The last two chapters explored moral and legal interventions that have shaped the way that war or intervention are justified and constructed. Each provided a more or less formal framework for making judgments about the conduct of war. The next two chapters shift to the more specific policy choices involved in different forms of intervention. Realist theory emphasizes the influence of material interests on policy. The rational decision is one defined in terms of the national interest in power. Power is first and foremost expressed as military capability, but the latter also relates to economic power, including the strength of the economy and the capacity to produce or purchase weapons. From this perspective, power rather than moral or legal principle motivates state policy or, at best, principle is a vehicle for realizing more material interests. To say, by contrast, that policies are social constructs is to focus on how power and principle combine in historically specific circumstances to bring about a particular configuration of relationships. One objective of the following two chapters is to explore how the relationship between material power and questions of moral principle combine in the construction of economic and military policy and practice.

A second objective is to examine the choices involved in particular economic or military interventions. In addition to the power/principle nexus, policy-makers choose from a range of different types of intervention. In the military realm, intervention with force can take many different forms. It can be done purely in the service of national interest or for humanitarian ends. It may have the end of keeping peace or enforcing it. Force may be used as part of coercive diplomacy, in order to get an Other to stop or undertake some activity, or as part of a strategy of pre-emption, to disarm a regime before it has an opportunity to launch its weapons. There is no straightforward formula for
making these decisions, which are inevitably shaped by a complex of factors.

The word intervention most often implies or refers to military intervention. Sovereignty and nonintervention have been the central rules of the international system. While states, such as the USSR during the Cold War, complained about the interference of other states in their sovereign affairs, for instance, relating to human rights, the main prohibition, enshrined in the UN Charter, regards the use of force for anything other than self-defense. This book looks more broadly at multiple practices of intervention and how these underpin or shape specific border-crossings. In this respect, the interventions explored thus far are closely related to the question of military intervention. Moral interventions, such as Just War theory, have provided a framework for thinking through the criteria for defining when a war is just and when the means for fighting war are just. Legal interventions from the UN Charter to the Genocide Convention have defined the conditions under which intervention is legal and illegal. These various legal interpretations raise questions about peace and stability or human rights as the rationale for intervention.

This chapter explores the complex criteria by which the use of military force is judged. There are military criteria for the evaluation of military strategy to bring about specific ends. However, the military means are often justified in terms of moral or legal ends. The purpose of this chapter is to look at different frameworks for judging military intervention in relation to several historical examples. The section on force and diplomacy will examine coercive diplomacy as a traditional tool of state power. The section on force and protection will analyze the relationship between the use of force and the end of protecting potential victims of war. The section on force and self-defense will explore the Bush Administration’s new strategy of pre-emption, particularly as it relates to the end of self-defense. The range of options and criteria suggests the increasing complexity of the social and institutional background against which states and other actors must shape and construct specific policy choices. At the same time, these options are constrained by historical context. The dominant military logic for action has shifted over the last two decades from deterrence to compellence to pre-emption.

**Force and diplomacy**

Military intervention is often conceived as the intervention of one state in the affairs of another state on behalf of its national interest.