

# A Critical Assessment of the Prescriptive Realism of War from a Moral Perspective

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## Abstract

A human serious concern throughout history and especially during the present epoch is war and its potential damages. Theorists have always attempted to examine war in many respects and weighed up its legitimacy legally and morally. Since ancient Greece, moral philosophers have concerned themselves about the moral assessment of war. There are three known theories regarding the ethics of war: realism, pacifism, and just war theory. Realism as a common view is divided into two kinds: descriptive and prescriptive, and prescriptive realism is classified into two parts: moralized and cautionary. According to cautionary prescriptive realism, the only way for states to promote interests inexpensively is by abandoning moral principles and taking precautionary measures to protect interests. This theory holds that accepting realism helps promote peace among states while accepting just war theory may lead to war expansion. In this paper, arguments for cautionary prescriptive realism will be critically explored.

## Keywords

Cautionary prescriptive realism, ethics of war, just war, peace, interests.

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