The History of Humanitarian Intervention in Theory and Practice

Seminar 2nd term 2014-2015

Organized by Dirk Moses (HEC) and Jennifer Welsh (SPS)
Mondays 11.00-12.50
Sala Belvedere, Villa Schifanoia
(Please register with adele.battistini@eui.eu and kathy.fabian@eui.eu)

Introduction to the Seminar

The last two decades have witnessed a resurgence of interest in the law, morality and politics of military intervention, particularly when undertaken for what are declared to be humanitarian purposes. Nonetheless, the question of when, if ever, outside parties can legitimately intervene in a sovereign state to address massive suffering of that state's population, is a highly contentious one. The humanitarian rationale for the use of force—which dates back to the beginning of the modern state system—has continued to encounter resistance, despite its apparent appeal. This interdepartmental seminar explores the history of this rationale since the early nineteenth century. It analyses the constitutive notions of the humanitarian and (military) intervention, as well as the context of imperial rivalry and the asymmetrical global order in which debates about humanitarian intervention have taken place. The practices and discourses about humanitarian intervention since the Second World War and decolonization will also feature in the seminar, as will the extensive debates about the related principle of the 'responsibility to protect', which has risen to prominence over the last fifteen years.

Organisation of the seminar

The seminar is taught in two-hour sessions. At each meeting there are two short oral presentations by students on key issues of interest from the readings (of no more than 10-15 minutes), followed by general discussion.

Students who wish to take this seminar for credit must meet relevant HEC and SPS Department attendance requirements, complete all required readings, and participate actively in seminar discussions. Students have the option of writing a research paper for the class, and if they wish to take this option they should discuss their proposed topic with Professor Moses or Professor Welsh well before the Department’s due date for term papers for the spring semester. Anyone wishing to audit the class must fulfill all requirements expected of other students.

If you want to write a term paper for this seminar, please send a copy by email to one of the seminar's professors (copied to his/her assistant). Once the paper is approved, your credit award will be updated in your academic records.
12 January: Origins of Sovereignty and Early Modern Precedents


Extra reading (introducing the debate on humanitarian intervention)


19 January: Interventions in the Ottoman Empire and against the Slave Trade


Extra Reading:

26 January: Quasi-Sovereignty and Foreign Interventions


2 February: Armenian Genocide, Non-Intervention, and its Consequence


9 February: The Second World War and its Consequences


See also:
16 February: Secessionist Civil Wars and Humanitarian Intervention:


23 February: The Revival of Interventionism in the 1990s


2 March: Genocide and the Question of Intervention in Rwanda


9 March: The Contested Intervention – The Former Yugoslavia and NATO’s Bombing of Kosovo


Alex J. Bellamy and Paul D. Williams, ‘On the Limits of Moral Hazard: The Responsibility to Protect, Armed Conflict, and Mass Atrocities’, *European Journal of International Relations*, EJIR online, 2011. Available at: [http://ejt.sagepub.com/content/early/2011/05/12/1354066110393366.full.pdf+html](http://ejt.sagepub.com/content/early/2011/05/12/1354066110393366.full.pdf+html)

*Extra recommended reading:*


*See also:*


23 March: The Development and Evolution of the Responsibility to Protect

Alex J. Bellamy, *Global Politics and the Responsibility to Protect: From Words to Deeds* (New York: Routledge, 2011), page range TBD


*See also:*
