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Book Reviews

Chandler, David. *From Kosovo to Kabul: Human Rights and International Intervention.* London, and Sterling, VA.: Pluto, 2002.

This work questions the ethical agenda of human rights intervention. It deals with the political basis for, and the political consequences of, ethical foreign policy and the developing human rights framework of regulation since 1990. The author asks whether in fact there is a progressive, empowering impulse in the human rights agenda.

At the outset, one encounters the background to current debates on international policy-making and the various claims of human rights advocates, as well as the shift in focus of the work of UN bodies and humanitarian NGOs. Next, the author considers the shift in a human rights approach to politics derived from domestic concerns rather than international ones. He argues that it is a pragmatic or opportunist approach to problems of domestic political legitimacy. The author considers the changing nature of international relations theory and the concentration on normative analysis. Differences in approach to rights are discussed as well as the consequences for proposed new forms of international regulation. Chandler contends that developments in international law since 1990 have not been universalizing, and extending the law has instead reinforced the political and economic inequalities. There is a consideration of whether there are still the same restrictions on the right of states to go to war. Chandler assesses human rights-based arguments that military intervention should be applied in situations of internal conflict. He asks whether peace is at the forefront of the UN's central goals. What is the impact of the human rights discourse in conflict and peacekeeping situations at this particular time? It appears that the new international courts have new powers to prosecute the governments of peripheral states for domestic abuses of power but where is the capacity to hold the major powers accountable for the international crime of war? Chandler examines the wider political implications of accepting the human rights framework. He queries the human rights critique of the political sphere, and the concept of political equality as it impacts relationships between the major powers and non-Western states. It is considered at the level of interstate relations in its wider aspect and more specifically within the domestic political sphere in the West.

The excellent Foreword by Edward S. Herman is even more meaningful when read a second time at the book's conclusion. The cogent analysis is top-notch. On the other hand, the myriad of viewpoints of those writers familiar to Chandler, may at times leave the reader needing to slow the pace of proceeding through the book. There is a reference guide, select bibliography, and index.

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