

**Non-Great Powers, Solidarism and the Responsibility to Protect -
Nordic Forces for Good¹**

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FIRST DRAFT - NOT FOR CITATION – COMMENTS WELCOME

Introduction

In 1991 George Bush Senior unveiled the idea of a New World Order envisaging it as “a world in which freedom and respect for human rights find a home among all nations” and where the United Nations and multilateralism would be the main vehicles to international order and peace. The idealist values of the interwar period were successfully reconstructed to fit the post-Cold War era and they included the significance of international institutions and law, self-determination and sovereignty, free trade and opening of markets. The hostile and inciting security discourse that had dominated and informed relations between the US and USSR during the Cold War seemed redundant. The general optimism that characterised the aftermath of the Cold War was nonetheless replaced by a set of pressing developments. Dormant ethnic strife was unleashed in places such as the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and

more recently in Sudan. These conflicts are examples of “new wars” because they are fought within states rather than between them (Kaldor, 1999). Events such as September 11, and the subsequent US led interventions into Afghanistan and Iraq, the terrorist attacks on Madrid in 2004 and London 2005, religious fundamentalism as well as the alleged clash in ideology between the Muslim and non-Muslim worlds have further complicated the international security agenda. Within this environment states and international organisations have explored new forms of conflict prevention, resolution and peace support, most recently in 2005 when the UN affirmed that the international community has a “responsibility to protect” distant others. The responsibility to protect strangers from crimes against humanity caused by ethnic and religious violence and in some cases genocide has become a powerful norm in international politics. It is closely linked with *human security* which centres on the protection of individuals against starvation, extreme poverty, disease and natural catastrophes etc. Human security and the responsibility to protect raise questions as to the future viability of the non-intervention principle that has constituted the backbone of international relations since the 17th century. Kofi Annan, (2000:43), amongst others, has questioned the extent to which it offers sufficient protection against brutal leaders who turn on their own people. In his words “once synonymous with the defence of territory from external attack, the requirements of security today have come to embrace the protection of communities and individuals from internal violence”. What is more “strictly traditional notions of sovereignty can no longer do justice to the aspirations of peoples everywhere to attain their fundamental freedoms” (Annan, 1999). His ideas are very much in line with the idea launched in the Canadian *International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty* (ICISS) report, *The Responsibility to Protect*, (2001) which contends that states have to earn their right to sovereignty by protecting their own citizens from human rights abuses and atrocities. The ICISS report carefully lays out the circumstances under which intervention can be authorised and draws extensively on just war theory for this purpose. The Commission has been central in shifting the international discourse from a strict interpretation of forcible intervention to the responsibility to protect norm even if the two are co-constitutive. The protection norm would be flawed if it was not backed up by the possibility of resorting to forceful intervention as a last resort. These are ideas that are consistent with the solidarist branch of the English School of international theory which will be examined here.

Western states have responded to these developments by internationalising their national militaries and restructuring their defence policies in line with the demands of the emergent international protection norm. In so doing they have recognised the significance of civil-military co-operation as a way of coping with the demands emerging from the human security concept, and the Nordic States (Finland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden) are no exception

here (Bergman, 2004). The US and UK air raids on Kosovo in 1999, the operations “Enduring Freedom” and “Iraqi Freedom” in Afghanistan and Iraq respectively, humanitarian disasters and wars in Africa have forced states to consider the extent to which brute force is an ethically justifiable way of preventing human suffering and whether they have a moral obligation to offer such protection. As we shall see below the Nordics vary in their conception of the legitimacy of foreign intervention in preventing human suffering. However, they have increasingly come to use their national militaries as “forces for good” with duties across borders, even if they agree that the use of brute force should be minimised to exceptional circumstances and should always be accompanied with other solidarist –inspired policies.

Theories also vary in their conception of humanitarian intervention and the closely related responsibility to protect norm. Realism offers five key objections to humanitarian intervention pointing to the tendency of great powers to intervene in those parts of the world where there are material and security gains to be made. Any attempt to frame forcible intervention within distinctively moral language should therefore be treated with a great measure of suspicion. Communitarians object to intervention on the basis of the goodness of political community itself, and pluralists argue that intervention jeopardises the international order - these objections will be discussed briefly below. Many attempts to substantiate the key claims of the Solidarist branch of the English School have focused on debates on humanitarian intervention and the deconstruction of the non-intervention norm – normally associated with the pluralist branch of the theory- in favour of the emergent responsibility to protect norm. Nicholas Wheeler (2000), amongst others, has come to view humanitarian intervention, providing it meets a set of humanitarian requirements, as a solidarist duty on the part of the members of international society. He nonetheless concedes that humanitarian intervention is often misused and given this we need to scrutinise the legitimacy and humanitarian outcomes of any given intervention (Wheeler, 2000:309). There is reason to ask whether the solidarist branch of the English School, of which Wheeler is part, perhaps invests too much power in humanitarian intervention as a means by which international society can be peacefully transformed and expanded beyond the privileged West? Most interventions are not noticeably humanitarian and judging whether they are legitimate is a highly subjective undertaking. This article explores whether states, more specifically non-great powers, that question the moral legitimacy of intervention, including Finland, Norway and Sweden, in favour of a mixture of non-military and military policies, obstruct the global solidarist project, or do they conduct an alternative solidarist discourse? Furthermore, is participation in armed humanitarian intervention the *only* key criterion by which the solidarist content of states’ military commitments can be examined, when such opposition to military intervention

might have more to do with their general support for international law. This is deeply embedded in Nordic foreign policy behaviour, rather than simple opposition to foreign intervention as a way of preventing human suffering or unwillingness to ‘sacrifice national lives for the sake of people far away’ (Kaldor, 1999:13), even if the Danish case is somewhat different. All the Nordic militaries, nonetheless, reveal a pronounced willingness to expand their sense of international duty by performing an active role as ‘forces for good’ with a solidarist-minded approach to conflict and sense of ethical obligation to distant others (Bergman, 2004). A key question asked here is how far are they willing to go in using their militaries for this purpose? These are contentions that will be discussed throughout this piece through an investigation of the internationalisation of the Nordic states’ militaries and their conception of the responsibility to protect norm as well as the merits of forcible intervention in enforcing it.

The English School, solidarism and non-great powers

The English School offers itself as a *via media* between realist and idealist international theory. Despite this it has been misconstrued as a form of realism insofar as it does not dispute the constraining effects of the logic of anarchy on international society. As in the case of neoliberalism the ES contends that co-operation between states is possible within the present anarchical order. Yet, the ES goes further than neoliberalism by postulating that anarchy does not preclude the transformation of systems into international societies of states, which are not alien to morality (Dunne, 1998:11). Through their membership of the “anarchical society” states share a common commitment to spoken and unspoken rules, international institutions, limited forms of co-operation, all of which help to maintain order in international politics (Bull, 1977). Key to this claim is that states have reached a minimum level of agreement on limitations of the use of violence, respect for property rights and diplomacy. These principles are guarded by international organisations and in the last resort just forms of war (Bull, 1977). The concept of order is the most central element of what has been defined as the pluralist branch of the English School. In essence it seeks to find a “more or less optimal solution to the problem of how to accommodate plurality of cultural values within a well-ordered international system ... which ... embodies a “thin” morality” (Dunne, 1998:11).

In his later work, Hedley Bull turned to “the revolt against the West”, by which he meant “the struggle of non-European or non-Western states, peoples and political movement to challenge

the dominant position of Western nations in the international system” (Bull, 1984:19) as well as advancing their entitlement to equivalent forms of justice (Bull, 1984: 19).. He contended that the expansion of international society, as a consequence of decolonisation and the dispersion of global human rights and justice, substantiates the claim that a solidarist international community is plausible in the present international order (Bull, 1984). Indeed, a central theme in Bull’s work is the thorny relationship between international order and international justice in international relations. Unlike more radical theorists, in particular those of a thick cosmopolitan persuasion, Bull does not argue for the wholesale transformation of the international society, indeed he discounts this as neither possible nor desirable. But he argues that, rightly or wrongly, the developing world believes that the developed world is responsible for their present condition. In so doing they put the West on the spot. The key implication of Bull’s analysis is that if we are true to the idea of a society of states — where the majority of the members are non-Western — we have to listen and accommodate their demands. Although Bull never had the chance to offer his commentary on the emergent responsibility to protect norm it is nonetheless consistent with the call for the expansion of international society. He argued that the expansion of international society, as a consequence of decolonization and the dispersion of global human rights and justice, substantiates the claim that a solidarist international community is not only plausible but increasingly necessary in order to maintain international order (Bull, 1984). Wheeler (2000) concedes by making a solidarist case for humanitarian intervention to prevent human suffering. This he claims will add force to the solidarist project embedded in international society. Bull and other ES scholars, however, do not tell us much about the specific actors that are to be charged with the solidarist project, although he points to the role of “great responsables” in reinforcing international order (Bull, 1977). He showed less interest in what I here define as non-great powers and their role in the expansion and nurturing of international society.²

In sum, whereas the pluralist wing of the ES privileges order over justice, the solidarists see order as requiring justice. The English school provides a more progressive account of international relations than often assumed. Indeed, in its most recent variations, it takes the idea of solidarity in international relations seriously even if it does not promote a wholesale transformation of global politics. A growing number of international actors, including the Nordic states, have endorsed the expansion of rights beyond the privileged west that is central to Bull’s work, and thereby helped to create “a solidarist zone of peace” ... within an essentially pluralist international society” (Linklater, 1998:35). The English School opens up to the analysis of normative considerations in international relations, in a manner that takes account of states’ endeavours to overcome the constraints of anarchy in favour of the

establishment of international order and justice. This position is close to the Nordic conception of good international citizenship which centres on a rule-bound international society that is sensitive to issues of redistributive justice and human security.

IR scholars continue to build upon the normative content of the ES.³ The work of Ana Gonzalez-Palez and Barry Buzan's (2003: 321-339) which in turn draws upon John Vincent's conception of the "right to subsistence" is indicative of such efforts. Their general objective is to "think about the relationship between international society and the International Political Economy" (321), and its significance in promoting "the solidarist project" (330). Jackie True (2005:151) has highlighted the lack of a feminist dimension to the ES by arguing that the "international society concept has never been developed in ways that can give recognition to women's international presence". Furthermore, she argues that the English School is "ignoring a state's domestic politics" (156). My work critically evaluates the role of "non-great" powers in constituting and nurturing solidarism in international society.⁴ It centres on the Nordic states' social democratically-inspired internationalism and seeks to add a stronger agentic element to the ES by analysing a group of states' specific contributions to international solidarism.⁵ This is not to dismiss the significance of great powers in maintaining international order and making contributions to universal justice. However, most so called great powers, have yet to prove themselves as "great irresponsibles" in international society, generally having a poorer record in bringing about such things as a more equitable distribution of global income, respect for international law and institutions as well as peaceful co-existence across borders (Bull, 1980:437-447; Dunne, 2005). US ODA provisions only amounted to 0.15% of GNI in 2003, a figure that is well below the OECD average and barely more than one-fifth of the Nordic states' national contributions. (Bergman, 2006: 76). The decision to launch a military intervention into Iraq without a UN mandate is also paramount example here. Yet, the official foreign policy discourses of great powers reveal a pronounced wish to project themselves as "good states" or "cosmopolitan agents" with a strong sense of duty beyond borders (Lawler, 2005). As Chandler (2003) has argued western states frame their international obligations in distinctively normative if not ethical language. Chandler (2003) looks at the "ethical foreign policies" of US and UK, amongst others, to illustrate this paradigm shift in IR. However, if we deconstruct individual states' foreign policy discourses we detect that states vary in their conception of what it means to be an ethical actor. For George Bush II this means to position the USA and its enemies in opposite camps using words such as the Axis of Evil to define so called rouge states that supposedly house both terrorists and weapons of mass destruction. In this way the USA has created a barrier between itself and the largely Muslim world rather than attempting to see itself in others, the condition under which solidarism between peoples

can emerge (Bergman, 2007). Britain's role in recent forcible interventions has been constituted within moral language whereby its responsibility as a "great power" has been evoked, even if the specific wording has been more subtle. Both the US and the UK have evoked moral arguments about the significance of protecting innocent "others" in faraway places from their own evil and undemocratic leaders and in so doing dissipating the ideals of democracy and economic liberalism across the world. They have in other words constructed their foreign policy commitments in language conducive to certain cosmopolitan notions of good international behaviour.

Still, most empirical developments suggest that great powers are just as likely to act as the "great irresponsibles" of the international society of states (Bull, 1980:437–447; Dunne, 2005). Given this, "non-great powers", the Nordics amongst them, *might* be better placed to perform some of the duties arising from good international citizenship, in particular by being less tainted by a colonial past and power political aspirations. What is more their official foreign policy discourses are generally less provocative and do not draw a sharp distinction between the civilised and uncivilised worlds. A word of caution should be entered here though since Denmark's prime minister has depicted what he considers to be the enemies of western liberal freedoms as "the forces of darkness" (Rasmusen, 2006). The ridicule of the Prophet Mohammad by two Danish and Swedish newspapers would suggest that there is a marketplace for Huntington-inspired arguments in non-great powers as well. Denmark is perhaps the most archetypical example of a non-great power that has started to behave as a great power which its participation in US led interventions suggests. An analysis of non-great powers and their distinct contributions to global justice and order, within the international society of states, can nevertheless begin to substantiate the normative and analytical rigour of the ES. This will also enable us to question the analytical rigour of orthodox small states arguments, in particular since they are a) tainted by realist assumptions, and, b, do not tell us much about an individual agent's self perception which might not be that of a small state, but rather a medium sized power or an activist good international citizen with considerable impact upon global events (Hey 2003; Ingebritsen, C. Neumann, C., Gstohl. S. J. and Beyer, 2006). For example, Browning (2006) has recently pointed to Finland's self identity as a small but "smart" state with considerable impact upon global politics. Although the theoretical position of Ann-Sofie Dahl (1999) is somewhat obscure there is reason to observe that she has depicted Sweden as a "moral superpower". Furthermore, so called small states are not unitary actors behaving in exactly the same way. Despite this there is a tendency in academia and beyond to label all states that do not constitute great powers small states, even if such misrepresentations are inconsistent with their self identities. The Nordic states have been portrayed in this fashion despite their rather different self perceptions. The self

perceptions and identities of the Nordic states have been constituted so as to allow them to be what Lawler (2005) has defined as “good states” in global politics with duties across borders. Browning’s (2006) conception of Finland as a “smart state” also fits this argument. As such the Nordics have sought to portray themselves as significant contributors to both international order and justice rather than being mere consumers of security or passive observers of global developments, waiting to jump on the great power bandwagon whenever the opportunity arises. In its candidature to the UN Security Council Denmark constituted itself as a “small country” that is nonetheless “an active player” and a “major donor” (Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2003). Norway’s self constitution is very similar:

It must not be forgotten that small states can make significant contributions on the international arena - as we saw during the “Oslo process” in relation to the peace efforts in the Middle East. For a small state, diplomacy is very much about finding ways to “punch above its weight”. Norway is active in a series of peace negotiations world-wide (Eide, 2006:1).

In the 2007 Finnish Cabinet’s Government Programme, which is a document composed of 73 pages, there is no mentioning of the country being a small state. Instead the country is constructed as “an active member of the international community” that “contributes to global solidarity and attends to its own opportunities to exert influence.” (Finnish Prime Minister’s Office 2007:10) Sweden is somewhat different from its Nordic neighbours because of the comparably larger population and geographical size. Its self identity does not sit comfortably with small state arguments. However in a recent speech its Foreign Minister Carl Bildt (2006) states that

“unfortunately, we Swedes make up only 0,15 per cent of the world’s population, and 1,2 percent of the world’s economy – and even in the European Union, we actually represent no more than 2 per cent of the population. But that does not mean that what we do is insignificant. We have traditions of international commitment, entrepreneurship and cooperation that command respect. Swedes are often in demand both when it comes to leading international companies and working for peace and reconciliation within the UN system and elsewhere”

All four Nordic states do in one way or another recognise their smallness as it were, however, they do not see it as an obstacle to their internationalism and contributions to global solidarism. On the contrary they view their own efforts with both self respect and confidence. The internationalisation of their armed forces should be viewed against the backdrop of this contention. Below we shall examine contending ethical justifications for or against intervention which will also tell us something about the credentials of the process in inspiring

solidarism in international society. These ideas will then be substantiated through an investigation of the internationalisation of the Nordic states' military policies and their conception of duty across borders.

Solidarism and the responsibility to protect

The question whether the international community and/or its members have a universal solidarist responsibility to protect innocent civilians from human rights abuses is central to normative debates in IR, including those conducted within the framework of the ES. We have to ask ourselves where the responsibility to protect resides, with each individual political community or with humanity at large? Theorists vary in their conception of the moral legitimacy of foreign intervention as response to human rights abuses. For communitarians such as Walzer our moral reasoning is governed by the norms of our community rather than some obscure universal principle. As Dower puts it “communitarianism as a doctrine in its own right is about the moral identity of individual human beings, according to which one’s own identity as a member of a particular community is far more important than membership of the some notional society of all human beings” (Dower, 1998:59). Thus, for Walzer morality is socially constituted and our primary duty is to look after those who reside within our own social, cultural or national boundaries. There are nonetheless different spheres of justice which govern our sense of morality and our relations with citizens of other communities. What brings people together is in fact their shared sense of “particularism” (Walzer, 1994:83) rather than their membership of a universal moral order. Walzer's defence of communitarian morality emerges from his view that communities are inherently good (Waltzer, 1994). Key to communitarian thought are the principles of right to sovereignty and territorial integrity. Consequently, foreign intervention has to be restricted to situations where these exclusive rights are put at risk or where there is no “fit” between the rulers of the community and the ruled. Walzer argues that “when a government turns savagely upon its own people, we must doubt the very existence a political community to which the idea of self-determination might apply” (Walzer, 1977:101). Similarly John Vincent (1974), arguing from an English School perspective, has noted that although non-intervention is the key principle of international order it is not an automatic right but depends on states' ability to meet ‘basic requirements of decency’ In brief, Communitarian thought is inward looking rather than other- regarding, although Walzer concedes that there is a set of “universal prohibitions” such as “murder, deception, betrayal” which have been recognised by “virtually every human society” (Orend, 2000:10).

Realists do not object to humanitarian intervention on universal or particular moral grounds but doubt the humanitarian content to the process. Furthermore, they argue that states are under no obligation to sacrifice their own soldiers to stop human suffering across borders. Another key argument is that states are highly selective in their response to intervention and that the process is prone to abuse (Wheeler and Bellamy, 2001). If we study these justifications more closely we can detect what might be construed as a normative element in realist thought, in particular its concerns with the selectivity of the process and the way it alerts us to states' abuse of intervention for the sake of economic and strategic gains. Yet, realists' main justification for not supporting intervention is that it does not further the interests of the intervening state. This however wrongly assumes that national interests are constant rather than socially constructed and subject to change (Lu, 2006:38). For long the dominant view was that intervention can never be legitimate because it breaches the non-intervention principle underpinning the Westphalian state system. The pluralist branch of the ES is sympathetic to this position in that it raises concerns about the lack of consensus regarding intervention and its potentially negative effects on international order. Yet, an increasing number of scholars and practitioners view intervention as a way of offering protection to "strangers" beyond borders, which has led to new debates on the legality and solidarism of the process. It is no longer certain that leaders who subject their citizens to crimes against humanity can hide behind the mantle of sovereignty. In 2005 the UN General Assembly nonetheless declared that "Each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity", however,

"The international community, through the United Nations, also has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, in accordance with Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter, to help to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity." (UN General Assembly, 2005:30)

The responsibility to protect is thus an obligation that is shared by the members of the international community and the Security Council of the UN. Chapter VII of the UN Charter allows the Security Council to sanction brute force to secure international peace and order. Had the UN Charter been authored in the 21st century it is likely that the sanctioning of the use of brute force would have taken place on the basis of the emergent responsibility to protect norm instead. Despite having this option it is very rare that the international community decides to launch a humanitarian intervention, even if the number of interventions have risen dramatically since the end of the Cold War. Yet, the violent conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo was for long a neglected conflict zone, even if free and

democratic elections were held there in 2006. Until recently Sudan was continuously neglected by the international community, however, there are signs of Western states wishing to repent themselves by sending troops to the region under UN command. Sweden and Norway will make a collective contribution to the UN's newly launched operation in Darfur by sending an engineering unit there. The British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and the French President Nicolas Sarkozy published a joint article in *The Times* on the 31st of August in which they committed themselves to "save the Darfuris" under UN led command. What we can extract from the above is that intervention is both selective and difficult to implement due to variations in states' foreign policy priorities and willingness to sacrifice troops and resources. As noted above the (ICISS) report draws extensively on the key criteria of just war theory to make such judgements. This, however, is not an easy decision to make because what might seem like a legitimate intervention to some could be viewed as a breach of international law by others. The ICISS runs the risk of legitimising such interventions because it draws upon subjective notions of just war criteria rather than strict interpretations of international law.

This, however, has not prevented the solidarist ES scholar Nicolas Wheeler (2000:21-52) from arguing for humanitarian intervention to take place in exceptional circumstances providing it is a response to a "supreme humanitarian emergency" when "the only hope of saving lives depends on outsiders coming to rescue". These should be "crimes against humanity" that "shock the moral conscience of mankind". What these might be is less clear and open to subjective interpretation. The use of force is a last resort and must be balanced against the human rights abuses that have taken place, and, finally, there must be prospects of humanitarian outcomes. The solidarist view is that intervention is a global duty, providing it meets these conditions. Cosmopolitan international theorists concede that HI can be a legitimate response to crimes against humanity, if not a moral obligation. More specifically, they would argue that HI is legitimate if states and their leaders turn on their own people and compromise their human rights, including both political and economic rights (Caney 2005:235), because from a thick cosmopolitan perspective any attempt to separate states into exclusive entities is highly artificial and immoral. This position has emerged from cosmopolitanism's conception of morality which is universally applicable rather than constituted within a specific political community. Not all cosmopolitans are prone to endorse foreign intervention as a way of dispersing such universal rights since "they are sceptical of the success" (Caney, 2005:233). What is more there are thick and thin cosmopolitanisms and they vary in the conception of the worthiness of states as a moral agents and their ability to promote universal human rights across borders.

Regardless of one's theoretical position there is reason to consider the extent to which intervention really functions as a way of offering protection to innocent civilians in faraway places, in particular since there are many human atrocities that go on unnoticed, many of which take place in Africa, with Darfur being one of the worst examples of international neglect ever. To this it should be added that the most recent interventions into Afghanistan and Iraq lacked both humanitarian credibility and a UN mandate, even if the great majority of the international community supported the USA's right to self defence in retaliation to the attack on the Twin Towers. A growing number of states, Denmark, amongst them, have come to support these new forms of interventions. Because such interventions lack the support of the UN they are dependent on the willingness of a select number of Great Powers (and their allies) that have the long-term resources to launch them and sustain them. Far from all so called great powers are prone to military intervention. France and Germany, amongst others, were outspokenly opposed to the Second Gulf War. The US led military actions against Afghanistan and Iraq and the successive post-war reconstruction of both countries have brought to the fore issues of the legitimacy of intervention. It has also cast light on the inability of great powers to foster peace in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as drawing attention to their lack of an exit strategy. In both cases there is reason to doubt the ethical/humanitarian content to these interventions even though they were constructed as such in the aftermath of the invasions. It was of course a very astute way in which great powers were able to construe their actions within moral discourse pointing to the selfish dispersion of western freedoms across borders. This leaves room for the analysis of "non-great powers" distinct conceptions of the global protection norm and the legitimacy of intervention as a vehicle towards global solidarity, which is something we shall turn to below. It will be argued that participation in armed humanitarian intervention is not the *only* key criterion by which the solidarist content of states' military commitments can be examined. What follows from this standpoint is a call for the English School to become more sensitive to alternative solidarist discourses and practices and investigate these alongside and in conjunction with forcible humanitarian intervention. This can only be successfully done if the ES places more emphasis upon the foreign and security policies of the individual agents themselves since they are the ones constituting international society. The focus here is on the contributions of non-great powers to the responsibility to protect norm emerging in international society.

The Nordic militaries - forces for good with a duty to protect

The end of the Cold War, the rise in intra-state warfare, international terrorism and threats to human security have forced Western states to reconstitute their national militaries and their duties beyond borders. These developments have forced them to consider the extent to which their militaries have a duty to protect distant others from human rights abuses outside

the confines of their own political community. This is a cosmopolitan-minded notion of obligation that is inconsistent with communitarians who believe that protection lies within the political community. From a cosmopolitan-inspired or thick solidarist perspective this way of reasoning does not make sense since our sense of morality is co-constitutive with the borders of our particular community. Despite the pronounced solidarist content to many western states' military policies, however, there is still a great deal of doubt regarding the possibility of conducting an ethically inspired defence policy. A realist conception of the actions of a supposedly cosmopolitan-minded military would be that it is nothing more than a "novel projection of national military power by a dominant state or an instrumental alliance of states" (Lawler, 2002). There are undeniably many states in the international realm that contribute to international peace operations whose ethical credentials are less than perfect. This claim must be counterposed with evidence that a growing number of international actors, the Nordic states prominently among them, have re-conceptualised the role and duties of their national military forces framing them in distinctively solidarist language (Elliott and Cheeseman, 2004; Bergman, 2004).

A key question here is to what extent participation in forcible intervention is the benchmark against which we should measure the solidarist content to states' military policies? Are there alternative routes that are perhaps more effective and also more ethical? Can non-Great powers play a role here? Here we shall look at the internationalisation of the Nordic militaries and identify the manner in which they have responded to the calls for a greater measure of solidarism across borders. Great powers and non-great powers have enhanced their military and civilian crisis management and conflict prevention capacities and committed a larger proportion of their national defence budgets to peace support and crisis management activities (Danish Ministry of Defence, 2002; Norwegian Ministry for Defence, 2002; Strøm-Erichsen 2006). Greater emphasis has also been placed on rapid reaction to international conflict and combat ability. The Nordic militaries have undergone a period of internationalisation, even if national defence remains a primary duty. This has not deterred them from widening their conception of ethical obligation to the 'other' and using their national armed forces as a means of furthering the responsibility to protect norm. In other words they have sought to combine their 'cosmopolitan and statist objectives at the same time' (Elliott, 2002:2) in a thin cosmopolitan fashion. Their armed forces have been reconstituted from having been mainly communitarian guards of national security into cosmopolitan minded militaries with solidarist duties across borders (Bergman, 2004). As the Norwegian Minister of Defence notes "Participation in military operations abroad is an integral and important part of Norwegian security and defence policy. Through our involvement we make a contribution towards peace while at the same time demonstrating our solidarity with the international community. Taking

part in such operations abroad helps to strengthen international security, and hence Norway's own security" (Strøm-Erichsen's, 2005:1). The Swedish Defence Commission (2003:14) identifies, for example, the preservation of the 'country's peace and independence', contributions to 'stability and security in our vicinity' and 'strengthening of international peace and security' as the wider objectives of the country's national security policy. The policy priorities of the other Nordic states are similar. Finland is an interesting case here since its foreign and security policy has historically been tainted by a large measure of realism, rather than ethical considerations, however, the country's national defence policy has moved towards good international citizenship and is discursively framed in consideration of its "growing international duties" to the rest of the world (Finnish Ministry of Defence, 2003:2:4). Moreover, Finnish defence policy aims at "sharing in the responsibility for international security and stability and peaceful change in line with shared values and principles" (Finnish Ministry of Defence, 2004:80). Similarly, the Danish Minister of Defence holds that his country's "Armed Forces is an important instrument in ensuring peace and security both in Denmark and internationally" (Gade, undated:3). In a recent statement by the Finnish Prime Minister's Office (2007:11) it points out that it will "enhance Finland's capacity to participate in international crisis management operations by means of intensifying cooperation related to the use of military and civilian capabilities and promoting civilian crisis management ... while paying particular attention to the position of women in conflicts and crisis management." As noted above the Nordic states are not alone in framing their international commitments within normative language emphasising the responsibility to protect. The Security Strategy of the EU defines the Union as a force for good and pioneer of multilateralism and support for the UN (Bergman and Peterson, 2006). The British Armed Forces have also been reconstituted as forces for good (Duncanson, 2005) enabling them to take on new roles in global politics including non-sanctioned military intervention one might add. Non-great powers and great powers have framed their military policies, discourses and practices within seemingly solidarist language with emphasis being placed upon the responsibility to protect norm. States and multilateral actors, however, vary in their conception of how to materialise this norm. It is not the case that all small actors oppose military intervention and great powers see it as the most viable option - there are small and large states in each camp. The Nordic states differ amongst themselves as to the best way of "saving strangers" from their brutal leaders. However, they share a commitment to a strong sense of collective selfhood as well as a duty to distant others, emerging from the co-constitution between their domestic and international welfare commitments (Bergman, 2007). As I have argued elsewhere the Nordic states' conception of duty across borders has been framed within sedimented pursuits of solidarism in domestic and foreign policies in recent decades and it can be traced through to their military policies (Bergman, 2004). Nordic

security practices, discourses and identity are thus co-constitutive (Hansen, 2006) and together they make up the region's collective strategic culture, which has been domestically constructed and is consistent with emergent responsibility to protect norm. By examining the Nordics we can add analytical and normative rigour to the English School as well as making it more sensitive to the role of non-great powers in promoting universal solidarism in international society.

Solidarism as practice

The intensity of foreign interventions, the demands arising from complex emergencies and genocide as well as issues of post-conflict reconstruction have forced the Nordic militaries to conduct themselves as forces for good. Traditionally the Nordic states have sought to promote international peace and order through their active participation in UN-led peacekeeping operations. They have a very respectable record in UN-led peacekeeping activities and mediation in conflict, dating back to the early 1960s. Throughout the period 1945–90 they belonged to the group of the seven most active participants in international peacekeeping in the world and the current figures are equally high (Bjereld, 1992:90-91). For example, more than 30,000 Norwegians served in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) during the period 1978–98, and approximately 80,000 Swedes have participated in UN forces since the 1950s (T. Smith-Meyer and Ø. Reisegg, 2001; Swedish Ministry for Defence, 2003). These days the Nordic states' contributions to international operations are no longer confined to the UN, but are also carried out under the auspices of the EU, NATO and in Denmark's case the "coalition of the willing". Finland and Sweden have been central to the creation of the EU's military and civilian crisis management (Bergman and Peterson, 2006). The Finns and Swedes "'got in early' and shaped the debate – arguing for the EU's embrace of crisis management (as opposed to 'defence') – at a time when positions were still forming" (Bergman and Peterson, 2006:155). Both states have been influential in developing the Union's civilian crisis management, a decision which was taken during the Swedish Presidency of the EU in 2001. Moreover, the decision to launch an EU's Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) was taken at the Helsinki Summit in 1999. Sweden has participated in all of the Union's international operations and was recently praised by Javier Solana for its ideational and political imprint on the ESDP. By making contributions to the EU's European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) Sweden and Finland have challenged the realist-inspired view that only large member states can set the EU agenda and frame its emergent international identity (Bergman and Peterson, 2006). The strategic cultures of Sweden and Finland are built on notions of collective, comprehensive security, and more recently the concept of 'human security', which originated in UN Human Development Reports of the early 1990s and was a prominent theme at the 2000 UN Millennium Summit

(Bergman and Peterson, 2006). The four Nordic states share the EU's broad vision of the responsibility to protect which is based on the idea that "each individual state has the responsibility to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity" and that the "protection of civilians in armed conflict is a key concern of the international community" (Kirsti Lintonen, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Finland to the UN, 2006:1). Norway and Denmark support the normative turn in European foreign and security policy even if the Danish opt-outs prevent it from fully participating in the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU (CFSP) and its humanitarian operations. Norway, on the other hand, has recently committed itself to participation in the Nordic EU Battle group, which is led by Sweden, and also include Sweden, Estonia, Ireland and Finland. As will be discussed below the four Nordic states have to various degrees and varying ways been involved in the reconstruction of the Afghani state and have made contributions to the build-up of Iraq. While Denmark has been part of the invasion force the other Nordics have refrained from doing so viewing the intervention as illegal and inconsistent with international law. To reiterate the point made above they are examples of states that are sensitive to alternative solidarist discourses and practices, that should be investigated in conjunction with forcible intervention. Despite their different positions on Iraq the Nordics have made a joint commitment to "strengthening the UN's ability to ... lead complex peace operations" (Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 2006:1) and as such reinforce the international protection norm. The establishment of the Nordic Coordinated Arrangement for Military Peace Support (NORDCAPS) and the Nordics' joint efforts in the build-up of the Baltic Defence Forces and peace-keeping are also significant in this context (Bergman, 2004). These efforts have in turn given rise to a recent *Nordic Initiative for Regional Defence Co-operation* which aims at providing long-lasting peace in the Western Balkans (Danish Ministry for Defence, 2007). In line with their historical support for the UN the Nordic defence ministers have agreed on "a joint package of measures" which "could contribute to the strengthening of the UN's ability to plan and lead increasingly complex peace operations" (Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 2006:1). The Norwegian government, for example, is firm on this point and promises to enhance its "level of support for the UN, including the organisation's military operations" (Strøm-Erichsen, 2005:1). Below we shall look at the Nordic states' approach to new forms of conflict before we examine how far they are prepared to go in their offerings of international protection.

An integrated response to international protection

The Nordic states show clear sympathy with the view that "new wars" cannot be prevented by peacekeeping or other military means alone and believe that

“enforcement of international humanitarian and human rights law”, the promotion of social and economic rights, democracy, nation building are central to successful conflict prevention, and protection of distant others (Kaldor, 1999:125). The Nordics thus share a commitment to an integrated response to violent conflict, generally believing that there is a need for more “civil-military co-operation” (Swedish Armed Forces, 2003; *Svenska Dagbladet*, 2 February, 2003). Values such as the involvement of non-governmental organisations and women in conflict resolution, democratic governance, respect for human rights, gender equality as well as protection of the human rights of individuals are placed at the core of Nordic military policies, what can easily be categorised as different forms of human security (The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2001a:17-21; Norwegian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2003). To this effect the former Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson launched the international conference *Stockholm International Forum ... Preventing Genocide: Threats and Responsibilities* in 2004, which gathered world leaders from across the international community and led to a joint declaration in which the participating states committed themselves to joint “obligations and responsibilities under international law including human rights and international humanitarian law” and the prevention of “the repeated occurrence of genocide, mass murder and ethnic cleansing” “as well as with the widespread occurrence of impunity for such crimes.” The Swedish Armed Forces have responded to this call by training peacekeepers in international law and alert them to the difficult situation of children in war torn regions. This work is done in collaboration with the Swedish Branch of the Save the Children (Save the Children Sweden, 2004). Sweden’s involvement in Iraq has centred on such things as economic recovery, democracy and human rights which are central to the post-war reconstruction of Iraq. What is more the country is the single most generous recipient of Iraq refugees in the world. *New York Times* (13 June 2007) recently reported that the “Swedish town Södertälje took in twice as many Iraqi refugees as the entire US”. The Danish position on Darfur lends further evidence to the Nordic commitment to the emergent protection norm. Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs Per Stig Møller (2006) states that:

"The Council's decision to continue preparations for a UN peacekeeping force to relieve the African Union force and stop the senseless carnage of civilians in Darfur drew sharp criticism from the Government of Sudan and was denounced as neo-

colonialism and a violation of its sovereign rights. But whose rights are really being violated here? Rather than the Government of Sudan, I submit that it is the right of the population of Darfur to get protection that is being violated. And it is incumbent on the international community to act, if a government fails to fulfill this responsibility. I call upon the Government of Sudan to work with us, not against us, in protecting the population in Darfur."

The Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs Tuomioja (2006) argues that "a new human rights culture is needed. The Human Rights Council should be based on a renewed spirit of genuine partnership and shared responsibility. Finland ... pledges to work in a transparent manner and together with others, with a view to protecting and promoting human rights all over the world." Finland takes a broad integrated approach to the global protection norm combining military and non-military means. For instance, in Afghanistan it has funded a library specifically for women and offered training of public officials and journalists in Afghanistan as well as supported the first democratic elections there (Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2003c,d). It has also sent around 100 troops to Afghanistan to assist the international stabilisation force operating there and in so doing acknowledging that they might be involved in the use of brute force in offering protection to civilians. Norway and Denmark were amongst the founding nations of the CIMIC Group North of NATO, which aims at placing civil-military co-operation at the heart of international security discourses (NATO, 2000). Indeed, Danish foreign policy official identifies the other Nordic states as Denmark's closest partners in furthering civil-military (CIMIC) co-operation norm globally (Interview, 2006). In 2005 the Danish Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs formed a working group composed of themselves and Danish NGOs including *Medecins San Frontiers*, the Red Cross in an effort to add a stronger element of civil-military co-operation to Danish defence policy. The aim is to provide a framework for civil-military co-operation between the armed forces and other sections of society in order to find broad solutions to security problems encountered by Danish troops on international missions, which is in line with the concept of human security. The Danish Ministry of Defence (undated:17) argues that "international crisis operations are not only a military task. Basic needs such as water, electricity, transport, police, administration" are all central to peace and stability and so is civil-military co-operation. To this end Denmark has focused many of its efforts on offering legal and policing advice to the Iraqi authorities, support for human rights and economic development as well as engaging in military tasks (Danish Ministry of Defence, 2006a). A more cynical view would be that it is an attempt on the part of the Danish government to legitimise its actions in Iraq by involving a larger number of actors, many of

which are widely supported by the general public. Danish participation in Afghanistan was, in part at least, justified on the basis of protecting women's rights.

By drawing upon specifically Nordic values including rule of law, human rights, gender equality, redistributive justice domestically and globally, consensual democracy as well as using their national militaries as "forces for good", capable of rapid reaction, the Nordics can have some hope of materialising the philosophical foundations of the global responsibility to protect norm, which is tightly linked with military and non-military practices. Below we shall examine how far they are prepared to go in endorsing intervention as a way of promoting solidarity in international society.

How far are the Nordic states prepared to go?

In sum the internationalisation of the Nordic militaries reveals a pronounced willingness to expand their sense of international duty by performing an active role as "forces for good" with a cosmopolitan-minded approach to conflict and sense of ethical obligation to distant others (Bergman, 2004). But how far are the Nordic states willing to go in this role and what are their conceptions of armed intervention as a route to a more just, equal and orderly international society. The four Nordics continue to believe that forcible humanitarian or other interventions should be preceded by a UN mandate, which is a position emerging from their longstanding support for international law. Yet Denmark has on several occasions departed from this view. Norway, another NATO member state, has been more restrictive in its reading of foreign intervention. On the second day of the Iraqi war the previous Norwegian Prime Minister Bondevik (2003), a practicing Christian, explained to the *Stortinget* that Norway cannot support a military intervention which is not firmly grounded in international law and does not enjoy the support of the UN Security Council. He also warned against civilian casualties and openly deplored the military intervention. The current Minister of Defence outlines the country's position by underlining "the crucial importance" of "a clear UN mandate for Norwegian participation in military operations abroad. It is an essential precondition for the use of military force" and it "should be firmly based in international law" (Strøm-Erichsen, 2005:1) as well as "multilateral organisations rather than in so-called coalitions of state willing to take part" (Strøm-Erichsen, 2006:3). Norway made military contributions to the interventions into Kosovo in 1999 and Afghanistan in 2001, but did not send troops to the Second Gulf War in 2003, which it opposed. The Norwegian government has nonetheless participated in the NATO led stabilisation force operating in Iraq as well as in NATO's training mission there. However, it has been almost apologetic for its actions, in pointing out that they should not be misconstrued as participation in the Iraqi war itself. Nor does Norway wish to be portrayed as an occupying power, rather as a non-great power with a

strong sense of global duty across borders. As such it is part of a legitimate humanitarian multilateral force, a position in line with its wider commitments to the UN as well as international law and Nordic internationalism more generally (Norwegian Ministry of Defence, 2003a:2)

The two Nordic non-aligned states Sweden and Finland opposed the invasion of Iraq. The Swedish Prime Minister adamantly argued that the US-led invasion was a breach of international law and that the USA and its allies deserve to be “criticised” for their actions (cited in Ahlin, 2006:1). The Finnish line was almost identical even if its criticism was not as outspoken as that of Sweden. Helsinki’s position was that the UN should be the actor responsible for the disarmament of Iraq. In the words of the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2003:b) “Finland regrets that the US and its allies have begun military action against Iraq ... without the UN’s ... authorisation”. Both states have nonetheless provided considerable amounts of foreign aid to Iraq but have not taken part in the NATO led stabilisation force there. This is an instructive example of the dilemmas facing national militaries as well as the limits to their willingness to use brute force beyond borders. In the case of Finland and Sweden it can be explained by their support for international law and globalism as well as their policies of non-alignment that restrict their freedom in these kinds of situations (Bergman, 2004).

Within the framework of the EU the two states agreed that the USA and its allies had the right to launch a military invasion into Afghanistan in 2002, since this was interpreted as an act of self defence offering protection against exogenous aggression. This does not mean that they actually thought that the invading states were right to undertake such actions. The causalities of September 11, the repression of basic human rights and systematic discrimination of women in Afghanistan nonetheless served to legitimise the US led intervention, even if international lawyers disputed its legal legitimacy. Finland and Sweden did not participate in the armed intervention though, but have made military contributions to the NATO led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, which has a UN mandate, which is a somewhat controversial decision since their soldiers can easily be mistaken as part of the coalition of allied powers. Swedish and Finnish soldiers have found themselves in the line of fire despite representing the interests of the international community rather than those of the Great Powers.

Traditionally the position of Finland, Norway and Sweden can be directly traced to their support for international law and peace, which they believe to be central to the distinctively Nordic conception of good international citizenship. However, to sympathisers of the US led

intervention into Iraq, the question might arise whether Finland, Norway and Sweden, all of which were opposed the Second Gulf War, are entitled to define themselves as good *solidarist* states, despite their overt activism in other area of conflict prevention. Is the international behaviour of Denmark somehow more legitimate? Is forcible intervention the only route to a solidarist international society? Some might argue that reluctance to send troops to other parts of the world for the purpose of combating violent ethnic conflict or dismantling totalitarian regimes is a highly self interested strategy emerging from reluctance to sacrifice the lives of one's own soldiers.

This, however, assumes that participation in armed humanitarian (or other) intervention is the key criterion by which the solidarist content of states' military commitments can be examined, when such opposition to military intervention has more to do with their general support for international law, UN-led multilateralism, human rights and security, economic development and the role of diplomacy in conflict prevention and resolution as well as widespread public opinion and a historically deep rooted preference for rights-centred strategies of 'criminalisation' over those of 'warfighting' in response to the new forms of conflict in the Cold War era (Lawler, 2002). These are deeply embedded in Nordic foreign policy behaviour, rather than a simple reluctance to provide troops or willingness to 'sacrifice national lives for the sake of people far away' (Kaldor, 1999:13). What is more it is simply not the case that Sweden and other opponents of the Iraqi War are not prepared to sacrifice their troops on international missions. As noted above Swedes, Finns and others continue to find themselves in the line of fire in Afghanistan, Africa and elsewhere. Despite the willingness to make contributions to various international missions the three Nordic states continue to view intervention as an exception rather than common practice. As Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs Tuomioja (2003) has argued

A rule-based approach is important against arbitrariness, and so are agreed procedures. Even formal sovereignty does have important functions in the system of states and international law: to be effective, international law must apply equally to all States. Exceptions to commonly agreed norms may serve short-term interests of States in some situations but they risk to create uncertainty and undermine the legal standards on which multilateral cooperation relies.

What mattered the most to Finland, Norway and Sweden was their conception of the Iraqi war as being illegal and unjust. They adhere to the view that "a commitment to human rights is insufficient to justify humanitarian intervention" (Caney, 231), in particular since there is no guarantee that intervention will produce humanitarian outcomes, which is one of

the most controversial criteria laid out by Wheeler (2000). As for the Iraqi intervention it is not even clear whether it was motivated by humanitarian reasons even if there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein was a particularly cruel leader. Ethically, the Iraqi conflict was not easily justifiable for the three Nordic states, in that it overtly compromised their longstanding commitment to a rule bound international society based upon international law and institutions, which are key markers of the Nordic internationalism (Bergman, 2007, Kuisma, 2007, Browning, 2007) As such it did not meet the core criteria of just war theory including a just cause, right intention, last resort, proportionality, reasonable prospects and right authority, all of which can help states to deem the legality and the legitimacy of a particular intervention and whether the responsibility to protect norm should kick in. However, “an external intervention may be able to stop massacres, but much more is needed to address the underlying causes of the political disorder in failed states or internal conflicts” (E. Tuomioja, 2003).

By tradition, Denmark has shared its Nordic partners’ strong commitment to international law and the UN, but the Fogh-Rasmussen Government nonetheless decided to make military contributions to the US led intervention (albeit of a very limited kind) in order to take apart the Ba’athist Iraqi regime. The Danish government’s interpretation of the legality of the Second Gulf War differed from its Nordic partners. Denmark offered its full support for the US position and as such parted from its “Nordic security identity ... with its emphasis on cooperation and integration and ... a rule governed international society” (Wivel, 2006:3). As has been noted above Denmark is probably one of the most atypical non-great powers in that it has recently started to reconstruct its identity in line with the behaviour of the USA- the world’s only superpower. Danish support for the US led intervention was nonetheless portrayed as a morally inspired act, that would bring more stability and democracy to the international system.⁶ This discourse has continued to frame Denmark’s engagement in the post-war reconstruction of Iraq. On a recent visit to Iraq the Danish Prime Minister represented Denmark’s efforts in Iraq as an effort to rid the international society of “the forces of darkness” in favour of “freedom” and “democracy” (Rasmusen, 2006). His discourse is quite similar to that favoured by the Bush administration and builds upon (neo)liberal idea of political freedom. Denmark’s campaigning of these values beyond borders, most notably in the Muslim world, can be traced through to its efforts to “civilise” its own Muslim population at home. Thus there is a close connection between its domestic and international policies. This way of behaving can be directly linked to the Nordic states’ efforts to export their own conceptions of good international conduct to other parts of the world. In this context a foreign policy official points out that the real reason for Denmark to participate in the Afghani conflict was to liberate the women of Afghanistan which is in line with the

country's own emphasis on gender equality (Interview, 2006). Similarly, in discussing Denmark's role in Iraq Wivel (2006:8) notes that "like Nordic idealism during the Cold War, this was very much formulated as a position of moral superiority".

Danish involvement in the US military intervention in Iraq has nonetheless led some scholars to question its traditional support for internationalism and solidarity in favour of a less social democratic approach to the resolution of international disputes and conflict (Lawler, 2004; Bergman, 2004; Brems Knudsen, 2004). A cynical view of Denmark's actions would be that the current government has been particularly keen to strengthen its links with the US. Mouritzen (2006:18) notes that "Iraq participation ... improved Denmark's standing in Washington. In partial mitigation of this shift, as Brems Knudsen (2004:83) notes, Denmark was not "happy about leaving behind the UN and the established framework of international law". The Danish *Folketinget* was divided on this issue but the Liberal-led coalition government managed to secure a narrow majority in favour of operation Iraqi Freedom. Although a significant proportion of the Danish public expressed concerns regarding their country's participation it did not ignite the same intensity of demonstrations as experienced in the United Kingdom. It is hard to say why this was the case – one explanation might be that the Danish government successfully convinced its public that the war was just and humanitarian and not a matter of enhancing the presence of western powers in the Middle East or it might be a reflection of deep-seated discourse and practices at the domestic level, which have been centred on identifying Islamic values as a potential source of conflict domestically.

Recent developments in Nordic cooperation nonetheless suggest that disunity over Iraq has not caused a permanent rift in their defence relations, even if Denmark's departure from the Nordic position on intervention shook the internationalist foundations of the Nordic community of peace. They share a commitment to the emergent responsibility to protect norm in international relations and have come to view their joint contributions to UN operations as an important step in its sedimentation (Interview, 2006; Norwegian Ministry for Defence, 2006). Moreover, they view the Baltic states as significant partners in the furthering of international peace and order, not the least the contributions that the latter can make to the European Union's near neighbourhood policy (Danish Ministry of Defence, 2006, Bergman, 2000, 2004, 2006).

Conclusion

The article started by casting light on the shift in international relations discourses and practices away from the principle of non-intervention towards the responsibility to protect norm and the urgency with which states have responded to this development. It then went on to look at the normative potentials of the ES in explaining the role of non-great powers in furthering such solidarism. I argued for a stronger agentic dimension being added to the ES in the shape of non-great powers. I also suggested that humanitarian (forcible) intervention occupies too much analytical and normative space within the solidarist branch of the ES. Indeed it reveals a lack of real engagement with the contributions made by non-great powers to global justice within international society. To sustain these claims the paper examined the Nordic militaries' self identities as forces for good with duties beyond borders, which is a concept that is consistent with their role as high achieving non-great powers. To add further strength to this argument an examination of the Nordic states' conceptions and practices of the emergent responsibility to protect norm was provided. I showed that the Nordic states share a commitment to the norm and that their preference is for a combination of military and non-military means to realise its full potential. I raised the question how far the Nordic states are willing to go in this role and some significant differences between Finland, Norway and Sweden, on the one hand, and Denmark, on the other, were identified. It was pointed out that the three Nordics' objections to the Iraqi conflict were not realist-inspired but have emerged from their normative commitment to international law, a rule-bound international society as well as solidarism amongst its members. It was argued that Denmark's foreign policy behaviour and self identity have to some extent come to resemble that of a great power. This, however, does not mean that Denmark's stance on intervention is a sole attempt to cosy up the USA. As has been explained above Denmark was keen to do the right thing and appeared to think that its actions were legitimate, despite the lack of a UN endorsement and opposition to the invasion amongst international lawyers. It is nonetheless worth reiterating the point made above that there is no set way according to which non-great powers should or indeed do behave, in particular since their self identities are subjective and constructed within specific ideational and cultural contexts. Yet, because of their shared historical, ideational and political experiences the Nordic states can quite easily be slotted into a joint category of non-great powers – a group of states that possess a shared commitment to international peace support and view brute force as one route, alongside others, to a more solidarist-inspired international society. Admittedly, my findings here are preliminary and more research needs to be done to substantiate the claims made throughout the paper. However, by placing the emphasis upon the individual agents that make up the international

society of states we can begin to revise its normative content and move away from solidarist discourses that take humanitarian intervention as the only viable route to the progressive transformation of international society.

¹ Note that I have changed the title of the paper to better fit the content of the paper.

² In his impressive account of humanitarian intervention Wheeler (2000) rectifies this to some extent by examining a set of states' individual roles in specific interventions. In so doing he makes an important contribution to making the ES more sensitive to the actual agents that constitute and nurture international society and the solidarist projects that take place within it.

³ See Linklater, A. and Suganami, H. (2006) for an extensive account of the English School to date and the normative potentials embedded within it, in particular chapters 4 and 7. See also B. Buzan (2004) for an insightful investigation into the ES in particular the attempts made by him to combine it with social constructivism.

⁴ In so doing I apply a holistic social constructivist approach that allows me to trace the social interaction between international society and its members in nurturing international solidarism.

⁵ My forthcoming book on the ES and non-great powers focuses on a variety of Nordic internationalisms including Adjacent Internationalism, Gendered Internationalism and Global Welfare Internationalism, (Bergman-Rosamond forthcoming).

⁶ Denmark's participation in operation Enduring Freedom was also represented as an ethical obligation to the international community and the only viable way of dealing with international terrorism.

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