Preface

Ethics & International Affairs—the quarterly journal of the Carnegie Council—is now in its third decade. The inaugural issue appeared in 1987, when the idea of a world without the Soviet Union was not yet seriously considered, and ethics and public policy at the international level were debated within the confines of controlling ideas, such as "containment" and "moral equivalence." More than twenty years later we still find value in realist frameworks, yet we also welcome the growth of a new, less encumbered literature addressing issues of global scope and concern.

Contributors to *Ethics & International Affairs* draw on applied ethics and international normative theory to address moral problems in world politics. Whether the problem be well known or overlooked, long-standing or immediate, local or truly international, our authors apply moral reasoning—informed by facts and shaped by the structures of philosophical and social scientific inquiry—to deepen understanding and push toward some resolution. In this way, our approach is *normative*; that is, it prescribes and explains expected and required behavior in accordance with ethical systems and intuitions. Yet it is also *empirical* in that it places policy choices within historical and political contexts. Over the years we have witnessed an increase in the number and range of authors writing about world politics who combine normative and empirical work.[1] However, to the extent that this increase has been a consequence of new global dilemmas and worrisome trends, we may view it less as an occasion to indulge in celebration, and rather as cause for a redoubling of rigor and creativity in the field of international ethics.

But what is this "field" of international ethics? Who, in particular, are we referring to? With its methods and problems intersecting with a range of other fields and disciplines, as well as implicating several levels of analysis—from individuals to global society—international ethics is not a field that can be clearly delimited, or even identified with a single university department (as if it were confined to universities at all). At its theoretical core, international ethics can be said to overlap with that aspect of the international relations field that engages realism and its critics, as well as with discussions of cosmopolitanism and *its* critics arising among moral and political philosophers.

Of course, this is a mold that will be quickly broken, even by the chapters in this volume, which have been penned also by economists and historians.[2] However, even focusing only on the international ethical debates within and between

the fields of international relations and philosophy, it is safe to say that, with their growing technical maturity, the range of included perspectives, their responsiveness to real-world developments, and the willingness on the part of political scientists and philosophers to borrow from, talk to, and collaborate with one another, the field has made definite strides forward in recent years.[3]

International ethicists have also displayed a steady tendency toward specialization, endeavoring to add value and gain traction on an issue-by-issue basis. Today, the field takes in debates about atmospheric justice, sovereign debt, human rights trials, and, among others, the topics broached in these pages: war and postwar reconciliation, intervention and its prospects, the boundless question of how communities can best determine just principles of authority and inclusion, and the ethics and politics of global inequality. Whereas the previous editions of this book were structured in an open-ended manner, with sections on ''theory,'' ''culture,'' and ''issues,'' the contents of this volume are instead ordered by topic, recognizing and reflecting the increased maturity and self-consciousness of the field. Needless to say, the contributions to theory and awareness of culture are no less salient in the present edition than in the past, but the context for them is now given as ''topics in international ethics'' rather than, say, questions of whether there is even a role for ethics in international affairs.

In making the selections of which conversations and contributions to include in this new edition, the aim has certainly not been to generate the greatest ''hits'' of international ethics, nor the greatest ''misses'' of global public policy, as if there had not been innumerable worthwhile contributions elsewhere in the literature, or as if the chosen topics are those we regard as most pressing or most deserving of wide discussion. Even though in the case of every contribution included here the discussion is ongoing rather than closed, the conversations should be taken as invitations to normative, empirical discussions and studies of whichever international issues are uppermost in readers' minds. The aim in making the current selections was to serve the contemporary international ethics classroom as efficiently as possible, as well as to invite and inform other new readers in the field. We have thus compiled resources that we suspect will be of special value in engaging and instructing a new generation of international ethicists and informed members of world society.

We hope we have balanced these desires—to supply a volume fit for the ethics classroom, and to reflect the growing maturity of the field—without misrepresenting or overdetermining the shape of the discussions from which the selections presented here are drawn. Helpful here may be the fact that each of the four sections offers a slightly different experience of the debate it confronts. The section on war gives a sense of how its interlocutors have stepped in to confront the normative dimensions of new security challenges, such as the demands of justice in ''transitions,'' particularly in the aftermath of war, and

the shake-up of the normative order suggested by the concept of "prevention"—with the discussion underwritten in no small part by the seminal contributions of Michael Walzer, critiqued from a realist perspective in the first of our chapters. The intervention section takes a slightly different tack, exploring the theory, history, politics, and prospects of normative evolution with regard to sovereignty and its exceptions. The section on governance, meanwhile, provides the material for a sophisticated consideration of how discussions of justice and legitimacy differ, and how they are interrelated, as we begin to think across borders—in this case, of nation and gender—and up and down levels of international life. Finally, the section on global economic justice rolls out a number of discrete approaches to framing and analyzing the predicaments of economic inequality and underdevelopment. The volume as a whole thus provides a sampling of the many ways in which one can encounter the literature on moral problems in international affairs, and, as mentioned, it invites readers to fill the gaps, whether through further reading or through developing their own contributions.

There are a number of other more general remarks to make about the essays in this reader: these relate less to issues of structure and how the essays reflect the field than to how a reading of these texts can deepen our understanding of important themes in international ethics and provide material out of which to construct some guidance for the literature moving forward. We have, after all, some obligation to redirect as well as to reflect. The first point to make is that, even while their work increases in specialization and sophistication, international ethicists will find it valuable to remain alive to the basic questions and limits of ethical reasoning: How should one live? By what values and standards? And how can the trade-offs inherent in political choice be managed? As representative of the best work in our field, the essays in this volume take it as a given that politics is an arena of imperfection: to engage in ethical reflection is simply to ask, Can we do better? At the very least, with clear thinking, good ideas, and the mustering of international political will, the worst policies can be avoided.

Second, one should note that the debate in this reader takes place in an interconnected world, with globalization unleashing and empowering new actors and possibilities. In the past, international relations scholars focused rather narrowly on the behavior of states. Today we see world-changing concentrations of power in multinational corporations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and international institutions. Indeed, the world's largest corporations, such as Wal-Mart and Microsoft, are themselves some of the world's largest economies. NGOs, such as Human Rights Watch and Médecins Sans Frontières, demand the attention of superpowers, middle powers, and failing states alike. And international organizations, such as the United Nations and the World Bank, assert themselves in decisive ways on a variety of functional issues, ranging from environmental regulation to humanitarian relief and

poverty alleviation. The project of updating our normative and empirical tool kit and vocabulary to respond to this changing global picture remains far from complete. International ethicists must, and surely will, continue the process of engaging the ethics of global business, global civil society, and global governance alongside, but not independent of, considerations of just war and other such topics that predate and still pervade the global village. Part of the mission of international ethics moving forward will be to better grasp how the "international" and the "global" are related.

Third, we should endorse the notion that monism—a single-minded, all-or-nothing approach to ethics and international affairs—is simply inadequate. Human judgment is known to be faulty and limited. New information often changes our views: while "truth" may be our ultimate goal and guide, our understanding of it may change over time. The first of Hans Morgenthau's "Nine Rules of Diplomacy" has especially lasting value in light of the current political climate in the United States. It reads simply: "Diplomacy must be divested of the crusading spirit."[4] Humility is required even in the face of conviction; international ethicists, for instance, must not be driven by the combative spirit often inherent in scholarly debates to let their professional convictions override what we should all agree on: that perhaps we are wrong.

Another unifying theme in these essays is an abandonment of ideology in favor of an enlightened realism that emphasizes pluralism. According to "enlightened realists," conflict is neither fated nor random. Interests are neither fixed nor self-defined. Decisions can be made according to reason, always requiring the weighing of claims in light of evidence. Some of our authors might prefer the label "realistic utopians."[5] They would see their work as describing the gap between what we ought to be doing and what we are doing. If we can sketch out what is morally desirable, we then have an end or a goal by which we can set the direction of our policies and gauge our results. To the extent that a meeting of enlightened realists and realistic utopians offers a fair portrayal of contemporary international ethics, it is an encouraging portrayal—certainly more so than the earlier image of realists confronting idealists.

Finally, a discernible "weak universalism" threads through the work in this volume. By "universalism" we mean a shared commitment to universal human dignity and social justice. The modifier "weak" acknowledges the pluralistic notion that shared principles of humanity will take different forms in different circumstances. The essays that follow seek neither perfection nor homogenization; rather, they pursue mutual understandings based on what is common in human experience. Paradoxically, the most common aspect of human experience is difference itself. How we live with difference—especially in light of common problems—will continue to be one among the many pressing questions faced by international ethicists.

It is in the spirit of mutual learning that we offer these essays for your consideration. The inquiry is open and unfinished, as it should be. We urge you to carry that inquiry on.

NOTES

1. For a discussion of the relationship between empirical and normative research on world politics, see Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal, "Reuniting Ethics and Social Science," *Ethics & International Affairs* 22, no. 3 (2008): 261–71.

2. Over the years *Ethics & International Affairs* has also welcomed contributions from psychologists, sociologists, lawyers, theologians, regional specialists, activists, policymakers, and policy professionals, among others.

3. See, for instance, the essay by the ethicist Allen Buchanan and the political scientist Robert O. Keohane in this volume, as well as their "The Preventive Use of Force: A Cosmopolitan Institutional Proposal," *Ethics & International Affairs* 18, no. 1 (2004): 1–22. For an example of a philosopher and an economist collaborating on a pressing topic of global scope and concern, see Christian Barry and Sanjay G. Reddy, *International Trade and Labor Standards: A Proposal for Linkage* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

4. Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, seventh edition (New York: McGraw Hill, 2006), 559.

5. The term *realistic utopia* appears in John Rawls's *Law of Peoples* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999). Rawls's vision of international ethical principles takes human nature as we find it.