, may be taken illustrate 'proportionate justice'.

Another distinction, closely connected with the latter, is between 'commutative' or reciprocal justice, and 'distributive' justice or justice assessed in the light of the common good or common interest of society as a whole. 'Commutative justice lies in the recognition of rights and duties by a process of exchange or bargaining, whereby one individual or group recognises the rights of others in return for their recognition of its own. To the extent that the bargaining strength of the individuals or groups concerned is equal, this reciprocal process is likely to result in what we have called 'arithmetical justice' or the same rights. 'Distributive justice', by contrast, comes about not through a process of bargaining among individual members of the society in question, but by decision of the society as whole, in the light of consideration of its common good or common interest. It is clear that 'distributive justice' in this sense may often take the form of justice which is 'proportionate' rather than 'arithmetical', requiring, for example, that the rich pay higher taxes than the poor.

To the extent that world politics is principally a process of conflict and cooperation among states having only the most rudimentary sense of the interests of the world as a whole, it is the domain pre-eminently of ideas of 'commutative' justice rather than 'distributive'. The main stuff of contention about justice in international affairs is to be found in the attempt of sovereign states, through a process of claim and counter-claim, to iron out among themselves what rights and duties will be recognised and how they will be applied. But ideas of 'distributive' justice, I shall try to show, have also come to play a significant part in the discussion of justice in world politics, if not yet to be prime movers of events.

Finally, it is important to consider in what agents or actors in world politics moral rights or duties are taken to be vested. Here one may distinguish what may be called interstate or international justice, individual or human justice, and cosmopolitan or world justice.

By interstate or international justice I have in mind the moral rules held to confer rights and duties upon states and nations, e.g. the idea that all states, irrespective of their size or their racial composition or their ideological leaning, are equally entitled to the rights of sovereignty, or the idea that all nations are equally entitled to the right of self-determination. The rights of states and of nations may, of course, conflict with one another. The principle of national

self-determination has been invoked to destroy the sovereign integrity of states and even now threatens a great many of them; but to the extent that there is now a broad consensus that states should be nation-states and that the official doctrine of nearly all states is that they are nation states, there is a measure of harmony between the ideas of interstate justice and international justice.

By individual or human justice I mean the moral rules conferring rights and duties upon individual human beings. In the form of the doctrines of natural law and natural rights, ideas of human justice historically preceded the development of ideas of interstate or international justice and provided perhaps the principal intellectual foundation upon which these latter ideas at first rested. That is to say, states and nations were originally thought to have rights and duties because individual persons had rights and duties, the rulers of states being persons and nations being collections of persons. But the ideas of interstate and international justice by the eighteenth century reached a point of take-off, after which they became independent of the means by which they had become established as rights and duties were held to attach to the notional personality of a state which was other than its rulers and the collective personality of a nation which was other than, and on some views more than, the sum of its members.

In this system in which rights and duties applied directly to states and nations, the notion of human rights and duties has survived but it has gone underground. Far from providing the basis from which international justice or morality is derived it has become potentially subversive of international society itself, a position reflected in the classical doctrine of international law that states are the only subjects of international law and that individuals are merely the objects of understandings between states. The basic compact of coexistence between states, expressed in the exchange of recognition of sovereign jurisdictions, implies a conspiracy of silence entered into by governments about the rights and duties of their respective citizens. This conspiracy is mitigated by the practice of granting rights of asylum to foreign political refugees, by declaratory recognition of the moral rights of human beings in such documents as the Atlantic Charter, the U.N. Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and by practical cooperation between governments to take account of human rights in such fields as the treatment of prisoners of war and the promotion of economic and social welfare. But the idea of the duties of the individual human being raises, in international politics, the question of the duties he has that conflict with his duties to the state—the question that the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal raised in relation to German soldiers and political leaders, and which as Judge Telford Taylor has pointed out, they have raised also in relation to the American soldiers and leaders responsible for the prosecution of the Vietnam War.⁷ And the idea of the rights of the individual human being raises in international politics the question of the right and duty of persons and groups other than the state to

which he owes allegiance to come to his aid in the event that his rights are being disregarded—the right of the Western powers to protect the political rights of the citizens of eastern European countries, of Africans to protect the rights of black South Africans, of Australians or New Guineans to protect the rights of Indonesian citizens in West Irian. These are questions which, answered in a certain way, lead to disorder in international relations or even to the breakdown of international society itself.

In addition to ideas about interstate or international justice, and about human justice we need to recognise a third category of ideas which concern what may be called cosmopolitan or world justice. These are ideas which seek to spell out what is just or right or good for the world as a whole, for an imagined *civitas maxima* or cosmopolitan society to which all individuals belong and to which their interests should be subordinate. One thinks, for example, of Kenneth Boulding's attempt to spell out the idea of a world economic interest, of C. Wilfred Jenks' notion of an emergent common law of mankind that will replace law between states, and of much of the presently fashionable discussion of the global or cosmic problem of man and the environment.⁸ This notion of justice as the promotion of the world common good is different from that of the assertion of the rights and duties of individual human beings all over the globe for it posits the idea that these individuals form or should form a society or community whose common interests or common good must qualify or even determine what their individual rights and duties are, just as the rights and duties of individuals within the state have in the past been qualified or determined by notions such as the common good, the greatest happiness of the greatest number or the general will. It calls for distributive rather than purely commutative justice.

These notions of world or cosmopolitan justice are at present inchoate and of slight practical importance. The world society or community whose common good they purport to define does not exist except as an idea or myth which may one day attract enough followers to become of practical importance, but has not done so yet. Political mankind as such does not have the means of interest articulation and aggregation, of political recruitment and socialisation which, we are told, are the hallmarks of a political system. Insofar as the interests of mankind at large are articulated and aggregated, this is through the mechanisms of the society of sovereign states. For authoritative guidance as to what the interests of the world as a whole might be with regard, for example, to the distribution of economic resources, or the control and distribution of population, or the conservation of the environment, we can only look to the views of sovereign states and of the international organisations which they dominate. There is, indeed, no lack of self-appointed spokesmen of the common good of 'the spaceship earth' or 'this endangered planet', and indeed there are non-governmental international bodies with valid claims to express the ideas of transnational groups of various kinds. But the views which these private

individuals and bodies express are not the outcome of any political process of the assertion and reconciliation of interests; they provide indeed less in the way of an authoritative guide to the interests of the world as a whole than do the views of sovereign states, even unrepresentative or tyrannical ones, which are at least the authentic expression of the perceived interests of some part of the globe. But if it is chiefly through the views of states that we must seek to discover the world common good, this is bound to be a distorting lens; universal ideologies that are espoused by states are notoriously subservient to their special interests, and agreements reached among states notoriously the product of bargaining and compromise rather than of any consideration of the interest of the population of the countries they represent treated as a whole.

IV

How are order and justice in world politics related to one another? There are some who would say that there is little or nothing of either and therefore no basis for pursuing the question. But the two things whose relationship I wish to consider are quite concrete. On the one hand there are the institutions and mechanisms whereby international society does provide a framework of international order or minimum coexistence. On the other hand there are the ideas or beliefs about justice in world politics that I have outlined. To what extent does the framework of international order satisfy the various aspirations for justice that are prevalent in the world? And what would be the effects on international order of the attempt to realise their aspirations or to realise them more fully?

It is obvious that the existing framework of international order fails to satisfy some of the most deeply felt and powerfully supported of these aspirations for justice. It is true that justice in any of its forms is realisable only in a context of order, and that international society, by providing this context, may be regarded as paving the way for the equal enjoyment of rights of various kinds. It is true that international society as such, through such nearly universal organs as the United Nations and its Specialised Agencies is formally committed to much more than the preservation of minimum order or coexistence: it espouses ideas of interstate and international justice, and of individual or human justice, although perhaps not of world justice; and it facilitates intergovernmental cooperation in many fields to promote the realisation of these ideas.

But, to begin with, the framework of international order is quite inhospitable to projects for the realisation of cosmopolitan or world justice. If the idea of the world common good were to be taken seriously, it would lead to the consideration of such questions as how the immigration policies of states throughout the world should be shaped in the general interest, which countries or which areas of the world have the most need of capital and which the least, how trade and fiscal policies throughout the world should be regulated in accordance with a common

set of priorities, or what outcomes of a host of violent civil and international conflicts throughout the world best conformed to the general interests of mankind.

These are of course the very issues over which governments have control and do not seem likely to be willing to relinquish control in the absence of vast changes in human society. The position which governments occupy as custodians of the perceived interests of limited sections of mankind imposes familiar obstacles to their viewing themselves simply as so many agencies jointly responsible for the implementation of the world common good. It is sometimes said that the commitment of the donor countries through aid and trade policies to the objective of a minimum level of economic welfare throughout the world implies and presupposes acceptance of the idea of the interests of the community of mankind. Kenneth Boulding, for example, argues that since the transfer of resources from rich countries to poor is wholly one-sided or non-reciprocal it means that the rich see themselves as part of the same community with the poor. 'If A gives B something without expecting anything in return, the inference must be drawn that B is 'part' of A, or that A and B together are part of a larger system of interests and organisations.'⁹ It is not clear, however, that the idea of the community of mankind does actually underlie the enterprise of the transfer of resources to any important degree; or indeed that the transfer of resources yet has a secure and established position as part of the permanent business of international society, assailed as it is on the one side by the idea that the rich countries should reduce their involvement in the Third World to the minimum, and on the other side by the doctrine that aid is essentially a means of perpetuating domination and exploitation and hence prejudicial to the true interests of the Have Nots.

The framework of international order is inhospitable also to demands for human justice, which unlike projects for cosmopolitan or world justice represent a very powerful ingredient in world politics at the present time: in the form, for example, of the demands of poor countries for economic justice for their inhabitants or the demands of African states for racial justice in southern Africa. International society takes account of the notion of human rights and duties that may be asserted against the state to which particular human beings belong but it is inhibited from giving effect to them, except selectively and in a distorted way. If international society were really to treat human justice as primary and coexistence as secondary, if, as Professor Mazrui says the African and Asian states want, the UN Charter were to give pride of place to human rights rather than to the preservation of peace and security, then in a situation in which there is no agreement as to what human rights are or in what hierarchy of priorities they should be arranged, the result could only be to undermine international order and, incidentally, such prospects as there might be for justice as well. It is here that the society of states—including, I should say, despite what Professor

Mazrui says, African and Asian states—display their conviction that international order is prior to human justice. African and Asian states, like other states, are willing to subordinate order to human justice in particular cases closely affecting them, but they are no more willing than the Western states or the states of the Soviet bloc to allow the whole structure of international coexistence to be brought to the ground.

There is another obstacle to the realisation of human justice within the present framework of international order. When questions of human justice achieve a prominent place on the agenda of world political discussion, it is because it is the policy of particular states to raise them. The world heard about the war guilt of the Kaiser and later witnessed the trial and punishment of German and Japanese leaders and soldiers by international procedures for war crimes and crimes against the peace. It did not witness the trial and punishment of Allied leaders and soldiers who *prima facie* might have been as much or as little guilty of disregarding their human obligations as Göring, Yamamoto and the rest. This is not to say that the idea of the trial and punishment of war criminals by international procedure is unjust or unwise, only that it operates in a selective way. That these men and not others were brought to trial by the victors was an accident of power politics.

In the same way the world has heard of the human rights of non-European persons in southern Africa, and may even come to see redress of the wrongs they have suffered, because it is the policy of black African states to take up this issue, just as the world once heard of the rights of the Christian subjects of the Sultan of Turkey because it was the policy of Gladstonian England to uphold them. But the rights of Africans in black African states, or of intellectuals in the Soviet Union, or of Tibetans in China or Nagas in India or communists in Indonesia are less likely to be upheld by international action because it is not the policy of any prominent group of states that they should be. The international order does not provide any general protection of human rights, only a selective protection that is determined not by the merits of the case but by the vagaries of international politics.

There is a further obstacle. Even in cases where, as the consequence of these vagaries of international politics, international society permits action directed towards the realisation of human justice, the action taken does not directly impinge upon individual human beings but takes place through the mediation of sovereign states, who shape this action to their own purposes. Take the case of world economic justice, towards the realisation of which the transfer of resources from the rich countries to the poor is bent. The ultimate moral object of this process is to improve the material standard of life of individual human beings in poor Asian, African and Latin American countries. But the donor countries and international organisations concerned transfer resources not

directly to these individuals but to the governments of the countries of which they are citizens. As Julius Stone points out, it is left to these governments to determine the criteria according to which the resources will be distributed to individuals, or indeed to distribute them arbitrarily or not distribute them at all. As he says, the unspoken assumption of the business of transfer of resources is that the actual claimants and beneficiaries of what he calls the 'justice constituency' are not individual human beings but governments.¹⁰ The doubts which donor countries entertain about the way in which the governments of recipient countries distribute or fail to distribute the resources transferred to them of course constitute one of the principal disincentives to foreign aid. Yet one has also to agree with Stone's conclusion that although the transfer of resources, as it takes place at present, necessarily falls short of the realisation of what I have called human justice, it is not possible, given the present nature of international society, for it to take place in any other way: donor countries and organisations cannot determine in detail the way in which recipient governments distribute resources transferred to them so as to realise notions of cosmopolitan justice without violating the most fundamental norms of the compact of coexistence.

If international society is quite inhospitable to notions of cosmopolitan justice and able to give only a selective and ambiguous welcome to ideas of human justice, it is not basically unfriendly to notions of interstate or international justice. The structure of international coexistence, as I have argued, itself depends on norms or rules conferring rights and duties upon states—not necessarily moral rules, but procedural rules or rules of the game which in modern international society are stated in international law. These rights and duties which states have, moreover, they have to an equal degree, as Emer de Vattel pointed out in his celebrated argument that equality is a corollary of sovereignty: 'A dwarf is as much a man as a giant is, a small republic no less a sovereign state than the most powerful kingdom.' Whereas ideas of world justice may seem entirely at odds with the structure of international society and notions of human justice to entail a possible threat to its foundations, ideas of interstate and international justice may reinforce the compact of coexistence between states by adding a moral imperative to the imperatives of enlightened self-interest and of law by which it is defined.

Yet international order is preserved by means which systematically affront the most basic and widely agreed principles of international justice. I do not mean simply that at the present time there are states and nations which complain that they are denied their rights, and perhaps are denied their rights, as Laos and Cambodia are denied their rights of sovereignty or Kashmir or Quebec or Tibet is denied its right of self-determination. It is the normal condition of any society that some of its members should feel that their rights are infringed. What I have in mind is that the institutions and mechanisms that sustain international

order, even when they are working properly, indeed especially when they are working properly or fulfilling their functions, necessarily violate ordinary notions of justice.

Consider, for example, international law. It is not merely that international law sanctifies the status quo without providing for a legislative process whereby the law can be altered by consent and thus causes the pressures for change to consolidate behind demands that the law should be violated in the name of justice. It is also that when the law is violated, and a new situation is brought about by the triumph not necessarily of justice but of force, international law accepts this new situation as legitimate, and concurs in the means whereby it has been brought about. As Mazrui writes, international law condemns aggression, but once aggression has been successful it ceases to be condemned. The conflict between international law and notions of international justice is endemic because the situations from which the law takes its point of departure are a series of *faits accomplis* brought about by force and the threat of force, legitimised by the principle (distinguishing international law from municipal) that treaties concluded under duress are valid. *Ex factis jus oritur*.

Moreover, contrary to much superficial thinking on this subject, it is not as if this tendency of international law to accommodate itself to power politics were some unfortunate but remediable defect that is fit to be removed by the good work of some high-minded professor of international law or by some ingenious report of the International Law Commission. There is every reason to think that this feature of international law, which sets it at loggerheads with elementary notions of justice, is vital to its working; and that if international law ceased to have this feature, it could not play any role at all.

Or consider the role that is played in the maintenance of international order by the special position of the great powers. Great powers contribute to international order by maintaining local systems of hegemony within which order is imposed from above, and by collaborating to maintain the global balance of power and, from time to time, to impose their joint will on others. But the great powers, when they perform these services to international order, do so at the price of systematic injustice to the rights of smaller states and nations, the injustice which is felt by states which fall within the Soviet hegemony in eastern Europe or the American hegemony in the Caribbean, the injustice which is written into the terms of the UN Charter which prescribe a system of collective security that cannot be operated against great powers.

Consider again the role that is played in international order by the 'balance of terror' or relationship of mutual deterrence between the superpowers, or the wider historical role of the institution of the balance of power, of which the former is in some respects a variant. Here is an institution which offends against ordinary and widely agreed notions of international justice and also human

justice, in ways that need not be elaborated here, and yet whose role in the preservation of international order at the present time is a central one.

V

Given that the framework of international society fails to satisfy these various ideas of justice that have been considered, what would be the effects upon international order of attempts to realise them? Can justice in world politics, in its various senses, be achieved only by jeopardising international order? And if this is so, which should take priority?

It is possible to distinguish three ideal types of doctrines which embody answers to these questions. There is first the conservative or orthodox view that recognises an inherent conflict between the values of order and of justice in world politics, and treats the former as having priority over the latter—international society as a society in which ‘minimum order’ or coexistence is the most that can be expected, and in which demands for a just or ‘optimum order’ threaten to remove the small area of consensus upon which this coexistence is built.

There is secondly the view of the revolutionary which also is founded upon the idea of an inherent conflict between the present framework of international order and the achievement of justice, but treats the latter as the commanding value: let justice be done ‘though the earth perish’. The revolutionary, however, does not believe that the earth will perish, only that the damned will perish: the saved may look forward to the re-establishment of an order that will secure the just changes he wishes to bring about, after a period of temporary and perhaps geographically limited disorder. This has been the doctrine of some black Africans in relation to the African continent, or Arab nationalists in relation to the Arab lands, and of the early Bolsheviks and now of China in relation to the world as a whole.

Thirdly, there is the liberal or progressivist view that has always represented one important strand in thought about foreign policy in the West, that (perhaps without denying it altogether) is reluctant to accept that there is any necessary conflict between order and justice in world politics, and is constantly seeking after ways of reconciling the one with the other. It is inclined, for example, to see the righting of injustices as the true means to the strengthening of international order: the removal of *apartheid* or of ‘the last vestiges of colonialism’ as the way in which the black African states can best be integrated into the system of ‘peace and security’, the provision of economic justice for the poor peoples of the world as the means of avoiding an otherwise inevitable violent confrontation of Haves and Have Nots. It is inclined to shy away from the recognition that justice in some cases can be brought about only by violent change, to cling to the idea that just change may be brought about through

processes of consent or consensus, to argue that attempts to achieve justice by disrupting order are counter-productive, to cajole the advocates of 'order' and of 'justice' into remaining within the bounds of a single moral system that provides for both and permits an adjustment that can be mutually agreed.

It is clear that where the states concerned are willing to give their *consent* to a change brought about in the name of an agreed notion of justice (as when India demanded for herself and Britain conceded the right of national self-determination) this may take place without prejudice to the foundations of international order. It is clear also that even where there is not consent by all the parties affected, but there is overwhelming evidence of a *consensus* in international society as a whole in favour of a change held to be just (especially if the consensus embraces all the great powers) the change may take place without causing other than a local and temporary disorder, after which the international order as a whole may emerge unscathed or even appear in a stronger position than before. The action taken by Britain, on the authority of the Congress of Vienna, to suppress the slave trade, fell into this category.

The conflict between international order and demands for justice arises in those cases where there is no consensus, or no sufficiently overwhelming consensus, as to what justice involves, when to press the claims of justice is to reopen questions which the compact of coexistence requires to be treated as closed. If there were a consensus within the United Nations, including all the great powers, in favour of military intervention in Southern Africa to enforce national self-determination for black majority populations and to uphold black African political rights, it might be possible to regard such intervention as implying no threat to international order, or even as strengthening international order by confirming a new degree of moral solidarity in international society. In the absence of such a consensus, demands for external military intervention imply the subordination of order to considerations of international and human justice. The argument that has been advanced by black African states in the Security Council since 1963 to the effect that *apartheid* is not merely a violation of human rights but a threat to the peace, whatever merits it may or may not have as a construction of the law of the Charter or as a political tactic, obscures the position: it is the proponents of intervention who wish to threaten the peace, and they are moved by considerations not of peace but of justice.

The military action taken by India against Portugal in 1961 and by Indonesia in West Irian in 1962 also represented the breaking of the peace for the sake of change conceived to be just. It is interesting that in these cases, as in relation to proposed military intervention in southern Africa, the justifications provided related to order as well as to justice, Krishna Menon defending India's action in terms of the need to respond to Portugal's aggression of 1510 (since when there had been 'permanent aggression'), as well as in terms of India's right to conduct

a just war of national liberation. Thus the revolutionaries accommodate themselves to the prevailing modalities of the system.

When then, demands for justice are put forward in the absence of a consensus within international society as what justice involves, the prospect is opened up that the consensus that does exist about order or minimum coexistence will be undone. The question has then to be faced whether order or justice should have priority.

It would not make sense to argue that one or the other value should always have priority in any given case. In fact, ideas of both order and justice enter into the value systems, the justificatory or rhetorical stock-in-trade of all actors in world politics. The advocate of revolutionary justice looks forward to the time when a new order will consolidate the moral gains of the revolution. The proponent of order takes up his position partly because the existing order is, from his point of view, morally satisfactory, or not so unsatisfactory as to warrant its disturbance. The question of order vs. justice will always be considered by the parties concerned in relation to the merits of a particular case.

When the merits of any particular case are considered, moreover, the priority of order over justice cannot be asserted without some assessment of the question whether or not or to what extent injustice is embodied in the existing order. Why do we regard order as valuable? As Mazrui writes, 'the importance of peace is, in the ultimate analysis, *derivative*. Taken to its deepest human roots peace is important because "the dignity and worth of the human person" are important'.¹¹ Those who are unwilling to jeopardise international order for the sake of anti-colonial or racial or economic justice reach their conclusions because of the assessments they make about justice as well as order, whether the former are acknowledged or not.

When all these qualifications have been made, it may still be contended that international order is prior to justice—international, human or cosmopolitan—in the sense that it comprises the elementary or primary conditions of international coexistence, which have to be satisfied at least in some measure before justice in any of its senses can be realised. It cannot be concluded from this, however, that the preservation of international order should be preferred to the realisation of justice in any particular case; and to the extent that the framework of international order is a strong one, it is able to withstand the shock of violent assaults carried out in the name of justice. The nuclear peace, in particular, has made the world safe for just wars of national liberation, carried out at the sub-nuclear level, and the international or interstate peace has made the world safe for just internal or civil violence.

(2) Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations: The Second Martin Wight Memorial Lecture

There is no lecture which I could feel more honoured to have been asked to give than one which commemorates the name of Martin Wight. Just twenty years ago I made the same journey I have just made—from Oxford to the London School of Economics—to take up a position as assistant lecturer in the Department of International Relations. I had not done a course of any kind in International Relations, nor made any serious study of it, and as I arrived in Houghton Street I wondered how I was to go about teaching the subject and even whether it existed at all.

It was Professor Manning who urged me to attend the lectures on International Theory being given by Martin Wight, then reader in the Department. These lectures made a profound impression on me, as they did on all who heard them. Ever since that time I have felt in the shadow of Martin Wight's thought—humbled by it, a constant borrower from it, always hoping to transcend it but never able to escape from it. Until 1961, when he moved to the University of Sussex, I was his junior colleague. After that time I was able to keep in touch with his work through the meetings of the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics, for which many of his best papers were written and about which Sir Herbert Butterfield, who originally convened the Committee, spoke in his lecture inaugurating this series.¹² Since Martin Wight's death in 1972 I have become more intimately acquainted with his ideas than ever before, through being involved in the editing of his unpublished manuscripts.

Let me say a little about this. Wight was a perfectionist who published very little of his work. His writings on International Relations comprise one sixty-eight page pamphlet, published thirty years ago by Chatham House for one shilling and long out of print, and half a dozen chapters in books and articles, some of the latter placed in obscure journals as if in the hope that no one would notice them. He was one of those scholars—today, alas, so rare—who (to use a phrase of Albert Wohlstetter's) believe in a high ratio of thought to publication.

It has seemed to me a task of great importance to bring more of his work to the light of day. The task would be impossible but for the encouragement and constant help I have received from two people to whom I should like to pay tribute: Martin's wife Gabriele and his pupil and friend Harry Pitt of Worcester College, Oxford. That the work he left should be published at all was not self-evident. Some of the work is unfinished. Some may never have been intended for publication. If it was his judgement that the work did not meet the very high standards he set himself for publication, should his judgement not be respected? For myself, what has weighed most is not the desire to add lustre to Martin Wight's name, but my belief in the importance of the material itself and in the need to make it available to others, so that the lines of inquiry he opened up can

be taken further. Especially, perhaps, there is a need to make Martin Wight's ideas more widely available in their original form, rather than through the second hand accounts of others, such as myself, who have been influenced by him.

It is my hope that two and possibly three publications by Martin Wight will in due course appear. The first is a series of essays on different aspects of the modern states system and of other historical states systems, which he wrote in the last eight years of his life for meetings of the British Committee. The second is a revised and much expanded version of *Power Politics*, the Chatham House essay of 1946 to which I referred a moment ago, the completion of which—unhappily, he did not complete it—he saw as his principal scholarly task.¹³ In preparing this manuscript I have been fortunate in securing the cooperation, as co-editor, of Carsten Holbraad, who was Martin Wight's student both at the London School of Economics and at Sussex, and in recent years has been a colleague of mine in Canberra. Thirdly, I hope that it will be possible in some form to make available to others the lectures on International Theory which impressed me so deeply when I arrived at the London School of Economics and are at once the least published and the most profound of his contributions to International Relations. Fortunately the notes of these lectures—detailed and immaculate in his beautiful handwriting—have been preserved.

I propose to devote this lecture to a discussion of some of Martin Wight's own ideas. I shall not attempt to provide a survey of his life and thought as a whole. Such a survey—I have sought to provide the sketch of one in the introduction to one of the forthcoming volumes—would have to deal not only with his ideas about international Relations but also with his ideas about the philosophy of history, about education and about Christian theology. It would have to take account of his close association with Arnold Toynbee, with whom he worked at Chatham House both on *A Study of History* and on the *Survey of International Affairs*, and from whom he derived his commitment to universal history and his interest in the relationship between secular history and what he called sacred history or divine providence. Mention would have to be made of the influence upon him as a very young man of Dick Sheppard, the Vicar of St Martin's-in-the-Field and a founder of the Peace Pledge Union, and of his conversion in the late 1930s to Christian pacifism, a position to which he adhered steadfastly throughout that apparently most just of wars, Britain's struggle in the Second World War. One would have to consider the books he wrote, while a member of Margery Perham's team at Oxford during the war, on colonial constitutions and especially his pioneering work *The Development of the Legislative Council*, his only substantial contribution to technical or professional history.¹⁴ An assessment would have to be made of his impact as a teacher—as a young schoolmaster at Haileybury, as reader at the London School of Economics,

as Professor of History and Dean of European Studies in the early, heroic period of the University of Sussex.

I want instead to focus your attention on one part of Martin Wight's legacy, *viz.* his ideas on the Theory of International Relations. First, I propose briefly to state what some of these ideas were. Secondly, I shall consider some questions that have long puzzled students of his work about the interpretation and assessment of these ideas. And thirdly I shall ask what can be learnt from Martin Wight's example.

When in the 1950s Wight was developing his lecture course at the London School of Economics the scientific or behaviourist movement towards what was called 'A Theory of International Relations' was gathering strength in the United States. This movement had its roots in dissatisfaction with what was taken to be the crude and obsolete methodology of existing general works about International Relations, especially those of Realist writers such as E.H. Carr, George F. Kennan and Hans Morgenthau, which formed the staple academic diet of the time. The hope that inspired the behaviourists was that by developing a more refined and up-to-date methodology it would be possible to arrive at a rigorously scientific body of knowledge that would help explain the past, predict the future and provide a firm basis for political action.

Wight's interest in the Theory of International Relations may also have owed something to dissatisfaction with the writings of the Realists, with which his own essay on *Power Politics* had close affinities, although his was a dissatisfaction with their substance rather than with their methodology. But the kind of theory to which he was drawn was utterly different from that which was intended by the behaviourists. He saw the Theory of International Relations—or, as he called it, International Theory—as a study in political philosophy or political speculation pursued by way of an examination of the main traditions of thought about International Relations in the past. Whereas the behaviourist school sought a kind of theory that approximated to science, his was a kind that approximated to philosophy. Whereas they began by rejecting the literature of the past, even the immediate past—and it was the latter they had in mind when they spoke, rather absurdly, of 'the traditionalists'—he began with the resolve to rediscover, to assemble and to categorise all that had been said and thought on the subject throughout the ages. While the behaviourists sought to exclude moral questions as lying beyond the scope of scientific treatment, Wight placed these questions at the centre of his inquiry. Where they hoped to arrive at 'A Theory of International Relations' that would put an end to disagreement and uncertainty Wight saw as the outcome of his studies simply an account of the debate among contending theories and doctrines, of which no resolution could be expected.

Wight's attitude towards the behaviourists was the source of one of my own disagreements with him. I felt that they represented a significant challenge and

that it was important to understand them and engage in debate with them. The correct strategy, it appeared to me, was to sit at their feet, to study their position until one could state their own arguments better than they could and then—when they were least suspecting—to turn on them and slaughter them in an academic Massacre of Glencoe. Wight entertained none of these bloody thoughts. He made no serious effort to study the behaviourists and in effect ignored them. What this reflected, of course, was the much greater sense of confidence and security he had about his own position. The idea that an approach to Theory as unhistorical and unphilosophical as this might provide a serious basis for understanding world politics simply never entered his head.

At the heart of Martin Wight's Theory course was the debate between three groups of thinkers: the Machiavellians, the Grotians and the Kantians—or, as he sometimes called them (less happily, I think) the Realists, the Rationalists and the Revolutionists. The Machiavellians he thought of crudely as 'the blood and iron and immorality men', the Grotians as 'the law and order and keep your word men', and the Kantians as 'the subversion and liberation and missionary men'. Each pattern or tradition of thought embodied a description of the nature of international politics and also a set of prescriptions as to how men should conduct themselves in it.

For the Machiavellians—who included such figures as Hobbes, Hegel, Frederick the Great, Clémenceau, the twentieth century Realists such as Carr and Morgenthau—the true description of international politics was that it was international anarchy, a war of all against all or relationship of pure conflict among sovereign states. To the central question of the Theory of International Relations—'What is the nature of international society?'—the Machiavellians give the answer: there is no international society; what purports to be international society—the system of international law, the mechanism of diplomacy or today the United Nations—is fictitious. The prescriptions advanced by the Machiavellians were simply such as were advanced by Machiavelli in *The Prince*: it was for each state or ruler to pursue its own interest: the question of morality in international politics, at least in the sense of moral rules which restrained states in their relations with one another, did not arise.

For the Grotians—among whom Wight included the classical international lawyers, Locke, Burke, Castlereagh, Gladstone, Franklin Roosevelt, Churchill—international politics had to be described not as international anarchy but as international intercourse, a relationship chiefly among states to be sure, but one in which there was not only conflict but also cooperation. To the central question of Theory of International Relations the Grotians returned the answer that states, although not subject to a common superior, nevertheless formed a society—a society that was no fiction, and whose workings could be observed in institutions such as diplomacy, international law, the balance of power and

the concert of great powers. States in their dealings with one another were not free of moral and legal restraints: the prescription of the Grotians was that states were bound by the rules of this international society they composed and in whose continuance they had a stake.

The Kantians rejected both the Machiavellian view that international politics was about conflict among states, and the view of the Grotians that it was about a mixture of conflict and cooperation among states. For the Kantians it was only at a superficial and transient level that international politics was about relations among states at all; at a deeper level it was about relations among the human beings of which states were composed. The ultimate reality was the community of mankind, which existed potentially, even if it did not exist actually, and was destined to sweep the system of states into limbo. The Kantians, like the Grotians, appealed to international morality, but what they understood by this was not the rules that required states to behave as good members of the society of states, but the revolutionary imperatives that required all men to work for human brotherhood. In the Kantian doctrine the world was divided between the elect, who were faithful to this vision of the community of mankind or *civitas maxima*, and the damned, the heretics, who stood in its way.

This Kantian pattern of thought, according to Wight, was embodied in the three successive waves of Revolutionist ideology that had divided modern international society on horizontal rather than vertical lines: that of the Protestant Reformation, that of the French Revolution and that of the Communist Revolution of our own times. But it was also embodied, he thought, in the Counter-Revolutionist ideologies to which each of these affirmations of horizontal solidarity gave rise: that of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, that of International Legitimism and that of Dullesian Anti-Communism.

Having identified these three patterns of thought Wight went on to trace the distinctive doctrines that each of them put forward concerning war, diplomacy, power, national interest, the obligation of treaties, the obligation of an individual to bear arms, the conduct of foreign policy and the relations between civilised states and so-called barbarians. It is impossible to summarise what Martin Wight had to say about the three traditions without in some measure vulgarising it. The impact of his lectures was produced not only by the grandeur of the design but also by the detailed historical embroidery, worked out with great subtlety, humanity and wit and with staggering erudition. In the hands of a lesser scholar the threefold categorisation would have served to simplify and distort the complexity of international thought. But Wight himself was the first to warn against the danger of reifying the concepts he had suggested. He insisted that the Machiavellian, Grotian and Kantian traditions were merely paradigms, to which no actual thinker did more than approximate: not even Machiavelli, for example, was in the strict sense a Machiavellian. Wight recognised that the

exercise of classifying international theories requires that we have more pigeon-holes than three and so he suggested various ways in which each of the three traditions could be further subdivided: the Machiavellian tradition into its aggressive and its defensive form, the Grotian tradition into its realist and idealist form, the Kantian tradition into its evolutionary and its revolutionary forms, its imperialist and its cosmopolitanist forms, its historically backward-looking and its forward-looking or progressivist forms. He was always experimenting with new ways of formulating and describing the three traditions and in some versions of his lectures he suggested a fourth category of what he called Inverted Revolutionists, the pacifist stream of thought represented by the early Christians and by Tolstoy and Gandhi. He was aware that particular international thinkers in many cases straddle his categories: thus he explored, for example, the tension in Bismarck's thought between a Machiavellian perspective and a Grotian one, the tension in Woodrow Wilson between a Grotian perspective and a Kantian one, and the tension in Stalin between a Kantian perspective and a Machiavellian one. He saw the three traditions as forming a spectrum, within which at some points one pattern of thought merged with another, as infra-red becomes ultra-violet.

There are three questions about Wight's ideas on International Theory that I want to consider. First, as between the Machiavellian, the Grotian and the Kantian perspectives, where did Martin Wight himself stand? This was a question that earnest students would put to him plaintively at the end of a lecture. Wight used to delight in keeping students guessing on this issue and went out of his way to give them as little material as possible for speculating about it. In one of his lectures he quoted the following conversation of the earl of Shaftesbury: 'People differ in their discourse and profession about these matters, but men of sense are really but of one religion. ... "Pray, my lord, what religion is that which men of sense agree in?" "Madam," says the earl immediately, "men of sense never tell it."' ¹⁵

Of course, if we had to put Martin Wight into one or another of his own three pigeon-holes there is no doubt that we should have to consider him a Grotian. Indeed, in one of the early versions of his lecture course he did actually say that he regarded the Grotians or Rationalists as 'the great central stream of European thought', and that he would regard it as the ideal to be a Grotian, while partaking of the realism of the Machiavellians, without their cynicism, and of the idealism of the Kantians, without their fanaticism. He displayed his leaning toward the Grotians when, in one of the chapters he wrote in *Diplomatic Investigations*, he gave an account of the Grotian tradition under the heading 'Western Values in International Relations', claiming that this tradition was especially representative of the values of Western civilisation because of its explicit connection with the political philosophy of constitutional government, and also because of its quality

as a *via media* between extremes.¹⁶ He was attracted towards the Grotian pattern of thought, I think, because he saw it as more faithful than either of the others to the complexity of international politics. He saw the Grotian approach to international morality, for example, as founded upon the recognition that the moral problems of foreign policy are complex, as against the view of the Kantians that these problems are simple, and the view of the Machiavellians that they are non-existent. The Grotian tradition, he thought, was better able to accommodate complexity because it was itself a compromise that made concessions to both the Machiavellian and the Kantian points of view. The Grotian idea of the just war, for example, was a compromise between the Kantian idea of the holy war or crusade and the Machiavellian idea of war as the *ultima ratio regum*. The Grotian idea that power in international society should be balanced and contained was a compromise between the Kantian demand that it should be abolished and the view of the Machiavellians that it was the object of the struggle. The view of the Grotians that the relations of the advanced countries with so-called barbarians should be based on the principle of trusteeship was a compromise between the Kantian notion that they should be based on liberation and assimilation, and the Machiavellian contention that they should be based on exploitation.

Nevertheless, it would be wrong to force Martin Wight into the Grotian pigeon-hole. It is a truer view of him to regard him as standing outside the three traditions, feeling the attraction of each of them but unable to come to rest within any one of them, and embodying in his own life and thought the tension among them. I have mentioned that as a young man Wight took up the position of an Inverted Revolutionist or pacifist. *Power Politics*, which he published at the age of thirty-three, is generally thought to embody a Machiavellian or Realist point of view and can certainly be linked more readily to the Machiavellian tradition than to the Grotian. As he grew older, it appears to me, the Grotian elements in his thinking became stronger: they are much more prominent in his contributions to *Diplomatic Investigations*, published in 1967, than in his earlier writings and reach their highest point in the essays on states systems which he wrote in the last years of his life. As one of the factors causing him to move closer to the Grotian perspective after he came to the London School of Economics, I should not myself discount the influence upon him of Professor Manning, despite the great contrasts in their respective approaches to the subject. I should not myself dare to speculate as to whether or not Professor Manning would classify himself as a Grotian. But certainly in his thinking the idea of international society occupies a central place and it emerges, I think, from the volume of essays presented to Professor Manning, to which Martin Wight contributed along with others among Manning's former colleagues and students, that there are certain common elements in the outlook of all those who worked in the Department at that time, no less noticeable in Wight's contribution than in the others.¹⁷

But Wight was too well aware of the vulnerability of the Grotian position ever to commit himself to it fully. He understood that it is the perspective of the international establishment. The speeches of Gladstone in the last century and of Franklin Roosevelt in this century proclaimed that their respective countries should seek in their foreign policies to conform to the common moral standards and sense of common interest of international society as a whole and in so doing they provided us with some of the most memorable statements of the Grotian idea. But what Wight asks us to notice about these two statesmen is that each of them, at the time he spoke, was the leader of the most powerful country in the world. The comfortable Grotian phrases do not come so readily to the lips of the oppressed, the desperate or the dissatisfied. In his lectures, as in his contribution to *The World in March 1939*, Wight expounds with remarkable detachment the critique put forward of Anglo–French Grotian legalism by Hitler in *Mein Kampf*: that Britain and France, the sated imperial powers, were like successful burglars now trying to settle down as country gentlemen, making intermittent appearances on the magistrate’s bench.¹⁸ Wight asks us to reflect on the fundamental truth lying behind Hitler’s tedious phrases: that Britain and France had got where they were by struggle, that they could not contract out of the struggle at a moment that happened to suit them, still less could they justify themselves in attempting to contract out of it by appealing to moral principles which they had ignored when they were committed to the struggle.

If Wight could recognise the force of the Machiavellian critique of Grotian doctrines he is at first sight less capable of regarding sympathetically the Kantian critique of them. There was much about the Kantians—‘The Political Missionaries or Fanatics’, as he called them in early drafts of his lectures—that repelled him. He notes how the Kantians begin by repudiating all intellectual authorities, and any methodology save the principles of pure thought, but then become enslaved to sacred books; the Jacobins to Rousseau, the Communists to Marx. He saw it as the central paradox of the successive waves of revolutionist and counter-revolutionist doctrine that they aim at uniting and integrating the family of nations but in practice divide it more deeply than it was divided before. He held that these internal schisms of Western international society reflected the importation of attitudes which had previously prevailed in the external schism of Western international society and Islam. Just as in the Peloponnesian War the conflict between democratic and oligarchical factions imported into relations among Greeks the attitudes that previously had characterised the struggle between Hellenism and Medism, so in modern international history the various horizontal conflicts we have witnessed between the faithful and the heretical reproduce and reflect the earlier struggle between the Christian and the Infidel. The view that the Turk is Antichrist gives place to the view that the Pope—or some secular equivalent of him—is Antichrist; the epitaph of this historical connection between the internal and the external schisms of international society

being the strange doctrine of Luther that Antichrist is the Pope and the Turk combined: the Pope his spirit and soul and the Turk his flesh and body.

Wight's in some respects negative attitude towards the Kantian tradition reflected his religious views. He saw the revolutionist and counter-revolutionist doctrines of modern times as perversions of the New Testament, secularised debasements of the story of the Messiah—just as he saw Hitler's National Socialism as a perversion of the Old Testament, the self-appointment of a new Chosen People. Wight was also repelled by progressivist doctrines of International Relations, which are found principally, although not I think exclusively, within the Kantian tradition and above all in Kant himself. One of Wight's most persistent themes is that in international politics by contrast with domestic politics progress has not taken place in modern times; that international politics is incompatible with progressivist theory; that in progressivist theories the conviction precedes the evidence; that 'it is not a good argument for a theory of international politics that we shall be driven to despair if we do not accept it'.

Wight's rejection of the belief in progress reflects, once again, not only his study of the evidence but his religious views. For him secular pessimism was the counterpart of theological optimism. 'Hope', as he once wrote, 'is not a political virtue; it is a theological virtue'.¹⁹ Wight's lack of hope about the future of the secular world was, I think, so total, so crushing that only a deeply religious person could have sustained it. This lack of hope is most dramatically expressed in his invocation of de Maistre's 'occult and terrible law of the violent destruction of the human species'.²⁰ It is expressed also in his thesis that war is inevitable, even though particular wars are avoidable: a view he had the fortitude to contemplate because he was able to persuade himself that at the theological level this did not matter.²¹ "For what matters," he said in a broadcast in 1948, "is not whether there is going to be another war or not, but that it should be recognised, if it comes, as an act of God's *Justice*, and if it is averted, as an act of God's *Mercy*."²²

Yet there are moments when Wight seems as much drawn towards the Kantian tradition as towards the Machiavellian or the Grotian. He argues, in a long discussion of Kant's *Perpetual Peace*, that the progressivist argument from despair, while not intellectually speaking a 'good' argument, is nevertheless not a contemptible or dishonourable one: the optimism of a man who, like Kant, has looked into the abyss, but who says, 'No, looking down makes me giddy: I can only go on climbing if I look upward'—such an optimism grounded in utter despair merits respect. Wight also sees that the belief in progress is not the deepest element in the Kantian tradition. The deepest element—the element that must draw us to it—is the moral passion to abolish suffering and sin: the moral passion of Kant's hymn to duty, of Ivan Karamazov's cry that eternal harmony

is not worth the tears of one tortured child, of Lenin's burning faith that suffering is not an essential part of life. Wight traces with care the distinction between the evolutionary Kantians, who believe that suffering is the cause of sin, and that if suffering can be abolished, sin can be abolished—and the revolutionary Kantians, such as Marx and Lenin, who believe that sin is the cause of suffering, and that suffering can be eradicated only if sin is first eradicated.

While Wight in his maturity was personally more drawn to the Grotian tradition than to either the Machiavellian or the Kantian, the essence of his teaching was that the truth about international politics had to be sought not in any one of these patterns of thought but in the debate among them. The three elements in international politics which they emphasised—the element of international anarchy stressed by the Machiavellians, the element of international intercourse, stressed by the Grotians and the element of the community of mankind, stressed by the Kantians—are all present. Wight's argument was that any attempt to describe the subject in terms of one of the cardinal elements to the exclusion of the others, was bound to break down.

There is a second question about what Martin Wight had to say that I wish to consider. Is it true? Can one really categorise the history of thought about international politics in this way? And if one can, does an account of the debate among the three traditions really advance our understanding of international politics in the twentieth century?

I believe myself that Wight tried to make too much of the debate among the three traditions. Much that has been said about International Relations in the past cannot be related significantly to these traditions at all. Wight was, I believe, too ambitious in attributing to the Machiavellians, the Grotians and the Kantians distinctive views not only about war, peace, diplomacy, intervention and other matters of International Relations but about human psychology, about irony and tragedy, about methodology and epistemology. There is a point at which the debate Wight is describing ceases to be one that has actually taken place, and becomes one that he has invented; at this point his work is not an exercise in the history of ideas, so much as the exposition of an imaginary philosophical conversation, in the manner of Plato's dialogues.

I have already mentioned that Wight insisted that the three traditions were only to be taken as paradigms and that he was always urging us not to take what he said about them too seriously. But one has to take it seriously, or not at all. In all of Wight's work there is an instinct for the dramatic, a searching after superlatives—the *classic* expression of a point of view, the *earliest* statement of it, its *noblest* epitaph—that is the source of tantalising hypotheses and is what made his teaching so exciting. But one has to keep reminding oneself that the truth might be less dramatic, the superlatives not applicable, the hypotheses not fully tested. Again, in all his work there is an instinctive assumption—the

legacy of Toynbee's impact upon him as a young man—that there is some rhythm or pattern in the history of ideas which is there, waiting to be uncovered. But we have to recognise the possibility that in some cases the rhythm or pattern may not be there at all. The defence he was inclined to put up—that he is merely putting forward suggestive paradigms or ideal types—will not do. It makes his position impregnable, but only at the price of making it equivocal.

But if the account of the three traditions will not bear all the weight that Martin Wight sought to place upon it, there is no doubt that it has a firm basis in reality. Anyone who seeks to write the history of thought about International Relations that Martin Wight himself was so superbly equipped to undertake will find it essential to build on the foundations which he laid. His analysis of the three traditions, moreover, was profoundly original. There is one passage in Gierke's account of the natural law tradition in which the germ of the idea is stated, but I have seen no evidence that Wight was aware of this passage and in any case it does not entail the great structure of ideas which, when fully grown in his mind, it became.²³

That his account of these past traditions of thought contributes directly to our understanding of contemporary international politics there can be no doubt. In form his course was an exercise in the history of ideas, but in substance it was a statement about the world, including the world today. It presented the issues of contemporary international politics in historical and philosophical depth—requiring us, when confronted with some description of present events or some attitude taken up towards them, to view it as part of a series of recurrent descriptions or attitudes of the same kind, to identify the premises that lay behind it and to seek out the best of the arguments that had been presented, down the ages, for it and against it.

Wight's approach, it appears to me, provides an antidote to the narrow and introverted character of the professional academic debate about International Relations, the in-breeding and self-absorption of the journals and the textbooks, opening it out to wider intellectual horizons. It is striking that several of the current fashions within that professional debate have as their point of departure the discovery of some aspect of the subject which his own exposition of it has always embraced. The idea, for example, that international politics is not just a matter of relations between states, but also a matter of so-called 'transnational' relations among the individuals and groups that states compose, is one to which Martin Wight's exposition affords a central place; it is the core of the Kantian tradition. The notion which is central to the studies of models of future world order, now rising to a flood in Princeton and elsewhere, that it is necessary to look beyond the framework of the system of sovereign states and to contemplate alternative forms of universal political organisation—is one with which Wight was always concerned; one has only to think of his protest against 'the intellectual

prejudice imposed by the sovereign state', his doctrine (derived from Toynbee) that the idea of the normalcy of the system of states is an optical illusion, and his attempt—in the essays on states systems—to explore the geographical and chronological boundaries of the modern states system, and to suggest some of the issues with which a general historical account of the main forms of universal political organisation—today, virtually uncharted territory—would have to be concerned. The recent revival of interest, in the Western world, in Marxist or Marxist–Leninist accounts of world politics, and the important neo-Marxist analyses of imperialism and neo-colonialism, fall into place quite naturally in Wight's presentation of the subject—even though it is true that he was not much interested in the economic dimension of the subject, and that his failure to deal with the history of thought about economic aspects of International Relations is one of the points at which he is vulnerable to criticism. Above all, perhaps, the rediscovery of moral questions by the political science profession, the realisation that International Relations is about ends as well as means—which is the only meaning we can give to what is now so portentously called 'the post-behavioural revolution'—merely takes us back to the point at which Wight began his inquiry.

Wight's approach also provided an antidote to the self-importance and self-pity that underlie the belief of each generation that its own problems are unique. 'One of the main purposes of university education', he wrote in his lecture notes, 'is to escape from the *Zeitgeist*, from the mean, narrow, provincial spirit which is constantly assuring us that we are the summit of human achievement, that we stand on the edge of unprecedented prosperity or unparalleled catastrophe, that the next summit conference is going to be the most fateful in history. ... It is a liberation of the spirit to acquire perspective, to recognise that every generation is confronted by problems of the utmost subjective urgency, but that an objective grading is probably impossible; to learn that the same moral predicaments and the same ideas have been explored before'.

Is there not a danger in following these injunctions that when confronted by some genuinely unprecedented situation we may fail to recognise it? Does not world politics in the twentieth century reflect developments—too obvious to enumerate—which it is correct to regard as without precedent, and is it not a delusion to imagine that these developments can be understood by the seeking out of historical parallels rather than by immersing ourselves in the study of what is recent and new, in all its individuality?

There is such a danger as this but it is not inherent in Wight's position. He did not maintain that every international political situation has an exact historical precedent or that fundamental change does not occur. Indeed, the conception of history as a storehouse of precedents that can be discovered and then applied

as practical maxims of statecraft to contemporary political issues is one which he strongly attacked. He regarded this approach to history as the methodological gimmick of the Machiavellians—prominent in the writings of Carr and Morgenthau, as it had been earlier in those of the Social Darwinists, traceable back to the view of Bolingbroke that ‘history is philosophy teaching by examples’, and resting ultimately on Machiavelli’s own assumption that laws of politics could be derived from history because history took the form of mechanically recurring cycles.

There is a third question I want to consider. In what sense did Martin Wight think that theoretical inquiry in International Relations is possible? Wight’s most famous article on International Theory bears the title ‘Why Is There No International Theory?’²⁴ This leads students to ask: does he believe in International Theory or does he not? How can he deny the existence of the enterprise he is engaged in? Brian Porter has recently suggested that there is no great puzzle about this: what Wight meant was that the student will not find the history of thought about International Relations in ready-made and accessible form: the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle have to be disinterred and put together.²⁵ This is the correct explanation of the title, and it is confirmed by the fact that in an early draft Wight used as his heading ‘Why Is There no *Body* of International Theory?’

But there is a deeper problem in this article than the one posed by its title. Wight argues that it is no accident that International Relations has never been the subject of any great theoretical work, that there is ‘a kind of disharmony between international theory and diplomatic practice, a kind of recalcitrance of international politics to being theorised about’.²⁶ He notes that the only acknowledged classic of International Relations—Thucydides on the *Peloponnesian War*—is a work not of theory but of history. And he goes on to say that ‘the quality of international politics, the preoccupations of diplomacy, are embodied and communicated less in works of political and international theory than in historical writings’.²⁷

Is Wight here proclaiming the ultimate heresy that after all, theoretical understanding of international politics is not possible, only historical understanding? Is he, so to speak, throwing in the sponge? No, he is not; this is not what he says and all of his work in this field is a denial of it—for while that work is steeped in history it is not itself history. Wight gives us the clue a little further on when he writes that the only kind of theoretical inquiry that is possible is ‘the kind of rumination about human destiny to which we give the unsatisfactory name philosophy of history’.²⁸

Theoretical inquiry into International Relations is therefore philosophical in character. It does not lead to cumulative knowledge after the manner of natural science. Confronted by a controversy, like the great debate which Wight explores

among the three traditions, we may identify the assumptions that are made in each camp, probe them, juxtapose them, relate them to circumstances, but we cannot expect to settle the controversy except provisionally, on the basis of assumptions of our own that are themselves open to debate. All of this must follow once we grant Wight's initial assumption that theoretical inquiry into International Relations is necessarily about moral or prescriptive questions.

I believe myself, however, that an inquiry that is philosophical can be more public, more rational, more disciplined than Wight was willing to allow. In his work we may note a preference for vagueness over precision, for poetic imagery over prosaic statement, for subjective judgement over explicit formulation of a line of argument. I do not think, for example, that 'rumination' is an adequate word to describe the activity of theoretical analysis. Wight speaks of the 'fruitful imprecision' of Grotius's language, but it appears to me that this imprecision is in no way fruitful.²⁹ It is true, as Wight says, that the stuff of international theory is constantly bursting the bounds of the language in which we try to handle it, but this appears to me a reason for trying to find a language that is appropriate. There is a tendency to believe that those who are profound, as Martin Wight undoubtedly was, are thereby licensed to be obscure. This is the point at which I begin to part company with Martin Wight and to wonder whether there was not, after all, some value in the demand of the behaviourists that International Theory be put on a proper methodological footing.

I have tried in this lecture not to lose sight of those aspects of Wight's work with which it is possible to quarrel. Let me mention some more of them. The term Wight used to describe the enterprise he was engaged in—International Theory—is not a good one; as Professor Manning pointed out long ago it is the Relations that are International not the Theory; the enterprise is better described as Theory of International Relations.

Wight's contribution is vulnerable to the charge of being unduly Eurocentric. It is the glory of his work that it sprang from a mastery of Western culture, ancient and medieval no less than modern. But although he took some account of Islam and of Gandhi and played with the idea that there was a Chinese equivalent of the debate among the three traditions—in the conflict of Confucianism, Taoism and the School of Law—he had no deep understanding of non-Western civilisations. He saw modern international society as the product of Western culture and felt, I think, a basic doubt as to how far the non-Western majority of states today have really been incorporated within it. I should not myself leap to the conclusion that in this he was wrong, but he does sometimes display insensitivity about non-Western peoples and their aspirations today, as in his contemptuous dismissal of Kautilya or his comparison between the Afro-Asian powers and the revisionist powers of the 1930s.

Wright's immense learning sometimes does more to encumber than to enrich his arguments: his intellectual architecture is not so much classical as baroque. His learning is entirely authentic: Wight was not a cultural showman or pedant, and had a great gift of apt quotation. But in some of his writings the branches of the tree are so weighed down with historical foliage that it is difficult to find the trunk.

I have often felt uneasy about the extent to which Wight's view of International Relations derives from his religious beliefs. These beliefs are not obtrusive in his writings about secular matters, which apparently employ only the ordinary canons of empirical knowledge of the world. And yet one is conscious of the extent to which his view of the subject is affected by beliefs not derived in this way.

What can one learn from Martin Wight's example? He was a person of unique gifts and no one else is likely to contribute to the subject in quite the way that he did. But three aspects of his work in this field are worthy of note by others.

The first is his view that theoretical inquiry into International Relations should be focused upon the moral and normative presuppositions that underlie it. In the 1950s and 1960s there was a tendency in the Western world to leave these presuppositions out of account: to inquire into the international system without inquiring into its moral and cultural basis, to discuss policy choices—as in strategic studies or development economics—in terms of means or techniques rather than in terms of ends. More recently, values or ends have made a comeback, but chiefly in the form of the shouting of slogans, the fashion of so-called political commitment, which means that values are asserted and at the same time held to be beyond examination. Wight stood, it appears to me, not simply for having value premises but for inquiring into them.

The second is his attempt to associate theoretical inquiry with historical inquiry. The professional diplomatic historians, on the whole, have not been interested in large questions of theory. The theorists of International Relations have lacked the capacity or the inclination to do the historical work. Or they have approached it in the belief that it consists of "data", to be fed into the computer, and without any real grasp of historical inquiry itself. Wight is one of the few to have bridged this gap with distinction.

The third and the most important is Wight's very deep commitment to intellectual values and to the highest academic standards. Especially, perhaps, in a field such as International Relations there is a temptation to study what is ephemeral rather than of enduring importance, to be knowing rather than to say only what one truly knows, to claim results prematurely rather than to persist in the long haul. The most impressive thing about Martin Wight was his intellectual and moral integrity and *gravitas*. His writings are marked by paucity, but at least we cannot say of them, as he said of theoretical writings about

International Relations before him, that they are marked also by intellectual and moral poverty.

(3) The Revolt against the West

By the time of the First World War, there existed not only a worldwide international system but also an international society that was universal in the sense that it covered all the world and included states from Asia, Africa, and the Americas as well as Europe. In this universal international society, however, a position of dominance was still occupied by the European powers, or more broadly (since Europe's offshoots in north and south America, southern Africa, and Australasia partook of this dominance) by the Western powers, which continued to occupy this position until the Second World War. After the Second World War a revolt against Western dominance—a revolt which had been growing in strength earlier in the century, and whose roots lay late in the last century—became powerful enough to shake the system.

The dominance of the European or Western powers at the turn of the century was expressed not only in their superior economic and military power and in their commanding intellectual and cultural authority but also in the rules and institutions of international society. This society was still seen as an association of mainly European and Christian states, to which outside political communities could be admitted only if and when they met the criteria for membership laid down by the founding members—as Japan by 1900 was widely deemed to have done and China not yet to have done. The rules of international law which then prevailed had been made, for the most part, by these European or Western states, which had consented to them through custom or treaties concluded among themselves; the governments and peoples of Asia, Africa, and Oceania, who were subject to these rules, had not given their consent to them. The international legal rules, moreover, were not only made by the European or Western powers, they were also in substantial measure made *for* them: part, at least, of the content of the then existing international law (e.g. treaty law, which upheld the validity of treaties concluded under duress; the law of state sovereignty, which took no account of the self-determination of peoples; the law governing the use of force, which made resort to force a prerogative right of states) served to facilitate the maintenance of European or Western ascendancy.

At the turn of the century the chief pillars of this system of dominance were the European colonial powers, especially Britain and France, and to a lesser extent the latecomers, Germany and Italy; and even as late as the early years of the Second World War, this still appeared to be the case. But the United States, the white dominions of the British Empire, the Latin American republics, and indeed the Russian Empire were also supporters and beneficiaries of Western dominance, even if in some cases ambiguously; and as the revolt unfolded against it, later in the century, they too became its targets.

The United States, it is true, saw itself as an anti-colonial power, sympathised with anti-colonial rhetoric, which was the rhetoric of its own war of independence, and resented the exclusiveness of European imperial structures, in which its trade was sometimes put at a disadvantage. But the American colonies which gained their independence from Britain were themselves a product of the process of European expansion; the United States carried this process further by extending its dominion across the north American continent to consolidate its territory, subjugating aboriginal peoples as it did so; it expanded in the Caribbean and the Pacific to become a colonial power in its own right; its denial of equal rights to black Americans aligned it with European policies of racial exclusiveness; and the economic position it acquired for itself in Asia and Africa was such that, when European colonial rule eventually disappeared and neo-colonialism became the principal target of Third World protest, the United States came to be viewed as the main antagonist.

Russia, it is true, has always been perceived in Europe as semi-Asiatic in character, a perception confirmed by the ambivalence in Russia's own mind as to whether it belongs to the West or not; it was, until recently, a relatively backward and under-developed country, vulnerable to the Western great powers as Asian countries have been; the efforts of Russian reformers, from Peter the Great onwards, to learn from the West so as to be able to compete with it provide a model which Asians and Africans have followed; and since 1917 the Soviet state has rendered powerful assistance to the forces struggling against Western dominance as their ally and champion. But like the United States, the imperial Russia of the turn of the century was the product of European expansion; like the maritime expansion of the Western European states, the expansion of Russia by land proceeded by the subjugation of indigenous communities and immigration and settlement by metropolitan peoples. Its frontiers, determined in places by 'unequal treaties', and its non-European peoples, originally subject to Russian dominance, still partly define the character of the Soviet Union today, rendering it also a potential target of Third World hostility.

The Latin American republics, like the United States, have an anti-colonial and national liberationist tradition. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, moreover, at a time when the United States saw itself as a newly arrived great power, the Latin American states saw themselves as victims of great power dominance and intervention; their attempts to impose legal limitations on the use of force in international relations and to strengthen the principle of non-intervention were an anticipation of the later policies of the Third World. In the post-colonial world their posture in world affairs has been that of poor, under-developed states, allied with Asians and Africans in the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement. But they, too, are the products of the process of European expansion; they are founded upon the subjugation of aboriginal peoples, whom some of them continue to oppress; they are chiefly

Western in language, religion, and other aspects of culture, and if anything distinguishes their position from that of the United States in the context of the revolt against Western dominance, it is only their conspicuous failure to match it in economic or political development.

European or Western dominance of the universal international society may be said to have reached its apogee about the year 1900. It is true that at that time the Western impact on the world was in many respects less far-reaching than it has since become. European colonial expansion did not reach to its fullest extent until the period between the two world wars. African and Asian societies, even under colonial rule, were not then as entangled in the world economy as they were to become in the post-colonial period. The technological distances between the most advanced Western societies and most Asian and African societies, although this is difficult to measure, may be judged to be in some respects greater now than it was then. The intellectual and cultural penetration of Asian and African societies by the West was less profound then than it was to become later.

But at the turn of the century the dominance of the European or Western powers expressed a sense of self-assurance, both about the durability of their position in international society and about its moral purpose, that did not survive the First World War. In non-Western societies also the ascendancy of the West was still widely regarded as a fact of nature rather than as something which could or should be changed. The spiritual or psychological supremacy of the West was at its highest point, even if its material or technological supremacy was not. In their attitudes to other peoples, moreover, the Western powers displayed a measure of unity, of which a striking expression in 1900 was their intervention in China to suppress the Boxer Rising. The leading states of the old, European-dominated international order sank their differences and sent an international army that inflicted humiliation upon the greatest of non-Western societies. The presence in this international army of a Japanese contingent, however, showed that the system was already changing. The Japanese did not respond to the Dowager Empress's request to the Mikado for Asian unity against the West, but joined in the defence of the international society of states, to membership of which they had graduated.

The revolt against Western dominance, which had already begun at this time, comprised five phases or themes. First, there was what we may call the struggle for equal sovereignty. This was the struggle of those states which retained their formal independence, but enjoyed only a subordinate or inferior status, to achieve equal rights as sovereign states. The marks of their inferiority included so-called 'unequal treaties'—treaties concluded under duress, conferring conspicuously unequal benefits on the parties to them, and impairing the sovereignty of the non-Western states concerned—and especially those conferring rights of extraterritorial jurisdiction on the citizens of Western states within the territories

of non-Western states. The lead in this struggle was taken by Japan, which freed itself of extraterritorial jurisdiction in the course of the 1890s, and went on to achieve the status not merely of a sovereign state equal in rights to the Western powers, but of a great power able to impose 'unequal treaties' of its own on Korea and China. Turkey achieved the elimination of extraterritorial jurisdiction through the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 (the system had been unilaterally repudiated by the Ottoman Empire on entering the war in 1914, but re-imposed by the victorious Allies through the Treaty of Sèvres in 1920); Egypt through the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936; China through agreement with the United States and Britain in 1943. In the Persian Gulf, where the old international order survived for a period after it had disappeared elsewhere, as the Empire of Trebizond survived the fall of Byzantium, extraterritorial jurisdiction continued until the British withdrawal in 1971.

Secondly, there was the anti-colonial revolution, by which we normally mean the struggle of Asian, African, Caribbean, and Pacific peoples for formal political independence of European and American colonial rule, although it is worth noting that Korea between 1912 and 1945 was a colony not of any European power but of Japan, that the Sudan between 1899 and 1956 was a quasi-colony of Egypt in conjunction with Britain, and that the European peoples of Cyprus and Malta still had the status of colonial dependencies after the Second World War. Although the colonial system was disturbed by the prominence given to the principle of national self-determination in the Bolshevik Revolution, the 1919 Peace Settlement, and the evolution of the British Commonwealth in the interwar period, the revolution that overthrew it in the non-Western world belongs chiefly to the post-1945 era: the Asian colonial dependencies became independent for the most part in the late 1940s and 1950s, the African territories in the 1960s and 1970s. With the collapse of the Portuguese empire in 1974–75 the era of classic, European colonialism came to an end, even though the anti-colonial movement had further targets in white minority rule in southern Africa and Jewish rule in Palestine.

Thirdly, there has been the struggle for racial equality, or more accurately the struggle of non-white states and peoples against white supremacism. The old Western-dominated international order was associated with the privileged position of the white race: the international society of states was at first exclusively, and even in its last days principally, one of white states; non-white peoples everywhere, whether as minority communities within these white states, as majority communities ruled by minorities of whites, or as independent peoples dominated by white powers, suffered the stigma of inferior status. The struggle to change this state of affairs spans many centuries and touches the internal history of states as well as their relations with one another. It encompasses the eighteenth-century doctrine of the rights of man, at first applied effectively only to persons of European race, the movements for abolition of slavery and the

slave trade in Europe and America, the emergence of Haiti as a black state, the Japanese victories over Russia in 1904–1905 and the Western powers in 1941–42, the pan-African movement in the first half of the century. But it has been in the post-1945 period that the decisive changes have come: the Afro-Asian movement launched at Bandung in 1955; the achievement of independence by so many non-white states that the whites have become a minority; the victories of the civil rights movement in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, profound in its repercussions on other Western countries; the virtual expulsion of South Africa from the Commonwealth, and its reduction to the status of a pariah in the United Nations; the development of human rights instrumentalities under the aegis of the United Nations, and especially the Convention on Elimination of Racial Discrimination of 1966. The solidarity of non-whites against whites has been one of the principal elements making for the cohesion of the loose coalition of states and movements to which we refer as the Third World.

Fourthly, there has been the struggle for economic justice. Although anti-colonial movements from the beginning maintained that imperialism was bound up with economic exploitation, and included goals of economic development or betterment in their programs, and although the assertion by Third World states of sovereignty over their natural resources may be traced back through the nationalisation of the Anglo-Iranian oil company in 1951, the Mexican expropriations of foreign oil in companies of the 1930s, the experience of the Bolshevik Revolution, and in the Calvo and Drago doctrines asserted by Latin American states late in the last century against foreign intervention in their economic affairs, it was not until the 1960s that economic objectives attained pride of place in the agenda of the coalition of Asian, African, and Latin American states, which by then had become known as the Third World. By the time of the formation of the Group of 77 at the first meeting in 1964 of the UN Conference on Trade, Aid, and Development, concern about colonialism was giving place to concern about economic domination by the Western powers of the post-colonial world; the gap between the living standards of most Western and most Third World states was growing as a consequence not only of the economic boom in Western countries but also of their new policies of state promotion of minimum standards of welfare; and consciousness of the gap was growing as a result of the revolution in communications. In the 1960s the debate between Western and Third World countries over what was called international development assistance took the form of a discussion of the terms of a partnership between rich and poor countries that had common interests in development—the rich having a stake in the development of the poor, and the poor in the further development of the rich. In the 1970s by contrast, under the impact of the 1973–74 oil crisis, the world recession, the radicalisation of Third World opinion and the reaction against this in the West, the terms of the debate changed: the idea of a partnership between rich and poor gave place to that of a struggle for

the world product, non-zero sum conceptions of the relationship to zero-sum, development assistance to redistribution of wealth—a change reflected in 1974 in the Declaration of a New International Economic Order and the Charter of the Economic Rights and Duties of States endorsed by Third World majorities in the United Nations.

Fifthly, there has been the struggle for what is called cultural liberation: the struggle of non-Western peoples to throw off the intellectual or cultural ascendancy of the Western world so as to assert their own identity and autonomy in matters of the spirit. The revolt against Western dominance in relation to the four earlier themes that have been mentioned has been conducted, at least ostensibly, in the name of ideas or values that are themselves Western, even if it is not clear in all cases that these ideas are exclusively or uniquely Western: the rights of states to sovereign equality, the rights of nations to self-determination, the rights of human beings to equal treatment irrespective of race, their rights to minimum standards of economic and social welfare. Perhaps the right to cultural autonomy may also be regarded as a Western value, or at all events as a value which Western countries (for example, as signatories of the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966) now support. But the re-assertion by Asian, African, and other non-Western peoples of their traditional and indigenous cultures, as exemplified in Islamic fundamentalism, Hindu and Sikh traditionalism in India, manifestations of ethnic consciousness in Africa, has raised the question whether what has been widely interpreted as a revolt against Western dominance carried out in the name of Western values, is not a revolt against Western values as such.

We need to bear in mind, in speaking of the repudiation of 'Western values' in Third World countries, that the former are neither monolithic nor unchanging. Different Western countries, and different regimes within those countries, stand and have stood for values of very different kinds: in the post-1945 period the West for some Third World peoples has been represented by the resurgent imperialism of the French Fourth Republic and the post-war Netherlands, by the Spanish and Portuguese dictatorships, and by a South African government committed to strengthening rather than removing barriers between races. In the period during which the revolt against Western dominance has been unfolding, there have been vast changes in the values prevailing in all Western societies; public attitudes towards the equal rights of non-Western states, national liberation from colonial rule, equal rights of non-white races, the rights of poor peoples to economic justice and cultural autonomy have been transformed in recent decades. Moreover, in noting the gap between Third World behaviour and what Western persons like to think of as 'Western values', we should not fall into the error of assuming that Western peoples are themselves always faithful to them; they are at most a statement of Western ideals, not a description of Western practices.

Yet as Asian, African, and other non-Western peoples have assumed a more prominent place in international society it has become clear that in matters of values the distance between them and Western societies is greater than, in the early years of national liberation or decolonisation, it was assumed to be. In making their demands for equal rights on behalf of oppressed states, nations, races, or cultures, the leaders of the Third World spoke as suppliants, in a world in which the Western powers were still in a dominant position. The demands that they made had necessarily to be put forward in terms of charters of rights (the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, the American Declaration of Independence, the League Covenant, the Atlantic Charter, the UN Charter) of which Western powers were the principal authors. The moral appeal had to be cast in the terms that would have most resonance within Western societies. But as Asian, African, and other non-Western peoples have become stronger relative to the Western powers, they have become freer to adopt a different rhetoric that sets Western values aside, or at all events places different interpretations upon them.

The collapse of the old, Western-dominated international order has been brought about by perhaps five factors on which we may briefly touch. First, there has been the psychological or spiritual awakening of Asian and African, Caribbean and Pacific peoples, beginning among small groups of the Western-educated, later affecting masses of people, that led them to perceive the old order no longer as a fact of nature, but as something that could be changed, to recognise that by mobilising themselves to this end they could indeed change it, to abandon a passive for a politically active role in world affairs. The great instrument these peoples have used to advance their purposes has been the state: they began by capturing control of states and then used them—domestically to build nationhood, to establish control of their economies, to combat local vestiges of external dominance; internationally to establish relations with outside states, to combine with their friends, drive wedges among their enemies, and expound their views in the councils of the world.

A second factor has been a weakening of the will on the part of the Western powers to maintain their position of dominance; or at least to accept the costs necessary to do so. The First World War destroyed the self-assurance of the European powers which had been so cardinal a feature of the old order, while also leading them to embrace a principle of national self-determination contradictory of the legitimacy of colonial rule. The Second World War left the European imperial powers too weak to maintain old kinds of dominance, even though it left the United States with a commanding position in world affairs. As Third World peoples mobilised themselves politically in defence of their interests, the use of force to maintain Western positions of dominance became more costly. At the same time it came to be questioned whether colonial dependencies were a source of material gain: the old liberal thesis, that the true interests of the

metropolitan peoples lay in non-interventionism and avoidance of empire, was revived, and appeared to be confirmed by the economic triumphs of Germany and Japan, achieved without military pre-eminence or colonies. Nor were the peoples of the metropolitan countries always insensitive to the aspirations of non-Western peoples: both in Europe and in America there were many for whom the emancipation of the former dependencies represented the fulfilment of their own ideals.

It would be wrong, however, to countenance the idea that the Western powers offered little or no resistance to the dismantling of the old order, or that this dismantling came about essentially in response to their own policies. That the process of de-colonisation was an act of policy of the colonial powers themselves is the thesis both of apologists for the policies of the colonial powers (as in the argument of writers about the British Commonwealth that the purpose of empire was preparation for self-government), and of those who see the transition from colonialism to neo-colonialism, from direct to indirect domination, as the result of a conspiracy by the colonial powers themselves to bring about a form of domination that they had come to prefer. There were indeed cases in the latter stages of the process of national liberation, especially in Africa and the Pacific, in which the independence of former colonies came about through cooperation between the metropolitan power and local representatives. But such instances were made possible only by the fact that the will of the colonial powers had already been broken. The reverses that were inflicted upon the Western powers in Indonesia, Indo-China, Algeria, Suez, Cyprus, Vietnam, and elsewhere had first to be suffered before the lessons from them could be drawn.

A third factor making for the demise of the old order was the impact of the Bolshevik revolution and the rise of the Soviet Union as a major power. The influence of the Soviet Union, it is true, has not always been perceived as a positive one from the point of view of the Afro-Asian or Third World nationalist struggles. Classical Marxism was basically unsympathetic to nationalism, and although Leninism has aligned the communist movement with it, the heritage of the ideas of Marx and Engels has sometimes proved a handicap in this respect. Stalin's Russia during the Second World War was aligned with European imperialists against Germany, and thus withdrew its support for anti-imperialist movements. Even after the War, Soviet support for communist revolution in the Third World stood in the way of an understanding with Third World nationalism until after the death of Stalin. The Soviet Union has never been able to compete with the United States and the Western European countries in providing economic and technological assistance to Third World countries. The Soviet Union's frontiers, as we noted above, result from European expansion and subjugation of non-European peoples, which means that some Third World sentiment may be mobilised against it, as China has sought to do. The Soviet Union's capacity for direct military intervention in Third World countries,

demonstrated in Afghanistan since 1979, has attracted some of the Third World antagonism against external domination previously directed chiefly at the Western powers.

Nevertheless, the rise of Soviet power, especially since the Second World War, including its attainment of crude strategic parity with the United States by the early 1970s and development of global interventionary capacity, has been basically helpful to the struggle of Third World peoples against the dominance of the Western powers. It is not merely, or perhaps even chiefly, that the Soviet state has provided a model of socialist planning and control of economic, social, and political life that has exerted an immense attraction over Third World countries and movements. It is rather that, since the collapse of Germany and Japan, the Soviet Union has been the chief centre of power in world affairs outside Western Europe and North America. Since it is the established ascendancy of Western Europe and North America in Asia, Africa, and Latin America that the Third World has been struggling to overthrow, the alliance of the Third World and the Soviet Union against the West, at least on a limited range of issues, that has been a basic feature of world affairs for many decades, has been natural and perhaps inevitable.

A fourth factor assisting the efforts of non-Western states and peoples to transform the system has been the existence of a more general equilibrium of power, to which the rise of the Soviet Union contributed, but of which it was only part, that has operated to the benefit of those challenging the old order. It is not a new circumstance that 'divisions among the imperialists' should operate in favour of the independence of weak peoples. But from the very beginning of the process of Western expansion, when the Papacy sought to contain the rivalry between Spain and Portugal, there were attempts, often successful, to preserve a common front *vis-à-vis* the non-Christian or extra-European world, or at least a common framework for competition within it. We have noted how, in the nineteenth century, such a framework was provided by the Concert of Europe.

In the post-1945 world also some elements of this common framework still survive: it is not wholly fanciful, for example, to see in the tacit understandings through which the North Atlantic powers and the Soviet Union have excluded war from their own area of the world, while exporting their military conflicts to the periphery, an echo of the arrangements reached between France and Spain at the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559, whereby armed conflicts in the New World were allowed to continue on the understanding that they would not disturb the peace of Europe. It is clear, however, that the divisions among the advanced powers are today much deeper than they were at the time when the West could agree to send an international force with a German commander to keep a dissident China in order; and that this new circumstance has operated to assist the weaker members of the system. Deeply divided as they are, the North

Atlantic states and the Soviet Union serve to check one another's interventions in the Third World. At the same time, the existence of several major centres of power—in Western Europe, Japan, and China, as well as in the United States and the Soviet Union—provides Third World countries with a range of diplomatic options for combining with one major power against another.

Finally, the dismantling of the old order has been assisted by a transformation of the legal and moral climate of international relations which the Third World states themselves, grouped with one another in the Afro-Asian movement, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Group of 77, have played the principal role in bringing about. Commanding majorities of votes as they do in the political organs of the United Nations, and able to call upon the prestige of numbers, not merely of states but of persons, accruing to the states claiming to represent a majority of the world's population, they have overturned the old structure of international law and organisation that once served to sanctify their subject status. The equal rights of non-Western states to sovereignty, the rights of non-Western peoples to self-determination, the rights of non-white races to equal treatment, non-Western peoples to economic justice, and non-Western cultures to dignity and autonomy—these rights are today clearly spelt out in conventions having the force of law, even though in many cases they are not enjoyed in practice and no consensus exists about their meaning and interpretation.

The Western powers have fought a rearguard action against this rewriting of international law and quasi-law, which may be studied in the debates that led up to the passing of such historic resolutions of UN organs as the 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Peoples, the 1965 resolution recognising the right to use force in a war of national liberation, or the 1974 Declaration of a New International Economic Order. As a result of the challenge delivered by the Third World to the old legal order there is today deep division between the Western powers and Third World states about a wide range of normative issues. As the political organs of the United Nations were made to subserve the political purposes of the Third World coalition, the Western powers, once able to make the United Nations the instrument of purposes of their own, became disillusioned about it. It is possible to argue that as a consequence of these disagreements and attempts to paper them over by resort to concepts of 'soft law', the integrity of international law has been debased and the role actually played by international law in international relations, as opposed to what John Austin once called positive international morality, has gone into decline. It is not possible, however, to doubt that the changes wrought by Third World majorities have affected the legal and moral climate of world politics profoundly, and in such a way as to assist the challenge to Western dominance.

Theorists of international 'dependence' tell us that the position of the Western countries in the international system is still one of dominance. It is indeed true that the present distribution of wealth and power in the world falls far short of the aspirations of Third World peoples and their well-wishers elsewhere for justice and equality. But if we compare the position occupied by non-Western states and peoples in the universal international society of today with the position in which they found themselves at the turn of the century, it is difficult not to feel that the revolt against Western dominance has had a measure of success.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Ali A. Mazrui, *Towards a Pax Africana: A Study of Ideology and Ambition*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1966.
- ² Augustine, *The City of God*, Book XIX, C.XIII, Everyman edition, London, 1950, p. 249.
- ³ See Quincy Wright, *The Role of International Law in the Elimination of War*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, p. 7.
- ⁴ See Myres S. McDougal and Associates, *Studies in World Public Order*, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1960.
- ⁵ The distinctions between general and particular justice, formal and substantive, arithmetical and proportionate, commutative and distributive, are all to be found in Aristotle. For a contemporary analysis, see Morris Ginsberg, *On Justice in Society*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 1965.
- ⁶ Aristotle, *Laws*, Book VI, p. 757.
- ⁷ Telford Taylor, *Nuremberg and Vietnam, an American Tragedy*, Quadrangle Books, Chicago, 1970.
- ⁸ See Kenneth Boulding, 'The Concept of World Interest', in Bert F. Hoselitz (ed.), *Economics and the Idea of Mankind*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1965; C. Wilfred Jenks, *The Common Law of Mankind*, Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., New York, 1958; and Richard A. Falk, *This Endangered Planet: Prospects and Proposals for Human Survival*, Vintage Books, New York, 1972.
- ⁹ Boulding, 'The Concept of World Interest', p. 55.
- ¹⁰ Julius Stone, 'Approaches to the Notion of International Justice', in C. Black and Richard A. Falk (eds), *The Future of the international Legal Order, Volume.1: Trends and Patterns*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1969.
- ¹¹ Mazrui, *Towards a Pax Africana*, p. 137.
- ¹² Sir Herbert Butterfield, *Raison D'Etat. The Inaugural Martin Wight Memorial Lecture*, Sussex University, 1975.
- ¹³ Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1946.
- ¹⁴ *The Development of the Legislative Council 1601–1946*, London, 1946.
- ¹⁵ Earl of Shaftesbury quoted in *The New York Law Journal*, 18 November 1963, p. 4, column 4.
- ¹⁶ See H. Butterfield and M. Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1966, pp. 89–131.
- ¹⁷ See A.M. James (ed.), *The Bases of International Order: Essays in Honour of C.A.W. Manning*, Oxford University Press, London, 1973.
- ¹⁸ See Arnold Toynbee and F.T. Ashton-Gwatkin (eds), *The World in March 1939: Survey of International Affairs 1939–1946*, Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1952.
- ¹⁹ 'Christian Commentary', talk on the B.B.C. Home Service, 29 October 1948.
- ²⁰ Butterfield and Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations*, pp. 33–34.
- ²¹ For Martin Wight's discussion of the inevitability of war, see 'War and International Politics', *The Listener*, 13 October 1953.
- ²² See 'Christian Commentary', talk on the B.B.C. Home Service, 29 October 1948.
- ²³ See Otto von Gierke, *Natural Law and the Theory of Society 1500 to 1860* (trans. Ernest Barker), Beacon Press, Boston, p. 85.

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²⁴ Butterfield and Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations*, ch. I.

²⁵ See Brian Porter's unpublished paper, 'Martin Wight's "International Theory": Some Reflections'.

²⁶ Butterfield and Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations*, p. 33.

²⁷ Butterfield and Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations*, p. 32.

²⁸ Butterfield and Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations*, p. 33.

²⁹ Butterfield and Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations*, p. 102.