# 1 *The Nature in and Nature of International Relations*

For as long as men and women have talked about war, they have talked about it in terms of right and wrong. And for almost as long, some among them have derided such talk, called it a charade, insisted that war lies beyond (or beneath) moral judgments. War is a world apart, where life itself is at stake, where human nature is reduced to its elemental forms, where self-interest and necessity prevail.

—Michael Walzer[1]

It's not surprising that the rediscovery of human nature has taken so long. Being everywhere we look, it tends to elude us. We take for granted such bedrock elements of life as gratitude, shame, remorse, pride, honor, retribution, empathy, love and so on – just as we take for granted the air we breathe, the tendency of dropped objects to fall, and other standard features of living on this planet.

—Robert Wright[2]

This curious dialectic of ethics and politics, which prevents the latter, in spite of itself, from escaping the former's judgment and normative direction, has its roots in the nature of man as both a political and a moral animal.

—Hans Morgenthau[3]

It is one of the great truisms of international relations: Foreign affairs is an amoral realm where everyday ethical norms know no place. Foreign policy is the pursuit of egoistic ends with little regard for others, often through the threat or use of violence. Since morality's primary function is to place restraints on selfish behavior, if egoism is the driving force of

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[1] Walzer, Michael. 1977. *Just and Unjust Wars*. New York: Basic Books, 3.
[2] Wright, Robert. 1994. *The Moral Animal*. New York: Pantheon Books, 8.
[3] Morgenthau, Hans J. 1945. "The Evil of Politics and the Ethics of Evil." *Ethics* 56(1): 5.

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international politics, then ethical considerations must be largely absent. As explained by Waltz, "Each state pursues its own interests, however defined, in ways it judges best. Force is a means of achieving the external ends of states because there exists no consistent, reliable process of reconciling the conflicts of interest that inevitably arise among similar units in a condition of anarchy. *A foreign policy based on this image of international relations is neither moral nor immoral*, but embodies merely a reasoned response to the world about us."[4] Morgenthau calls this the "autonomy of the political sphere," one in which there is no "relevance" or even "existence … of standards of thought other than the political one."[5] This is what Walzer calls "the world apart."

In this view, the "private" morality that we utilize in our daily interactions and within the (hopefully) more predictable, ordered, and stable confines of domestic politics is fundamentally different from the "public" morality exercised by state leaders. As Morgenthau explains, "The argument starts with the observation that man as an actor on the political scene does certain things in violation of ethical principles, which he does not do, or at least not as frequently and habitually, when he acts in a private capacity. There he lies, deceives, and betrays, and he does so quite often. Here he does so, if at all, only as an exception and under extraordinary circumstances…. In other words, there is one ethics for the political sphere and there is another ethics for the private sphere."[6]

The empirical study of morality in international relations (IR), what is sometimes called the "norms" literature, aims to counter that great truism by documenting some degree of moral progress over the course of time.[7] Elites and national publics demonstrate increasing concern for the fate of others beyond their borders, which is evident in such phenomena as international criminal tribunals, foreign aid, decolonization, and human rights treaties.[8]

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[4] Waltz, Kenneth. 1959. *Man, the State and War*. New York: Columbia University Press, 238 (emphasis added).

[5] Morgenthau, Hans J. 1948. *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: A. A. Knopf, 10–11.

[6] Morgenthau, "The Evil of Politics," 6.

[7] This "positive" literature is different from the normative literature, which concerns itself with what constitutes ethical behavior in international relations – the "ought" rather than the "is" – and is much older.

[8] Skeptics reply that states are still preoccupied with their own self-interests, sacrificing little for others. Even democratic publics and leaders are willing to

   All of these ethical phenomena are surely moral, and I would argue that they have systematically changed the nature of modern international relations. However, they are not all there is to morality in international relations. In fact, the norms literature does not even begin to scratch the surface. For all their differences, both optimists and pessimists rely on the same, overly truncated conception of morality, a liberal and cosmopolitan standard in which ethical action is that which demonstrates universal concern for individuals regardless of national origin. Liberal ethics are one standard of morality, but individualistic cosmopolitanism does not exhaust the set of moral foundations that might motivate state action in international relations. Missing that fact obscures the totality of morality in international politics. Scholars of international relations therefore drastically understate the presence of ethically minded and morally motivated action in international affairs. The largely universal embrace of liberal moral benchmarks in the positive literature on ethics in international relations leads to two particular blindspots.

   First, we focus on moral conscience – our desire to do good for others – to the neglect of moral condemnation and punishment, our response to what we perceive to be the unethical behavior of others, not only vis-à-vis third parties but also ourselves.[9] Morality serves to restrain excessive egoism, but how do we respond when others act in an overly self-interested manner? In both everyday life and international relations, the response is generally to punish. Norms of justice and fairness aim at taming our most grandiose ambitions but also come with their own injunctions in the face of noncompliance. Passing moral judgment on others is ubiquitous in international politics and can give rise to fundamentally different, and sometimes even more violent, dynamics than a simple amoral conflict of interests. When states believe that others are behaving in a disproportionately egoistic manner, they are morally outraged.

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   kill large numbers of innocent civilians to accomplish national goals (Downes, Alexander. 2008. *Targeting Civilians in War*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press; Press, Daryl G., Scott D. Sagan, and Benjamin A. Valentino. 2013. "Atomic Aversion: Experimental Evidence on Taboos, Traditions, and the Non-use of Nuclear Weapons." *American Political Science Review* 107(1): 188–206.

[9] DeScioli, Peter and Robert Kurzban. 2009. "Mysteries of Morality." *Cognition* 112(2): 281–299; DeScioli, Peter and Robert Kurzban. 2013. "A Solution to the Mysteries of Morality." *Psychological Bulletin* 139(2): 477–496.

Second, the positive IR ethics and morality literature have not come to terms with moral principles that operate at the level of the group, binding them together. For many, even in Western countries, morality is communitarian in nature. When our group is engaged in a conflict with another, we owe it our loyalty. Betrayal is a universally recognized moral transgression. In such situations, we defer to the authorities out of moral obligation. They deserve our respect for their efforts to protect us. These so-called "binding foundations" are the morality that brings and keeps *groups* together.[10] They are particularly important for international relations since foreign affairs are a matter of intergroup interaction.

Binding morality and moral condemnation are highly linked in international relations in that a belief that other groups are dangerous to our own is more often than not equated to a belief that they are immoral. Binding the group together is necessary precisely because there are unethical individuals and groups inside and outside of the group. These are second-order moral beliefs, beliefs about the ethics of others. It is this combination that keeps international relations from resembling a set of billiard balls colliding with one another since states project moral expectations for others' behavior into the global sphere.

Such a perspective shifts the emphasis in our study of ethics from the liberal question of whether states do good – important, of course – to the question of what states do when other states do bad, particularly to them. It implies a shift from the study of moral judgment to moral judgmental-ism. These impulses, motivated by moral outrage and a feeling of anger, are not necessarily our better angels, which would have us turn the other cheek.[11] But they are angels nonetheless in the sense that they are sincerely held moral principles by many. To capture the nature of international relations adequately, we must retrain our focus from doing right to being wronged and the rights that states feel they have in those circumstances – that is, to our lesser angels.

[10] Graham, Jesse, Brian A. Nosek, Jonathan Haidt, Ravi Iyer, Spassena Koleva, and Peter H. Ditto. 2011. "Mapping the Moral Domain." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 101(2): 366.

[11] On anger in international relations, see Hall, Todd H. 2017. "On Provocation: Outrage, International Relations, and the Franco–Prussian War." *Security Studies* 26(1): 1–29.

Once we cast our moral net more widely, we realize that morality is everywhere, more striking in the breach than the observance, as the opening epigraph from Wright suggests. As central as morality is to human interaction, sustained political action that pays no regard to morality is likely impossible. What we generally regard as the most striking manifestations of the lack of ethics, the use of violence for political purposes and other aspects of "power politics," are more often than not the very expression of moral principles, just not the ones we are used to. Even Morgenthau recognizes that "the very juxtaposition of 'power politics' and 'moral politics' is fundamentally mistaken" and ultimately rejects the private–public distinction (as we will see in the following text).[12]

Recognizing that not all morality is self-abnegating and that moral condemnation arises in response to the perception of excessive egoism by others, we see that what appears to be the naked expression of egoistic interests is quite often driven by a sense of injustice, such as when states object to threats to their honor and security or demand a fair share of a bargain. As we will see, the pursuit of fairness is often mistaken for status-seeking, perhaps the most self-regarding of all human (and therefore state) motivations. Morality is central to deterrence and war termination. Those who believe others are immoral feel the need to demonstrate resolve and frame situations as commitment problems so that the only solution in costly conflicts is to continue fighting. If our leaders do not demonstrate such determination, we fault them for not being loyal enough to the group's interest. When the "audience" judges leaders, it is finding fault with them ethically. Indeed the very groups that do the business of international relations – nation-states – are held together by moral glue. Morality also informs the extent and nature of military expansion and occupation. Not all conquest is the same, quantitatively and qualitatively. And moral coercion is one of the most potent sources of nonmaterial power in interstate diplomacy, even in negotiations about how to carve up the world.

In sum, we cannot understand much of anything in traditional security studies without morality; yet up to this point, the field has tried very hard to do just that. Both optimists and pessimists typically characterize ethics in international relations as a rare and delicate flower

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[12] Quoted in Murray, A. J. H. 1996. "The Moral Politics of Hans Morgenthau." *Review of Politics* 58(1): 98.

just starting to gain a foothold in inhospitable soil. Morgenthau summarizes this traditional view: "[T]he morality of the political sphere, viewed from the standards of individual ethics,[13] is a residue from an immoral age which has been overcome in the individual sphere but still leads a ghostlike existence in the realm of politics."[14] To make my alternative case, in this book, I present evidence derived from analyses of massive textual corpora, thirteen non-experimental and experimental surveys of American, Chinese, and Russian samples, and six historical case chapters on German foreign policy based predominantly on primary texts and original archival sources.

This is not to say that individuals or groups always act morally by any ethical standard. Indeed if self-restraint based on a sense of moral obligation were universal, there would be no concept of morality at all. However, rarely do either everyday Joes, Janes or political actors simply take what they want and say so. Walzer writes, "If we had all become realists like the Athenian generals or like Hobbists in a state of war … [w]e would simply tell one another, brutally and directly, what we wanted to do or have done. But the truth is that one of the things most of us want, even in war, is to act or to seem to act morally."[15] Pinker has the same idea when he writes, "Other than devils and storybook villains, no one says, 'I believe murder is a heinous atrocity, and I do it whenever it serves my purposes.'"[16] Even if doing the right thing is at times performative, this shows that morality is real and serves as a restraint on the pursuit of selfish interests, both within and between societies, as we will see. This is because state action takes place, as much of human behavior does, in front of audiences. I call this the "shadow of morality."

## The Nature in International Relations

There is a reason humans universally engage in moral condemnation and form groups to whom they feel they have moral obligations – our evolutionary origins. Evolutionary psychologists now agree that morality in all its predominant forms was central for the survival

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[13] Morgenthau means liberal, individualistic ethics.
[14] Morgenthau, "The Evil of Politics," 7.     [15] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 20.
[16] Pinker, Stephen. 2012. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: The Decline of Violence in History and Its Causes*. New York: Penguin Press, 623.

of individuals' genetic material in our distant past. By checking our most excessively egoistic impulses, morality allows us to reap the gains of cooperation without even knowing it, which in turn allows us and/or our kin to survive. Moral condemnation encouraged the development of moral conscience, backed by the emotion of guilt, which in turn acted as a credible signal of cooperativeness that paid material and therefore evolutionary dividends. Our humanitarianism is a genetic by-product of a biological but unconscious drive to survive. We are moral in all the ways we are because our genes are selfish. "A gene, in effect, looks beyond its moral bearer to interests of the potentially immoral set of its replicas existing in other related individuals."[17]

Binding morality also has evolutionary origins. Those humans who contributed to collective defense based on a sense of loyalty to a group and deference to authority would avoid the moral opprobrium of shirking their contribution to group welfare, which would have a potential genetic cost. Especially in extremely dangerous environments, those loyal to a group and deferential to authority could prosper to such a degree as to offset the competing incentives to shirk and free-ride within the group.

Even for those who do not have moral impulses, they are so universal that no one can ignore them, making humans extremely attentive to their moral reputation even in international relations.[18] Everyone – as we will see, even Hitler – operates under this *shadow of morality*. Evolutionary psychologists believe this attentiveness to audiences to be the manifestation of a genetic strategy to avoid moral condemnation that might have been materially and genetically costly. Being branded an egomaniac is bad for egoism. We have the evolved emotion of shame to protect us from self-defeat. In modern times, nation-states morally condemn other nation-states, generally for threats to the precursors of society – life, truth, and property.[19] And nation-states try to avoid this censure. Scholars of rhetorical coercion have already convincingly demonstrated how political actors attempt to

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[17] Axelrod, Robert and William D. Hamilton. 1981. "The Evolution of Cooperation." *Science* 211(4489): 1390.

[18] Johnston, Alastair Iain. 2001. "Treating International Institutions as Social Environments." *International Studies Quarterly* 45(4): 487–515.

[19] Bull, Hedley. 1977. *The Anarchical Society*. New York: Columbia University Press.

entrap others into taking their preferred positions, and a close look at this literature shows that framing debates are about occupying the moral high ground.[20]

There is also moral condemnation based on the binding foundations. Within states, self-interested leaders face potential accusations from their publics for not adequately defending their national interests, which is an accusation of disloyalty. US politicians ask each other, "You don't hate America, do you?" Even authoritarian leaders try to avoid such censure.

Given its biological basis, a large-scale autonomous sphere of human interaction absent of ethical considerations is no more possible than one devoid of oxygen. As De Waal writes, "Given the universality of moral systems, the tendency to develop and enforce them must be an integral part of human nature. Since we are moral beings to the core, any theory of human behavior that does not take morality 100 percent seriously is bound to fall by the wayside."[21] International relations offer theories of human behavior, so De Waal's warning applies. Otherwise, we are not doing justice to international relations, literally and figuratively. I believe we miss the omnipresence of morality in international affairs because morality is so natural and intuitive to us that we do not even notice it is there, as Wright claims.

Rather than a transcendence of our material reality, morality is material reality. Morality serves the function of solving recurrent material problems in our evolutionary past, problems we still face today such as deterring threats or distributing resources. This is at odds with the strictly ideational manner in which morality is generally approached in international relations theory, particularly in liberal and constructivist thought.

It also stands in contrast to many of those applications of biological thought to international relations to date that have given short shrift to one of the most important factors in explaining human success. References to "human nature" in IR theory almost universally imply the ethical limitations of human beings; they are resignations

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[20] Krebs, Ronald and Patrick Thaddeus Jackson. 2007. "Twisting Tongues and Twisting Arms: The Power of Political Rhetoric." *European Journal of International Relations* 13(1): 35–66.

[21] De Waal, Francis. 1996. *Good Natured: The Origins of Right and Wrong in Humans and Other Animals*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2.

to our immoral nature. Humans are the scorpions who cannot help but sting the frog. Yet this is a strikingly incomplete understanding of what makes us human. We are "moral animals," to quote the title of Robert Wright's book, the same phrase used by Morgenthau in his quote at the very beginning of this book, ironically because the latter is so associated with the pessimistic, unethical, or amoral understanding of humankind. One of the aims of this book is to reclaim the use of human nature from those who do not understand it.

Humans' ethical sense is physically embodied in our emotions. Our feelings are evolved mechanisms that lead us to automatically experience outrage at injustice to ourselves and others, guilt for our moral transgressions, and shame at having them exposed. These have all had the effect of promoting human chances in the evolutionary process. While we might reach different moral conclusions through active deliberation, our first draft morally is always intuitive. And even if we, for instance, decide that what is most humanitarian is to refrain from all violence regardless of the consequences, while others decide that violence might lead to fewer deaths in the long run and is therefore justified on the basis of the same humanitarian benchmark, our very concern for others is not something we can reason our way to. It is already there. We "know" it because we feel it.

Morality originated under conditions of anarchy precisely because of its adaptive function in promoting material well-being. It is not despite anarchy, as structural realists maintain, but on account of anarchy that humans have an ethical sense. "[O]ur noble tendencies might not only have survived the ruthless pressures of the material world, but actually have been nurtured by them."[22] Therefore, there can be no amoral "autonomy of the political sphere." The environment selected for morality, a case of "first image reversed" causation.[23]

This is not to say that states apply moral principles objectively, impartially, and even-handedly any more than individuals do. Their claims of unfairness or harm are just as myopic, inclined to give themselves the moral benefit of the doubt. Actions we take are not

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[22] Frank, Robert H. 1988. *Passions within Reason: The Strategic Role of the Emotions*. New York: Norton, ix.

[23] Kertzer, Joshua D. and Dustin Tingley. 2018. "Political Psychology in International Relations: Beyond the Paradigms." *Annual Review of Political Science* 21: 329–330.

as threatening as the same actions taken by others, as students of the security dilemma have long observed. Others' blows hurt more and are less justified than ours. States, made as they are of humans, are as self-righteous as they are righteous. Yet this should not distract from the phenomenology of morality, the subjective feeling that one is in the right, and its implications for understanding international relations. And as we will see, the combination of moral condemnation and binding morality inherent in self-righteousness is a potent and destructive ethical cocktail.

Evolutionary ethics has implications for both liberal and realist approaches to morality. A truncated understanding of morality confines the empirical and positive study of morality in international relations, restricting our focus to just a few distinct and largely modern phenomena such as humanitarian intervention and foreign aid. While important, they are hardly the whole story. This is only the (humanitarian) tip of the larger moral iceberg. The book should be read as a complement and a corrective to liberal accounts and tendencies, not a polemic. Yet it also demands that we allow for the likelihood that there are genuinely felt moral concerns on the part of others that we do not share. To properly understand morality, we need to try to escape our own subjectivity. This is not always easy. As we will see in Chapter 6, for instance, German leaders felt they had every right to complain that their imperial empire was unjustifiably small, a notion premised on the common assumption at the time that there was a natural distinction to be made between civilized and uncivilized nations. How the colonized felt about it was irrelevant to them.

The liberal position, however, is considerably stronger than the structural realist or rationalist position of the "autonomous sphere." Much of IR scholarship explicitly maintains or implicitly accepts that the anarchic nature of the international system differentiates anarchic international politics from interpersonal interactions within well-organized societies in a way that makes morality irrelevant to foreign affairs. Save references to "greedy states,"[24] generally ethically sanitized by relabeling them as "revisionists," there is no mention of ethics. Free-loading becomes "free-riding." Rationalists might write of "cheating," but this seems to evoke no outrage. After all, we can simply

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[24] Glaser, Charles. 2000. *Rational Theory of International Politics*. Princeton University Press.

call it "defection." Morality is scrubbed away. In amoral accounts of international relations such as these, even killing on the part of the state is treated phlegmatically. It is "just business." Violence is used without moral qualms but also borne without moral condemnation. There are no vengeful fantasies, no declarations of just rights or claims of being unjustly wronged. Human beings, and their leaders in larger groups, neither see or speak evil. What happens in anarchy stays in anarchy.

This is at odds with what we know about the perpetration of violence at every level of human society. Fiske and Rai write that "most violence is *morally motivated*…. [T]he person doing the violence subjectively feels that what she is doing is right: she believes that she should do the violence." In fact, "she is actually moved by moral emotions such as loyalty or outrage,"[25] that is, the binding foundations and moral condemnation, respectively. This is known as "virtuous violence" and is much more common than pure, morally indifferent, and instrumental killing. By presuming instrumental violence, we are missing the fact that most use of physical force, from the "war room to death row,"[26] is moralistic. Pinker argues, "The world has far too much morality. If you added up all the homicides committed in pursuit of self-help justice, the casualties of religious and revolutionary wars, the people executed for victimless crimes and misdemeanors and the targets of ideological genocides, they would surely outnumber the fatalities from amoral predation and conquest."[27] Or, as Walzer asserts in one of this book's epigraphs, "For as long as men and women have talked about war, they have talked about it in terms of right and wrong."[28]

Predatory violence, based on a pure desire for gain and greed with no ethical inhibitions, does unfortunately exist both within states and without. Not all humans have an ethical sense; nor do all state leaders, the Nazi regime being the most prominent example. However, that is precisely the point. Hitler's Germany does not represent the

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[25] Fiske, Alan Page and Tage Shakti Rai. 2014. *Virtuous Violence: Hurting and Killing to Create, Sustain, End, and Honor Social Relationships*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 5.

[26] Slovic, Paul, C. K. Mertz, David M. Markowitz, Andrew Quist, and Daniel Västfjäll. 2020. "Virtuous Violence from the War Room to Death Row." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 117(34): 20474–20482.

[27] Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, 622.

[28] Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 3.

norm of international relations, as it would were the "autonomy of the political sphere" to accurately depict the nature of world politics. This extreme example of pure immorality reveals the essential moral quality of humankind. As De Waal writes, "A society lacking notions of right and wrong is about the worst thing we can imagine – if we can imagine it at all."[29]

It is important, however, not to push the biological argument too far. Very few evolutionary psychologists or theorists of moral psychology are biological determinists. They recognize the tremendous human potential for moral entrepreneurship and dizzying cultural variation in the application of moral values. Indeed this book will highlight two moral *revolutions* that have affected the very nature of international relations, seen at work in the case chapters on German foreign policy. Even within each moral foundation, there are a number of values that conflict with one another, tradeoffs and tensions resolved differently across space but also time. Think of the difficulties in reconciling liberty and equality in modern liberal states, even though both grow out of respect for the individual. The implications of particular moral principles, that is, the operationalization of moral foundations into specific moral norms, can also vary widely. Even if communist and liberal systems both aim at creating a more humane society, they are profoundly different. Ideologies and –isms (nationalism, Marxism, Gaullism, etc.) often perform this work of translation.

When it comes to the binding foundations, owing loyalty to a group does not tell us what constitutes the group in the first place, nor the basis on which authority rests. This reminds us not to take for granted the modern *nation*-state, in which citizens identify with others on the basis of certain shared characteristics. Not only does binding morality not identify these traits and attributes, the creation of nations themselves as "imagined communities"[30] in Europe was a moral revolution that called into question the basis of legitimate authority for royal sovereigns.

Nevertheless, there are limits to even moral revolutions. We are always working with a particular moral menu defined by our evolutionary origins. We reimagine and reconfigure these moral foundations

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[29] De Waal, *Good Natured*, 3.
[30] The term is that of Anderson, Benedict. 2006. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso Books.

into new constellations, but we cannot manufacture new moral impulses. I think of our biological inheritance as a set of ingredients that can be combined in an incredible diversity of ways to suit our cultural tastes. Yet there are some tastes that are universally appealing or unappealing to us. Although cultural and individual-level variation in moral definition abounds, there are certain moral universals such as honesty, fairness, reciprocity, and the condemnation of unjustified aggression that are so universal as to suggest a strong biological foundation. They literally make us human.

Not only does evolution inform what is morally universal; it also illuminates moral divides and individual-level variation. While the emotional feeling of concern for others in need is so common in the species that it seems to be universal across societies, this does not mean that it is felt to the same degree across individuals, and indeed some might lack this impulse entirely. The same is also true of the binding foundations. This, in addition to tensions between the two moral intuitions, creates plenty of room for ethical debate. I draw on Duckitt's "dual process model" of ideology, which shows that political divisions are largely reducible to two dimensions of moral conflict, one defined by a humanitarian motivation to provide for others' welfare, the other defined by a desire to protect the ingroup.[31] In contemporary politics, the former expresses itself in advocacy for cosmopolitan projects of multilateralism and global aid, the latter in hawkish foreign policy attitudes. These ideological differences frequently divide left from right in modern nation-states.

Each dimension is associated with foundational characterizations of the social environment – second-order moral beliefs, that is, perceptions about the morality of others. The motivation to protect is grounded in a notion of the world as a dangerous place in which the fine, upstanding, and honorable members of a community must bind together against wrongdoers. Those who lack the motivation to provide see the world as a competitive struggle of all-against-all in which individuals must be amoral and ruthless. A competitive world

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[31] Duckitt, John. 2001. "A Dual-Process Cognitive-Motivational Theory of Ideology and Prejudice." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 33: 41–113; Duckitt, John, Claire Wagner, Ilouize Du Plessis, and Ingrid Birum. 2002. "The Psychological Bases of Ideology and Prejudice: Testing a Dual Process Model." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 83(1): 75.

is different from a dangerous one, in that belief in the latter is highly moralized, distinguishing between others who are good and bad, moral and immoral. It is only in the former that we find believers in the autonomy of the political sphere.

While we are accustomed to thinking of humanitarian and even multilateralist attitudes about foreign affairs as having an ethical core, this book shows that the foreign policy beliefs of what we now call the political right are just as moralistic. This is typically overlooked, I suspect because of the limited menu in an international relations scholarship predicated primarily on liberal values. Those who embrace what we today call a "conservative" perspective believe that strong authority is necessary to protect the innocent from the wicked. At home, strong law and order and strict adherence to moral norms are necessary to generate social stability and send a message that bad behavior will not be tolerated, something that seems unnecessary to those with more optimistic expectations about human behavior.[32] Abroad, a strong military is necessary.

Much of the resistance to the notion of a biological basis to morality is likely normative. It seems to cheapen our better angels, especially if we understand these as ultimately serving a selfish motive of survival, albeit one of which we are unconscious. And biological arguments have a (undeservedly) deterministic reputation; if human beings are just hardwired to act in certain ways, such as favor their ingroups, this seems to deny us the ability to effect change in moral values, not to mention a basis on which to condemn those who violate certain ethical maxims. We cannot blame others for things they cannot control. Plus, wasn't Hitler an evolutionist? That can't be good.

The arguments of this book hopefully clear up some of these misconceptions. More than that, I argue that understanding the biological basis of morality is much more normatively satisfying than the dominant understanding in international relations – that norms are purely the product of social construction. Constructivist approaches argue that what constitutes right and wrong is purely (or at least largely) the product of intersubjective agreement at any time and place. If this is all there

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[32] Altemeyer, Robert A. 1998. "The Other 'Authoritarian Personality'." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 30: 47–91; Feldman, Stanley. 2003. "Enforcing Social Conformity: A Theory of Authoritarianism." *Political Psychology* 24(1): 41–74.

is to morality, we are denied a firm foundation from which to ethically judge others' behavior, even Hitler. Humanitarianism, just as much as ingroup patriotism, lacks justification. Others have noted this tension in liberal norms scholarship. It implicitly assumes a humanitarian benchmark for assessing moral progress, yet taken to its logical theoretical conclusion, it has no external theoretical viewpoint by which to do so. Biology tells us that humanitarianism has material roots arising from the ways by which the exchange of reciprocal gestures, sanctioned by our feelings of right and wrong, that allowed human beings to thrive. This is precisely what Hitler, who dismissed humanitarianism as bourgeois, Christian morality with no basis in material reality, got wrong about evolution. Conversely, we must acknowledge the ubiquitous presence of ingroup favoritism. This is the price for liberal moralists. Yet the empirical findings of this book buttress those from other disciplines that outgroup hate and moral indifference to humanity are not equivalent to ingroup love; nor are they ingrained human traits. Hitler's was a perverted version of binding morality. I discuss the normative issues raised by the empirics of this book in the concluding chapter alongside an empirical evaluation of some of Hitler's worst immoral excesses.

## Empirical Strategies and the Plan of the Book

My aim is to offer a new characterization of the nature, quite literally, of international relations, one informed by evolutionary ethics. Since anarchy "caused" the development of morality, there is no reason to believe that morality somehow disappears when countries enter the fray of international relations. Since the world is anarchic, states might engage in more self-help. But more often than not, this is "self-help justice," the same things that individuals would do, or feel justified doing, in the absence of established order. My evolutionary account considers IR to be just one more domain of human interaction, not an autonomous sphere, given the common denominator – human beings. In this way, looking for the difference between "public" and "private" morality is a false errand. This is just as true in power politics as it is in other aspects of international relations. To understand the nature *of* power politics, we must understand the nature *in* power politics. These types of paradigm-challenging contributions are often weak on empirics. I believe that the evidentiary standards should be proportional to the boldness of the claim. I have three main strategies.

An evolutionary account proves especially tricky to test, since the processes leading to the behaviors I uncover are unobservable. My first strategy is to take a number of theories from moral and social psychology grounded in evolutionary claims and show that they illuminate critical components of international relations and foreign policy behavior. Because binding morality creates cohesive groups that project moral expectations and standards onto other groups, we should witness the same moral dynamics at work between groups as within them. My second empirical strategy is to take advantage of the fact that universal behaviors that emerge from our biology are automatic and intuitive. I utilize these two strategies in the first two empirical chapters of this book, which rely wholly on quantitative data. The more universal the domains from which I find evidence – across different cultural and non-Western national contexts, at different levels of analysis, and in political and non-political environments – the stronger the claim that they have a basis in human evolution. My third strategy is the "least likely" case, demonstrating the centrality of morality in the behavior of perhaps the biggest, baddest bully in international relations – Germany following Bismarck's departure up to and including (in certain limited ways) the Nazi regime. Germany, perhaps more than any other country, ostensibly shows what happens when foreign policy is stripped of morality. In the last six chapters, I turn to the German case studies, which demonstrate many of the mechanisms highlighted by evolutionary accounts – the importance of audiences, the moral underpinnings of political ideology – in action.

Because moral condemnation is a part of our biology, when we talk about war and violence, we cannot help but moralize. Whenever humans talk about harm and threat, they automatically speak evil. To say that some individual, group, or country is threatening is *inherently* an act of moral condemnation, in a way that is not true of the way we think about threats from nonhuman sources. A bear stealing your picnic basket is scary. A 6′8″ human doing the same is scary but also a bad man. With Caleb Pomeroy, I test this claim in Chapter 4 with a word embedding analysis of several large textual corpora. Word embedding analyses can be used to measure our implicit associations by looking for the company that particular words keep. Because harm and threat are so inextricably intertwined with moral condemnation and disapproval, utterances of words indicating these concepts have a consistent negative moral valence. Whether it be speeches before

the United Nations or private deliberations of American foreign policy officials, when policymakers and politicians talk about harm and threat, they simultaneously use words indicating judgments of immorality. We find the same is true of a massive quotidian and nonpolitical corpus meant to represent the entire English language. Elites do not operate autonomously from moral considerations in ways that differentiate them from ordinary people.

Fiske's "warmth-competence" model identifies moral characteristics as the most important criteria by which we form our impressions of others.[33] We notice what might present material threats or opportunities for us, and someone's ethical character is the most important thing to know. In other words, we see evil (and good). Chapter 4 indicates that we do the same with other nation-states. An original survey experiment on the Russian public shows that moral attributes are the single most important basis by which respondents make threat assessments of both other individuals and other nation-states, outweighing even power. Yet morality is nowhere to be seen in theories of threat assessment in international relations, presumably because the political sphere is thought to be autonomous and impervious to ethics. Again with Caleb Pomeroy, I buttress these findings by analyzing two observational surveys of Chinese respondents. One shows that attributions of Americans as being warlike are extremely highly correlated with assignations of immorality, barbarity, arrogance, and insincerity. The other shows that the more citizens of this US rival make negative moral assessments about the character of Americans, the more concerned they are about American involvement in the Pacific region on a variety of issues, even while controlling for threat perception. This shows the broader generalizability and external validity of the Russian experiment, which did not ask respondents to answer questions about real-life foreign policy issues. Combined, the results reassure us that this is not just a WEIRD (Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic) phenomenon, but a frequent complaint about psychological theories.[34]

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[33] Fiske, Susan T., Amy J. C. Cuddy, and Peter Glick. 2007. "Universal Dimensions of Social Cognition: Warmth and Competence." *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 11(2): 77–83.

[34] Henrich, Joseph, Steven J. Heine, and Ara Norenzayan. 2010. "Most People Are Not WEIRD." *Nature* 466(7302): 29.

If moral condemnation has a basis in evolution, then it should be easy to invoke and hard to avoid. A literature largely sympathetic to my claims maintains that individuals and publics develop mental pictures or "images" of specific others, more often than not containing moralized depictions, that subsequently inform interpretations of their behavior. I do not disagree, but such history is often unnecessary. The last survey experiment in Chapter 4 tests the response of the Russian and American public to fictional countries involved in a dispute over territory with valuable resources. Leaders of those countries who use force and cause casualties in occupying 50% of the territory, as opposed to making a diplomatic demand for an equal split, are morally judged as less trustworthy and greedier. Using force and causing harm to others matters much more than whether the country was pursuing oil or water, another manipulated aspect of the scenario meant to capture whether or not respondents were more forgiving of action in a "lifeboat" situation of material scarcity. Respondents in both countries judge the pursuit of water less harshly than oil, but this effect is small in comparison to the other treatments. Even in the absence of crystallized images, moral condemnation quickly emerges.

Recent advances in moral and social psychology have made clear that political ideology has moorings in the same moral foundations thought to have evolutionary roots. As previously mentioned, a number of different scholars have converged on what Duckitt has labeled a "dual process model" of political ideology, a two-dimensional framework for explaining the fundamental cleavages in politics. The first dimension captures binding morality, driven by a motivation to *protect* from threats. Linked with a narrower ingroup identity, the motivational goal of protection is associated with the moral foundations that bind groups together in order to meet challenges from inside and outside. The second dimension captures a motivation to *provide* for others' welfare, what we have called humanitarian morality, which defines virtue as taking care of others. Its absence indicates the amoralism we presume is omnipresent in international politics. These moral differences account for why some see the need for strong law-and-order policies (to protect) while others emphasize the need for a comprehensive welfare net for the weakest and most vulnerable (to provide).

Since there is no autonomous political sphere, however, these divisions over morality are not confined to domestic political controversies. We project these same cleavages onto foreign policy. In the second

empirical chapter, I present evidence from surveys of Americans and Russians showing that the two-dimensional models of foreign policy belief systems found to structure foreign policy attitudes in the United States and other countries have moral roots. Militant internationalism (MI), our beliefs about the necessity of carrying a big stick and being willing to use it, is strongly associated with binding moral values, our motivation to protect. Cooperative internationalism (CI), our beliefs about the gains to be had from cooperation and our obligations to others outside our own borders, is strongly associated with the moral motivation to provide. CI and MI are enormously important dispositions, postures, and attitudinal orientations shown to help both masses and elites derive policy preferences on more specific foreign policy issues.[35] Yet these reduce to even more fundamental values that grow out of our evolutionary past. This is not just true in the liberal West, but also in Russia, as the chapter shows.

Any residual concern that this is just a WEIRD phenomenon should be dispelled by the focus here on binding morality, thought to be the more "traditional" and therefore more common set of ethical considerations, across the globe. Rather than deriving a moral theory from the Western experience and projecting it onto others, I am returning binding morality to its proper, central place in even the behavior of developed, industrialized countries.[36]

What is the least likely case to show that there is no such thing as an autonomous political sphere – the country that, if we were to show the centrality of morality, would upend our traditional depictions of international politics? It is easy to pick and choose instances of moral condemnation, binding morality, and the influence of morally judgmental audiences from the historical record. But my aim is bolder – to show the ubiquity of these processes. I choose Germany, case studies of whose behavior form the last six chapters of the book.

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[35] Wittkopf, Eugene. 1990. *Faces of Internationalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.

[36] On one score, however, the manuscript can be properly criticized. I neglect gender and sex differences in morality and its evolution. Research has found that women are more committed to the care and fairness foundations, whereas men exhibit higher scores on authority and ingroup loyalty. Graham, Jesse, Brian A. Nosek, Jonathan Haidt, Ravi Iyer, Spassena Koleva, and Peter H. Ditto. 2011. "Mapping the Moral Domain." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 101(2): 366. I consider the role of gendered stereotypes about what constitutes honor, however, below.

The reasoning is drolly captured by Norm MacDonald in his Netflix comedy special *Hitler's Dog, Gossip and Trickery*: "On the entire earth, there's only one country that really scares me. That's the country of Germany.... I don't know if you are students of history, but Germany, in the previous century, they decided to go to war. And who did they decide to go to war with? [dryly and with comic pause]: The *world*. So you think that would last about five seconds and the world would win, and that would be that. But it was actually close. Then 30 years pass, and Germany decides to go to war again. And, once again, they choose as their foe: the world.... And now this time, they *really* almost win." We might also remember that a fictionalized version of Erich Ludendorff, the German general in World War I who will make an appearance later, was featured as the bad guy in the *Wonder Woman* movie (the good one).

There is a large school of historical thought we can call the "Fischer school," which is frequently echoed in international relations scholarship and which maintains that "the entire German nation, with the exception of some small and unimportant groups, had to a greater or lesser degree become the victims of an overwhelmingly obsession with power, the desire to obtain for the German empire equality of status with the three great world powers."[37] This tendency went unbroken through Hitler: "[T]he whole of the recent German past, from the beginning of the twentieth century, was nothing more than the introductory phase of the 'greater Germany' imperialism of the national-socialists."[38] Amoralists, of course, love to dominate and do not feel any embarrassment in doing so. Wolfers notes that such amoralism was pervasive in Germany, penetrating even its theorists of international relations: "German writers have been particularly insistent that ethical standards which apply to private individuals cannot measure the behavior of states."[39] These were believers in the autonomy of the political sphere. The decisive break only came with German defeat in World War II, after which time it became a stable democracy based on Western commitments to human rights and a reliable force for good

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[37] Mommsen, W. J. 1966. "The Debate on German War Aims." *Journal of Contemporary History* 1(3): 55.

[38] Ibid, 47.

[39] Wolfers, Arnold. 1949. "Statesmanship and Moral Choice." *World Politics* 1(2): 176.

in international politics. Germany was the "tamed power"[40] with a "culture of antimilitarism,"[41] committed to maintaining international peace and prosperity through multilateral cooperation, avoiding the *Sonderweg* (special path) it had taken before.

I instead show that very little of interest about German foreign policy can be understood *without* making morality central. The typical interpretation of German foreign policy suffers from the truncated understanding of morality symptomatic of political science, international relations, and perhaps much of the humanities and social sciences. Germany is indubitably guilty of hostility to liberal morality. As Mommsen notes, the typical depiction of German foreign policy pre-World War II is "based largely on ethical convictions … reflected in the repeated condemnation of the extremism and recklessness of German nationalist and imperialist ambitions."[42] Once we widen our scope, however, to allow for the presence of binding morality as well as understand the centrality of moral condemnation in foreign affairs, we see German foreign policy (before Hitler at least) in an entirely different light. In closely analyzing Germany's foreign policy, in particular domestic political divisions over the right course to take, we also see in practice the utility of the dual-process model and the centrality of domestic and international audiences in instances of great historical importance.

These chapters proceed chronologically. The first two chapters in this section deal with Wilhelmine German foreign policy before the war, the third and fourth German domestic politics during World War I, and the last two Nazi foreign policy. Each chapter on German foreign policy is written in such a way as to be largely self-standing and to contribute to some theoretical or empirical controversy in international relations scholarship or German historiography, another way of showing that no one can avoid morality in this field, even if they tried (although they do try). Three of these chapters on pre-Nazi foreign policy are paired with a survey experiment of a contemporary population that allows me to identify the effect of morality at the microfoundational, individual level when it is particularly difficult to do so macrohistorically, which also adds to the external validity of my

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[40] Katzenstein, Peter J. (ed.). 1997. *Tamed Power: Germany in Europe*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

[41] Berger, Thomas. 1998. *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

[42] Mommsen, "The Debate on German War Aims," 48.

claims. It is entirely possible of course to read these without accepting any of what I claim about morality's evolutionary origins. Indeed one of the central themes of these chapters is the way that morality can change in revolutionary ways very quickly. However, I do believe that the case of Germany is decisive in putting to bed the notion of an autonomous political sphere, even in the context of intense imperial competition, power politics, and war.

Wilhelmine foreign policy was excessively moralistic and self-righteous. In Chapter 6, I show that German insistence on (a highly subjective understanding of) fair treatment in early twentieth-century world politics is mistaken for wanton status-seeking. The status dissatisfaction literature correctly turns our attention to the foreign policy consequences of perceived gaps between what states deserve and what they have. However, we also know this as a particular form of fairness, that of equity. Feeling unjustly rewarded for its great power position, Wilhelmine leaders provoked two crises over the status of Morocco, a nominally independent kingdom slowly falling under French control. However, in the first, it did not seek any special advantages for Germany, as it would have had it been a pure status-seeker. Instead, Germany sought the moral high ground by forcing the convocation of an international conference to settle the question of Western countries' rights more generally. This strategy ultimately backfired by denying the possibility of a bilateral deal with France but also leaving the country without a moral leg to stand on when no other Western power expressed dissatisfaction with French predominance at the Algeciras conference. Itself highly self-righteous, Germany overstated the role that moral condemnation would play for others. In the second crisis, Germany once again reacted strongly to increasing French influence in Morocco without the compensation that France had offered to other countries. To force a settlement, the Germans clumsily tried to apply military leverage by deploying a gunboat while simultaneously disavowing such intentions through utterly transparent pretexts. This disingenuousness created suspicions on the part of the English in particular (since morality is the main way by we judge others) and generated a crisis wholly centered on who was to blame. When the moral duel exploded into the public sphere, the countries came to the brink of war. Even though no shots were exchanged, the crisis crystallized and hardened the divisions between Germany and its soon-to-be World War I adversaries.

The current literature bakes justice into the conception of status and does not provide a mechanism for distinguishing status and fairness. The key, I argue, is whether the actor in question is demanding exclusive rights for itself, consistent with a desire to occupy a rarefied rank that has more value the fewer who have it; or whether it is content to share a higher rank with others who have earned it. Based on what we know from fairness-seeking in moral psychology, I hypothesize that fairness is judged by whether or not one is excluded from a club which they feel entitled to join, but once included they do not begrudge the admission of others who deserve it. However, they do not feel the same outrage when others are excluded as when they are; they are self-righteous.

We see this in both Moroccan crises, but so as to more precisely distinguish between pure status-seeking and fairness-seeking, I supplement these case studies with two survey experiments of the Russian public. Asked about membership in the Group of Eight (G8), respondents find exclusion to be unfair but not threatening to Russian status. Respondents prefer a more inclusive organization that admits other countries who deserve to be included by virtue of their GDP to an organization in which only Russia is admitted beyond the existing members. When asked to create their own Group of X organization, they respond to experimental manipulations of fairness through alternative measures of GDP, even becoming less likely to include Russia when it is ranked lower in economic activity. Since Wilhelmine Germany and contemporary Russia are regarded as status-seekers par excellence, these findings should lead us to rethink the status quo on status-seeking in international relations.

Chapter 7 tackles a second explanation for Germany's aggressive and bellicose foreign policy during the Wilhelmine period – suspected efforts by entrenched elites to distract from the country's stunted democratic development by generating international threats to unify the country, of which the Moroccan crises were prominent examples. These accounts fail to come to terms with the moral revolution occurring in Germany at the time – the rise of nationalism. A focus on Germany brings home the ways by which political actors can create wholly new combinations of moral values in ways that dramatically affect foreign policy – that is, cultural construction on top of a biological foundation.

The identification of the group as the nation, and the understanding that the nation's welfare is the leader's primary concern, required a

revolution in the basis of authority. The legitimacy of the ruler had to be grounded in the people's will rather than divine right, a process that even extended to those countries that retained their sovereigns and did not undergo democratic revolutions. This amounted to an assertion of the moral supremacy of ingroup loyalty over deference to authority and a severing of the de facto equivalence of the two captured in the pithy phrase "L'etat, c'est moi."

Although this moral revolution was not confined to Germany, when it did come to the Reich, it implied that the emperor owed loyalty to the people, even if they were not (and should not be, in the eyes of the nationalist right) equal participants in a democracy. For this reason, German elites could not (and would not have wanted to) invent new ideas that called into question the nature of monarchical rule and their very privileges. Indeed it is these very ideas that allowed German nationalists to begin to critique the emperor for his vacillating and indecisive foreign policy, criticism that would have been previously unthinkable on the part of the German right because it would have been seen as demonstrating insufficient loyalty to the sovereign. The nationalist right began to demand assertiveness in foreign policy and to question the indecisive policy of the Wilhelmine regime in a way that was previously ethically prohibited. In a dangerous world full of immoral enemies, it is natural for binding moralists to venerate will, determination, and resolve since these are thought to be the bases for prevailing in conflicts that safeguard the nation's interests. The second Moroccan crisis was decisive for the breakthrough of a vocal "nationalist opposition," which was previously an oxymoron. During this episode, Wilhelmine elites unsuccessfully tried to opportunistically incite nationalist agitation to use as bargaining leverage vis-à-vis France and England. However, they did not invent such an opposition in the first place.

The internal moral dynamics in Wilhelmine Germany have implications for models of international relations that try to capture the relationship between leaders and their audiences, such as the now well-known "audience cost" models. First, any tendency of elites to avoid censure by standing firm assumes a particular constellation of binding moral values, one in which the nation is felt to be a community to whom all owe loyalty, even the authority figure. Second, any model emphasizing the effect of domestic publics on leaders for lack of resolve or insufficient patriotism is implicitly moral since resolution

is a virtue. Since the moral nature of accusations of insufficient resolve is difficult to establish empirically through qualitative case studies, I supplement this chapter with a survey experiment conducted on the American public. For those who hold dangerous world beliefs, four virtues generally thought to indicate "competence" – disciplined and hard-working, strong-willed and determined, tough and strong, and persistent and resolute – are actually used as moral benchmarks, particularly for leaders. The standards by which binding moralists in Germany held Wilhelm II are the same used by contemporary Americans for their leaders.

We also see Germany's excessive self-righteousness in World War I. Binding morality, I argue in Chapters 8 and 9, is directly responsible for Germany's self-defeating behavior during the conflict – its refusal to seek a negotiated settlement when it became clear to rational decision-makers that there was no hope of real victory. According to bargaining models of war, war reveals private information about resolve and power, to which decision-makers respond rationally by increasing or lowering their reservation price for settling. When we are in a hole, we stop digging. Germany during World War I presents a puzzle for this baseline rationalist expectation, and theoretical accounts offer three rational reasons as to why leaders in a losing situation might nevertheless continue to fight, a number dealing with Wilhelmine Germany as a central case. If others cannot be trusted to abide by any peace settlement, a commitment problem arises that makes fighting on rational. Even exploring diplomatic settlement could reveal private information about a lack of resolve. Self-interested leaders fearing that defeat will result in domestic turmoil, revolution, and the loss of their elite prerogatives might have incentives to "gamble for resurrection." This might even result in the inflation of war aims precisely as the battlefield and home-front situation are turning against them in an effort to buy off the ordinary public for its sacrifices.

While these explanations are all theoretically plausible in other contexts, I argue that German elites' resistance to seeking diplomatic settlement, the concern with domestic revolution, and the inflation of war aims are all more parsimoniously accounted for through a focus on morality. All three were the expression of the ethics of German nationalists. Binding morality has built-in escalatory dynamics that make it hard to admit defeat – in this case, literally. Fundamental to this "ethics of community" is an understanding of adversaries as

having largely insatiable demands, in other words, the excessive egoism that generates moral opprobrium. This generates the perception of a commitment problem that makes anything other than victory unacceptable; it even creates demands for territorial expansion so as to secure the country in the future. Right-wing German nationalists would not even allow the government to make peace overtures to implacable enemies lest they infer a lack of resolve. The German right scorned demands for further democratization during the war as selfish class politics indicating that the country was not unified enough – bound together – for this existential struggle.

Chapter 9 shows that as the war dragged on and Germany's troubles accumulated, the German military, a bulwark of binding morality, even raised its wartime aspirations so as to adequately compensate for the people's loyal sacrifices. As citizens starve, soldiers perish, and property is destroyed, there is a natural tendency to accrue some gains to justify the losses. Otherwise all was in vain, a betrayal of all those whose sacrificed. This can lead to an increase in war aims when the rational course is of course to cut losses. The binding foundations lead individuals toward demanding more just as the objective situation on the battlefield should be pushing them to settle for less.

This irrationality is best seen in relief, by comparing the nationalist right not only to the German left but also to the consequentialist and realist ethics of the German chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, who was eventually swept aside by conservative forces. Careful from the beginning not to define German war aims too grandly, he adjusted his expectations downward as Germany faltered at home and on the fronts. The chancellor pragmatically advocated for domestic reform precisely as a way of preserving German unity during the conflict and avoiding the overthrow of the regime.

This effect of binding morality on increasing reservation price, the most obvious manifestation of the irrationality induced by binding moralism, is more difficult to establish than its other impacts. I therefore conducted a survey panel experiment, presented in Chapter 9, on a sample of the Russian public, which induced the same inflation dynamics found in World War I Germany. I presented respondents with a hypothetical war with the United States in the Arctic over a valuable piece of territory with natural resources, in which, like World War I Germany, Russia is continually falling behind with dwindling chances for victory. Those who identify as binding moralists persist

for much longer in the conflict. Those in the sample who stay in the conflict until the very end increase their reservation price over time, even as the Russians are suffering disproportionate casualties. This is irrational by any standard. This tendency is exacerbated further by an experimental treatment framing capitulation as a betrayal of fallen Russian soldiers. Whereas we might posit hidden ulterior and selfishly rational, motives for German generals trying to avoid a collapse of the German empire and save their hides, we cannot do so for ordinary Russian citizens answering questions about a hypothetical conflict.

Therefore, German foreign policy through World War I was delusional but (highly subjectively) righteous. Ultimately, Germany had far too much morality for its own good, with binding morality contributing to the very collapse of the authoritarian regime. If this exemplar of illiberal foreign policy is nevertheless morally motivated, it indicates that it is time to reevaluate the role played by ethics in foreign affairs. There is no greater liberal success story in international relations than post-war West Germany. Indeed its story is an exemplar of a broader narrative of the march of Western morality, which explains its empirical appeal to constructivist norms scholars. However, by mistaking a lack of liberalism for a lack of morality, we fundamentally misunderstand the dynamics of German policy up until Hitler.

The Nazis, however, were a fundamentally different type of right-wing force, led not by dangerous but by competitive world beliefs. Duckitt's dual-process model helps illuminate the difference. Believers in a competitive world, marked by material scarcity, lack the most basic and universal moral impulses – those of humanitarian concern – and are responsible for the type of predatory violence that treats others as mere objects no more worthy of moral condemnation than moral consideration. For such amoralists who see a dog-eat-dog world, predation, cheating, and violence are not lamentable lesser evils. These acts have no ethical valence at all. Hitler dismissed the very existence of humanitarian ethics as a mere social construction and illusion, refusing even the typical scorn more traditional German nationalists expressed vis-à-vis their wartime adversaries.

This is the second moral revolution explored in this book, a reconstitution of the political right on a racial basis under the Nazi Party. Chapter 10 shows that Hitler's regime explicitly redefined the national community not as a cultural and linguistic entity but as a biological one. Rather than a continuation of previous tendencies in German

nationalism, it was a decisive moral break and led to a wholly different basis for, and type of, international aggression. These racial groups, he argued, competed for resources – their daily bread – in a scarce world.[43] He preached ingroup loyalty and deference to his absolute authority (the *Führerprinzip*) so that the Aryan race might act in a unified manner to scrape for resources in a materially limited world. By defining the ingroup racially, in which what bound individuals together was not shared history but blood, Hitler paved the way for practices previously unimaginable even for radical nationalists, such as forced sterilization to advance the race (from the Nazi perspective) and of course the genocide of the Jewish people.

Most important for this book, Hitler's version of binding morality did away with any humanitarian concern for those outside the group. His moral revolution was also a moral devolution. In this way, Hitler's version of binding morality was a perversion of the usual ethics of community since it contained no element of moral condemnation directed externally, only internally at traitors to the German racial group. He felt no need, at least in private, to justify harm to other nations' actions by virtue of their immoral nature. Hitler dismissed the ambitions of Weimar nationalists of the Wilhelmine variety, whose only interest was to rail against the injustices of the Versailles Treaty and demand the return of lost German lands that were rightly theirs, perhaps going as far as annexing the remnants of the German-speaking Austrian empire. For Hitler, who presumed amorality in international affairs, no one had any right to any piece of territory; one simply took it. As a consequence, he defined foreign policy goals that were fundamentally different from those in pre–World War I and even wartime Wilhelmine Germany. Rather than security from implacably hostile and immoral adversaries, Germany's fair share in the imperial division of the world, or the unification of a culturally defined people in a single country, Hitler sought *Lebensraum* (living space) to feed Germany's growing population. Devoid of humanitarianism, Hitler was free to identify goals for German continental expansion that went far beyond what anyone in Wilhelmine Germany had ever considered.

Chapter 11 demonstrates how Nazi amorality led Hitler and the Nazi regime to undertake a fundamentally different type of occupation

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[43] In this way, Nazism is different from the more pedestrian "looking out for no. 1" attitudes of selfish individuals. It had a group basis.

in Eastern Europe compared to the German army in 1915–1917, in which he aimed not at the paternalistic civilizing of conquered peoples but rather the elimination, evacuation, and instrumentalization of non-Aryan populations. Not all occupation and conquest are the same; the difference is in the underlying moral assumptions of the expansionist. While the occupation of Eastern Europe by the Wilhelmine regime was brutal and therefore by definition inhumane, there is simply no comparison to what the Nazis did and what they would have in all likelihood continued to do had they not lost the war. The difference was the shift from demonization to dehumanization that occurred as the nature of the German right transformed.

As cruel and inhumane as Hitler was, however, his regime drives home a central point of this book. When we assert that international relations are an autonomous sphere or world apart in which morality stops at the edge of the ingroup, we (often unknowingly) presume that Hitlers will be the norm rather than the exception. The Führer exhibited the phlegmatic indifference to moral questions in international affairs that we are so often told to assume. Thankfully, this is not the case.

Most strikingly, however, is the way by which even Hitler operated under the shadow of morality. We will see in Chapter 10 that Hitler largely hid his lack of moral outrage vis-à-vis Germany's historical enemies from the German public during the 1920s, purposively instrumentalizing the Versailles Treaty for propaganda purposes. Following the election of 1930, after which the Nazi Party become a major force in German electoral politics, he entirely jettisoned his amoral biological worldview from his public comments, indicating that he understood it could not appeal widely enough to even a nationally minded electorate. This made it difficult for the British in particular to establish whether he was a (now garden-variety) German nationalist of the Wilhelmine sort or a racial nationalist intent on European domination. They lost crucial time.

This account contrasts sharply with frequent claims in political science and international relations, shared by constructivists and realists, that Hitler was simply a more virulent nationalist and militarist and that in any case some sort of revisionist expansion was inevitable in German foreign policy. By distinguishing between the highly moralized dangerous world beliefs of traditional German nationalists before and after World War I and the entirely amoral competitive world beliefs of

Hitler and the Nazis, the difference finally becomes clear. Both were expansionist but for entirely different reasons. The continuity school finds itself needing to explain away the Holocaust as a sort of side project for Hitler that ultimately does not say much about German foreign policy. My moral account implies that Nazi genocide cannot be extricated from the larger goal of Lebensraum. The comparison of the behavior of the Germany army in World War I and World War II in occupied Eastern Europe in the final chapter shows the human cost of the difference.

Before we turn to empirics, however, the next two chapters lay out the theoretical foundation. The first theoretical chapter exposes the often implicit moral standards that IR scholars bring to their study of ethics in foreign policy and the blindspots this creates. I contrast humanitarian morality with binding and realist ethics and note the central role played by moral condemnation. The second theoretical chapter reviews the evolutionary literature that accounts for these different moral foundations and contrasts my argument with prevailing international relations approaches.