

## **THE ETHICS OF THE USE OF FORCE: THE CASE OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION**

Master of International Affairs  
Sciences Po  
**Fall semester 2008-09**

Tuesday 2.45 pm – 4.45 pm  
Hall A-12

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This seminar will discuss one of the most salient aspects of contemporary international relations, the use of force by states and non-state actors and its justification. It will discuss the role of norms in the context of international affairs and the tension and interaction between norms and power. It will focus on the detention, the production and use of weapons of mass destruction of various kinds. It will discuss the various modes of justification of WMD, their normative assumptions and the military, geo-strategic and political predictions upon which they rely.

The goal of this seminar is to elaborate an explanatory and normative analysis of the justification of the use of force aimed at a better understanding of the current debates on the use of weaponry in warfare.

This seminar is also future oriented, it favors anticipatory analyses of the evolution of norms.

### **Course requirements**

- Research paper<sup>1</sup>. 10-15 pages due by January the 13<sup>th</sup>. One-page proposal stating problem to be addressed, provisional thesis and bibliography due by December 2<sup>nd</sup>. 50% of the grade<sup>2</sup>.
- Oral presentation<sup>3</sup> of the required and recommended readings. 30% of the grade.
- Class participation and attendance. 20% of the grade.

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<sup>1</sup> Every student will choose a topic which fits into these different domains: technology and international norms, normative scenarios for the future (WMD related), salient key studies (normative responses to Iran, North Korea...). Other types of proposals will also be examined.

<sup>2</sup> Every student will present his/her paper during the last session of the seminar.

<sup>3</sup> Each week one or two student(s) will present the required reading of the session (and will bring some elements from the recommended readings), will discuss the text(s), highlight the novel elements they bring into the debate, eventually point out their flaws. This presentation ought not to be simple summary of the text, it a critical analysis of the views of the author. The various texts have been scanned and will be sent by email. Some of the texts are available through JSTOR or other online services accessible through the ScPo library website.

## INTRODUCTION: USES AND ABUSES OF POWER

### Session 1 Power in a world without mercy?

Tuesday September 30<sup>th</sup>

Definitions of power  
Ethical visions for the world  
The balance of power  
Is the use of power amoral?

Hans Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, New York, McGraw Hill, 1993 (1st ed.1948) :  
« Chapter 3 Political power », p.29-49.

Charles Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1979: « Part I International Relations as a State of Nature &1-5 », p.13-66.

Ward Thomas, *The Ethics of Destruction Norms and Force in International Relations*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2002: “Chapter I Ethics, Norms and the Study of International Relations”, p.1-26.

### Session 2 Justifying the use of force: the lesser evil?

Tuesday October 7<sup>th</sup>

Ethical frameworks of justification  
Deontological approaches, utilitarianism  
Just war theory

Thomas Nagel, “War and massacre”, in C. Beitz et al. (ed.), *International Ethics*, p.53-74.

Robert Holmes, *War and Morality*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1989. See “Chapter 5 Can war be morally justified? The Just War Theory”, p.146-183.

Michael Ignatieff, *The Lesser Evil Political Ethics in the Age of Terror*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2004. See “Chapter 2 The Ethics of Emergency”, p.25-53.

### Session 3 Technology and power

Tuesday October 14<sup>th</sup>

WMD

Technology and weaponry in international affairs

Technology as a stabilizing force for the world?

Deterrence

Robert Jervis, “The Theory of the Nuclear Revolution”, in Robert Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution: Statescraft and the Prospect of Armageddon*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, p.1-45.

Kenneth Waltz, “More May Be Better”, in Scott Sagan, Kenneth Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons A Debate*, New York, Norton, 1995, p.1-45.

### FIRST PART: USING WMD

### Session 4 Historical accounts: the Cold War

Tuesday October 21<sup>st</sup>

A preventive war vs. the USSR?

Cuba

The role of game theory

Nuclear theorists: von Neumann, Wohlstetter

Marc Trachtenberg, « Preventive War and US Foreign Policy », *Security Studies*, January-March 2007, p.1-31.

Russell D. Buhite, WM. Christopher Hamel, « War and Peace : the Question of an American Preventive War against the Soviet Union, 1945-1955 », *Diplomatic History*, vol. 14, n. 3, summer 1990, p.367-385

Fred Kaplan, *The Wizards of Armageddon*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1983. See “Chapter 3 Planning for War”, p.33-50.

### Session 5 Optimism and pessimism in military affairs

Tuesday October 28<sup>th</sup>

Nukes, no first use, no first strike

The absolute weapon?

Optimists vs. pessimists

Jeffrey Knopf, « Recasting the Proliferation Optimism-Pessimism Debate », *Security Studies*, vol. 12, n. 1, autumn 2002, p.41-96.

Richard Betts, « Chapter 3 Universal Deterrence, or Conceptual Collapse ? Liberal Pessimism and Utopian Realism », in Victor Utgoff (ed.), *The Coming Crisis Nuclear Proliferation, U.S. Interests and World Order*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 2000, p.57-85.

## SECOND PART: NORMS AND POWER

### Session 6 Rules: laws and military doctrines

Tuesday November 4<sup>th</sup>

International law, the role of experts  
 What regime for WMD?  
 The Non Proliferation Treaty: a logic of fairness?  
 Imperial doctrines

David A. Koplow, *Testing a Nuclear Test Ban: What Should be Prohibited by a "Comprehensive" Treaty ?*, Darmouth, Aldershot, 1996. See “The importance and history of a CTB”, p.1-43

The Bush doctrine (2002, 2006): [www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss/2006/>

Ruth Wedgwood, « The Fall of Saddam Hussein : Security Council Mandates and Preemptive Self-Defense », *American Journal of International Law*, vol. 97, n. 3, July 2003, p.576-584

### Session 7 Are there cultures of violence?

Tuesday November 18<sup>th</sup>

Culturalist approaches to strategy, the use of force and weaponry  
 Aggressive cultures?  
 Cultures of dominance?  
 Cultures of aggressive technology? (Heidegger...)  
 “The West and the rest”

Elizabeth Kier, “Cultural and French Military Doctrine Before World War Two”, in Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security Norms Identity in World Politics*, New York, Columbia University Press, , p.186-215

### **Session 8 Are there cultures of non violence?**

Tuesday November 25<sup>th</sup>

Christian views over the bomb:

Donald Davidson, *Nuclear Weapons and the American Churches: Ethical Positions on Modern Warfare*, Boulder, Westview, 1983. See “Chapter 3 Nuclear Weapons: Perspectives from Just-War Ethicists”, p.41-67 and “Chapter 4 The Roman Catholic Discussion: a Closer Look”, p.69-115

Pacifism

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/pacifism/>

Jan Naverson, “Pacifism: a philosophic response”, in Richard Wasserstrom (ed.), *War and Morality*, p.63-77

Non lethal weapons as an option, a compromise?

David Koplow, « Tangled up in Khaki and Blue: Lethal and Non-Lethal Weapons in Recent Confrontations », *Georgetown Journal of International Law*, Vol. 36, n. 3, 2005, p.703-808

### **Session 9 Is there a nuclear taboo? A chemical taboo?**

Tuesday December 2<sup>nd</sup>

Facing total destruction

The anxiety of amputation

Bodies' ethics and truth

Landmines and the new case of cluster bombs

Richard Price, "A Genealogy of the Chemical Weapons Taboo", *International Organization*, vol. 49, n. 1, 1995, p.73-104

Nina Tannenwald, “The Nuclear Taboo : The United States and the Normative Basis of Nuclear Non-Use”, *International Organization*, vol. 53, n° 3, 1999, p. 433-468

## Session 10 Applying ethical frameworks

Tuesday December 9<sup>th</sup>

Distinction, unnecessary suffering...

The Non Proliferation Treaty: what's fairness got to do with it?

Joseph Nye, *Nuclear Ethics*, New York, Free Press, 1986. See "Chapter 5 Consequences and Risks", p.59-80

Robert Jervis, "Morality and International Strategy", in Robert Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution: Statecraft and the Prospect of Armageddon*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, p.107-135.

Scott Sagan, "Chapter 3 Realist Perspectives on Ethical Norms and Weapons of Mass Destruction", in *Ethics and Weapons of Mass Destruction Religious and Secular Perspectives*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p.73-95.

Henry Shue, "Liberalism the Impossibility of Justifying Weapons of Mass Destruction", id., p.139-161.

Michael Walzer, "A Liberal Perspective on Deterrence and Proliferation of WMD", id., p.163-167.

## THIRD PART: VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

### Session 11 The role of predictive analysis

Tuesday December 16<sup>th</sup>

Prediction and the social sciences

The role of think tanks in WMD

Who says what? What is their role?

Peter Haas, « Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination », *International Organization*, vol. 46 n. 1, winter 1992, p. 1-36.

Herman Kahn, « The Alternative World Future Approach », in Morton Kaplan (ed.), *New Approaches to International Relations*, New York, Saint Martin's Press, 1968, p.83-136

## **Session 12 Caring for others and protecting them**

Tuesday January 6<sup>th</sup>

Sharing and or caring?

The ethics of care in IR

Kimberly Hutchins, "Towards a Feminist International Ethics", in Ken Booth, Tim Dunne, Michael Cox (eds.), *How Might We Live? Global Ethics in the New Century*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, p.111-130.

Public intellectuals and the bomb

Elizabeth Anscombe, "War and Murder", in Richard Wasserstrom (ed.), *War and Morality*, Belmont, Wadsworth, 1970, p.42-53.

### **DRAWING SOME CONCLUSIONS**

## **Session 13 Debate The WMD regime in 2025, in 2050?**

Tuesday January 13<sup>th</sup>

- 1/ Build security scenarios for the decades to come.
- 2/ Imagine legal reforms that would follow or anticipate these political changes. Imagine the different role of norms entrepreneurs, governmental and non-governmental.
- 3/ What will be the impact on states' behavior and on international organizations?

## **Session 14 Presentation of the papers and their findings**

Tuesday January 20<sup>th</sup>

Depending on the themes of their papers, students will assemble in groups, i.e. those who wrote on just war theory will present their finds together, those who worked on regional case studies... Each group will present briefly the findings of it members.