Justice, Community and Dialogue in International Relations

Shapcott investigates the question of justice in a culturally diverse world, asking if it is possible to conceive of a universal or cosmopolitan community in which justice to difference is achieved. Justice to difference is possible, according to Shapcott, by recognising the particular manner in which different humans identify themselves. Such recognition is most successfully accomplished through acts of communication and, in particular, conversation. The account of understanding developed by H. G. Gadamer provides a valuable way forward in this field. The philosophical hermeneutic account of conversation allows for the development of a level of cosmopolitan solidarity that is both ‘thin’ and universal, and which helps to provide a more just resolution of the tension between the values of community and difference.

RICHARD SHAPCOTT is Lecturer in International Relations, Deakin University. His research interests lie in international relations theory, international ethics and the hermeneutic philosophy of Hans-Georg Gadamer.
CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Justice, Community and Dialogue in International Relations

Editorial Board

Steve Smith (Managing Editor)
Thomas Biersteker  Chris Brown  Alex Danchev  Phil Cerny
Joseph Grieco  A. J. R. Groome  Richard Higgott
G. John Ikenberry  Caroline Kennedy-Pipe  Steve Lamy
Michael Nicholson  Ngaire Woods

Cambridge Studies in International Relations is a joint initiative of Cambridge University Press and the British International Studies Association (BISA). The series will include a wide range of material, from undergraduate textbooks and surveys to research-based monographs and collaborative volumes. The aim of the series is to publish the best new scholarship in International Studies from Europe, North America and the rest of the world.
CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

78 Richard Shapcott
Justice, community and dialogue in international relations

77 Philip E. Steinberg
The social construction of the ocean

76 Christine Sylvester
Feminist international relations
An unfinished journey

76 Kenneth A. Schultz
Democracy and coercive diplomacy

75 David Houghton
US foreign policy and the Iran hostage crisis

74 Cecilia Albin
Justice and fairness in international negotiation

73 Martin Shaw
Theory of the global state
Globality as an unfinished revolution

72 Frank C. Zagare and D. Marc Kilgour
Perfect deterrence

71 Robert O’Brien, Anne Marie Goetz, Jan Aart Scholte and Marc Williams
Contesting global governance
Multilateral economic institutions and global social movements

70 Roland Bleiker
Popular dissent, human agency and global politics

69 Bill McSweeney
Security, identity and interests
A sociology of international relations

68 Molly Cochran
Normative theory in international relations
A pragmatic approach

67 Alexander Wendt
Social theory of international politics

Series list continues after index
Justice, Community and Dialogue in International Relations

Richard Shapcott
## Contents

*Acknowledgements*  
*Introduction*  
1. Beyond the cosmopolitan/communitarian divide  
2. Community and communication in interpretive theories of international relations  
3. Emancipation and legislation: the boundaries of conversation in poststructuralism and the critical theory of IR  
4. Philosophical hermeneutics: understanding, practical reasoning and human solidarity  
5. Philosophical hermeneutics and its critics  
6. Towards a thin cosmopolitanism  
*Conclusion*  
*Bibliography*  
*Index*
Acknowledgements

This book would never have been completed, or even undertaken, without the support, advice, encouragement and inspiration of the following people and institutions (in no particular order).

The School of Australian and International Studies and the Faculty of Arts at Deakin University granted me six months leave to complete this project in 2000. The Faculty of Social Sciences and the Department of Politics of the University of Bristol awarded me a university scholarship, as did the Overseas Research Scholarship scheme, to undertake the PhD thesis out of which this book evolved. I would be remiss were I not to acknowledge the benefits I gained from teaching on Bristol’s Master’s degree in World Politics. At Bristol I received the support and friendship from the staff in general and the administrative staff – Veronica Scheibler, Anne Jewell and Elisabeth Grundy in particular. In addition, the Department of International Relations at the University of Keele provided me with a fertile, stimulating and welcoming environment for the seven months in which I was a visiting scholar there in 1994 when crucial early research was conducted. Alex Danchev, John Macmillan, Hidemi Suganami and Chris Brewin all expressed interest and enthusiasm as well as provided constructive input. Rosarie McCarthy, Peter Newell, Matt Paterson and Jo Van Every all helped to make my transition to English life easier and my time at Keele enjoyable. The Department of Politics at Monash University also supported the early stages of my investigation and awarded me an Australian Postgraduate Research Award in 1993. The book also benefited from the time I spent at La Trobe University, Australia, as a Post-doctoral Fellow in 1998. Steven Slaughter of Monash University stepped in at the last minute to take over my teaching responsibilities at Deakin; without this assistance the book would have been a much longer time coming.

viii
Acknowledgements

In England I was fortunate enough to receive real encouragement and enthusiastic support from a number of colleagues and friends which went way beyond my expectations and made for a thoroughly hospitable and welcoming intellectual environment. Chris Brown, Mervyn Frost, Steve Smith, Nick Rengger, Mark Hoffman, Tim Dunne, Molly Cochran, Eddie Keane, Charlotte Hooper and Ewan Harrison, are just a few of the people who contributed to this work. Professor Steve Smith has shown an interest and support for my work since an early stage and has continued to do so. As an examiner and as managing editor of this series his input has been crucial to the development of this project.

At Bristol, Professor Richard Little as both Head of Department, and as examiner, always gave me useful, intelligent advice and support. Most importantly, he understood the value of supporting a vibrant graduate student body. He, along with Dr Judith Squires, encouraged our participation in every aspect of departmental life. Furthermore without the time, effort and contributions of Judith Squires I am certain this would be a much poorer piece of work. During her time as supervisor of the PhD from which this book grew she was more than generous with her time, and provided crucial directions, constructive criticism and detailed advice. She provided the best possible supervision a PhD candidate could ask for.

This book would certainly never have been completed without the friendship of Charlotte Hooper, Ian Douglas, Debbie Lisle, Will Gallois, Matt Patterson, Marinês Garcia, Mark Ogge and Michele Wilson. I would also like to thank Christie and colleagues at The Beach Café, and the staff at The Turtle Café, in Elwood.

I would especially like to acknowledge my friend and colleague Richard Devetak. He has been an excellent conversational partner (though our conversations sometimes get rather heated and resemble arguments!) since we shared an office at Keele, and ever since. His critical mind and close readings have served to engage and correct me many times since. He has also provided a constant reminder of the importance of really reading a text.

My major intellectual debt is to Professor Andrew Linklater who, since my earliest days as an undergraduate, has been able to inspire me, and others, with the scope of his vision and the fairmindedness of his criticism. He has set intellectual and professional standards to which I can only aspire, but which I hope have informed and guided my work.

Several people read and commented on drafts of the various chapters, in particular Dr Michael Janover of Monash University, who graciously
Acknowledgements

agreed to read, meet and talk with me on several occasions. Michael’s is one of the finest minds I have ever encountered and I am grateful to have been the recipient of its insights. Richard Devetak and Andrew Linklater gave close readings and provided invaluable comments and insights at crucial stages. My father, Thomas Shapcott, invaluably, proof-read the penultimate draft, somehow fitting it into his truly enormous reading load. Needless to say all the inadequacies present are mine. Thanks also to Janey who read and commented on the early chapters.

Thanks are also due to John Haslam and Susan Beer for their help in editing and copy-editing. Finally, as always, my largest debts go to my mother and father, Margaret Grace and Thomas Shapcott, who have provided support in too many ways to mention here.

Sections of this book were presented as papers in a number of places, including the Department of Politics, Latrobe University, 1998; the International Studies Association Annual Conference, Toronto, March 1997; the Department of Politics, Monash University, March 1997 and June 2000; the British International Studies Conference, Durham, December 1996; the Millennium 25th Anniversary Conference, London, October 1996; Keele University, Department of International Relations, May 1994; the Contemporary Research in International Political Theory (CRIPIT) session at the London School of Economics, June 1994.