6

A Constructive Engagement
with Warfare

Authors such as Juergensmeyer and Jones do not sufficiently attend to the distinction between genuine and false religion, nor do they explore the different moral horizons that inform religious agents' reasons for warfare. There can be no doubt that the sacred texts of religious traditions also influence the moral horizons of believers, whether or not those texts have been communicated and received after critical and responsible interpretation. Judeo-Christian and Islamic religious texts, uncritically examined, can lead one to conclude that religious traditions present a preoccupation with warfare and an image of a warrior God. The Old Testament Scriptures give many examples that connect warfare and religion, prompting people outside and inside faith communities to judge such texts as evidence of the link between violence and religion.

In the context of the Judeo-Christian religion, there is however a religious development from the Old Testament to the New Testament that points to the way of suffering self-sacrificing love as the central motivation for Christian moral decisions. This integrating principle stands in opposition to moral trajectories driven by the desire for mere power or warfare as the means of establishing the reign of God on earth. I will demonstrate that the way of suffering and self-sacrificing love within the Christian religious tradition founded on religious and moral conversion gives rise to a set of principles called the "just war" tradition. By means of these principles political agents can assess a moral recourse to war that is just and a conduct within war that is humane. These principles extend also to the postwar period, where there is a responsibility to work toward the reconciliation of parties, the restoration of war-torn areas, and the administering

140

of punishment to those who have participated in war crimes. However, since just war criteria are used to guide decisions in particular and specific historical circumstances, it is important to critically engage not only the criteria themselves but also the methodological thinking that shapes the criteria, otherwise decisions based on the criteria alone may only exacerbate the problem of violence.

Warfare in the Judeo-Christian Tradition

In the Judeo-Christian religious tradition, there is religious development from the Hebrew Scriptures (Christian Old Testament) to the specifically Christian tradition (New Testament) that calls for peace, moving away from the notion that religion promotes war toward the notion that war is a last resort to counter injustice in a sinful world.

Exploring the trajectories of war in the Hebrew Bible, Susan Niditch describes the history of war in ancient Israel as "a complex one involving multiplicity, overlap and fragmentation," with "several war ideologies" as "neither self-contained nor related to one another in simply chronological sequences in the social, religious and intellectual history of Israel."[1] Niditch explores seven trajectories, from which I choose three as particularly relevant to this work: the "ban" as God's portion, the "ban" as God's justice, and the ideology of nonparticipation.

The Ban as God's Portion

This practice refers to those texts that speak of *herem* or ban (Num 21:2–3, 23–24; Deut 2:30–35; 7:2–6; Josh 6:17, 21; 8:24–29; 10:28, 30, 31–32, 35, 37, 39, 40; 1 Sam 15:3), in which captured members of an opposing army are set apart by the victors for destruction through sacrifice and are promised to God in exchange for God's support for the victors' military campaigns.[2] This particular practice required "a wider view of God who appreciates human sacrifice, so those who partake in the ideology of the ban would presumably have something in common with those who had something in common with child sacrifice."[3] Girard captures the underlying socio-cultural assumption for this practice in his insight around the scapegoat mechanism, religion, and social order. In this case, the enemy is not part of

1. Niditch, *War*, 154.
2. Ibid., 28.
3. Ibid., 50.

the community but the scapegoat whose destruction is the promised sacri-fice to God in exchange for victory.

The Ban as God's Justice

This practice represents a trajectory promoted by the Deuteronomic writers, who considered the ban as "a means of rooting out what they believe to be impure, sinful forces damaging to the solid and pure relationship between Israel and God."[4] The overwhelming presumption is that enemies deserve punishment based upon an absolute distinction between friend and enemy, the pure of heart and the evil ones, and those worthy of salvation and those deserving of death, thus encouraging an acceptance of the idea of killing humans through demonizing and dehumanizing them.[5] This trajectory highlights what happens when the religious agent's horizon is shaped exis-tentially by the grace–sin dialectic. The subject has a distorted understand-ing of the world characterized as a battleground between their own identity and the identity of the other whom they consider to be evil.

W. M. Slattery argues that both the ban as God's portion and the ban as God's justice capture the Israelite fear and loathing of what is culturally, politically, ethnically, and religiously unknown, which lead to xenophobic attitudes that thwart any rational interrelationship or dialogue.[6] The bans, however, were also challenged by writers of the Old Testament, especially the prophets, and the writers of the first and second books of the Chronicles, who "appear to be conscious of unwanted and tyrannical violence [involved] in slaying all under the ban, eliminating Israel's enemies so that they will not have to be reencountered," and who were bothered by "cruel, vengeful and rapacious killing of physically and socially weak members of society.

The Ideology of Nonparticipation

In Niditch's account of the ideology of nonparticipation, she describes a trajectory within Israelite thinking that dialectically opposes domination and reconciliation, and seeks to eliminate war and establish peace.[7] In the cosmologically oriented culture of ancient Israel, the saving revelation of the God of Israel was the beginning of a long development that moved from

---

4. Ibid., 56.

5. Ibid., 77.

6. Slattery, *Jesus the Warrior?*, 47.

7. Niditch, *War*, 134.

understanding God as a warrior to God as the Suffering Servant–Redeemer. I argue that this particular trajectory within the Hebrew and Christian biblical revelation of God provides an example of the healing vector in history, by which a new revelation brings about personal transformation, a new cultural attitude about warfare, and a new sociopolitical situation.

The Suffering Servant in the Old Testament

According to Millard Lind, the Suffering Servant trajectory represents a significant development in the religious thought of the exilic prophets, who proclaimed a second exodus and return to Zion by the hand of God.[8] The Songs of the Servant in Second Isaiah especially focus attention on the Suffering Servant of God, the vision of a sole just one who wins healing, not by the processes of warfare backed by political and technological might, but by taking on the iniquities of all. Citing the work of Eric Voegelin, Doran asserts that the Servant Songs of Second Isaiah represent a "culmination of Old Testament revelation and the completion of the transimperial form of existence that this revelation introduces into history."[9]

The Suffering Servant symbolizes for Israel a new order away from warfare and the cult of empire. The symbol represented the means to bring about change in human history and a movement from a "cosmological imperial civilization to society in history under God."[10] Most importantly, salvation and suffering are no longer alternatives in this new order since, as Doran states, salvation "is not with the order of life under the covenant of the Law, but with the order under the Redeemer God. The servant embodies that order, and so is the covenant to the people, the light to the nations. Redemption is revealed as the fruit of suffering, right here and now," and, by implication, salvation and redemption are not the fruit of actual warfare.[11]

---

8. Lind, *Yahweh Is a Warrior*, 168–74. Lind traces a developing understanding of warfare from the patriarchal period to the period of kingship and the Deuteronomist tradition before and after the exile. By the latter period, the message was that Israel's power base was not military might but trust in God, obedience to God's word, and loyalty to the covenant.

9. Doran, "Suffering Servant," 45–46. See Voegelin, *Israel and Revelation*, 501.

10. Doran, "Suffering Servant," 48.

11. Ibid., 48–49.

Jesus the Suffering Servant and the Church

The Suffering Servant is a key christological theme in the Christian Gospels.[12] Doran states: "The New Testament acknowledges Jesus as the fulfilment of the Suffering Servant. It is not through ritual and cultic action, but through his suffering in history, that the sole Just One opens access to God."[13] By extension, Doran argues that the church is summoned to be the Community of the Servant of God, for, as redemptive suffering is so central to Jesus so "the principal catalytic agency of the community called and empowered to do as Jesus did will lie in its participation in the redemptive suffering and death through which he did in fact mediate a transition from a situation of sin to a situation of grace in history."[14] Here, the role of the church as servant is "to be understood quite strictly in terms of the Deutero-Isaian servant of God *in* the world, and not primarily as servant *of* the world."[15] The Christian is thus invited to acknowledge Jesus' suffering and death as one's own path to redemption and is "invited as well to have some share in the historical catalytic agency of that suffering and death as its power mediates," a situation of grace in history.[16]

This religious tradition reveals a development, in religious understanding, from warfare as a means to salvation through imposing God's retributive justice, to an alternative trajectory characterized by reliance on God in the midst of suffering and conflict. As Matthew Lamb asserts: "The empire of God as proclaimed by Christ is a free gift and call to enter into communities of expectation, faith and love with the poor, the hungry, the sorrowful, the untold victims of sinful histories of domination and oppression."[17] The community of the church is to be the catalytic agent that brings about change in human history through suffering and self-sacrificing love, forming the consciences of political leaders and individuals in the ways of justice and truth. The danger for the church, however, is that of succumbing to the kind of betrayal where the reign of God is pressed into the service of dominative cultural meanings and values that found oppressive symbols and institutions.

---

12. Kereszty, *Jesus Christ*, 152–54; Bourbonnais, *Behold My Servant*, 84–157; Burke, "Crucified People"; Wright, "Servant and Jesus," 281–97.

13. Doran, "Suffering Servant," 46.

14. Doran, *Dialectics of History*, 120.

15. Ibid., 121.

16. Ibid., 122.

17. Lamb, "Christianity," 92.

Christian Apocalyptic Imagination

We saw in chapter 5 that apocalyptic literature is a form of religious text that is filled with images of warfare in which God is depicted as a warrior. In my critique of apocalyptic consciousness, I highlighted the potential for apocalyptic texts to be inauthentically interpreted. The religious truth of Christian apocalyptic texts that uses the imagery of warfare, however, is an example of the healing vector within history addressing believers who are facing suffering and evil, exhorting believers not only to tell the truth but to live the truth, where doing so requires courage and perseverance.[18] The Christian is encouraged to endure undeserved suffering in the way Christ endured through hope, imitating the Suffering Servant by returning goodness for evil and thus transforming evil into good by making it an occasion of love. "Apocalypse," after all, is the English rendering of a Greek word meaning "revelation" or "unveiling," and is characterized by "a narrative framework in which a revelatory vision is accorded to a human being, most often through the intervention of an otherworldly being, e.g. by an angel who takes him to a heavenly vantage point to show him the vision and/or to explain it to him. The secrets revealed involve a cosmic transformation that will result in the transition of this world to a world or era to come and a divine judgement on all."[19]

As we saw in chapter 3, Doran argues that the integrity of the cultural dialectic is maintained through soteriological meanings and values. Christian eschatological consciousness begins in the belief that God is the source and goal of human history. Therefore, an authentic religious apocalyptic imagination, while recognizing disorder and not underestimating the power of evil, discourages a purely human ability to change this disorder.

Following the overview of Lonergan's account in chapter 3, we can see that social order is proximately related to cultural values, and cultural values are proximately related to personal transformation. Proximately, authentic religious apocalyptic consciousness orients the person, not only toward a hope-filled anticipation of the *eschaton*, but also remotely toward the end of the present disorder and the destabilizing of a good of order through intelligence, patience, and commitment. Here, violence and terror are not defeated by violence but rather through redemptive love that changes the moral horizon of the believer toward new cultural directions and social institutions and away from the infliction of a reciprocal violence and terror.

18. Griffith, *War on Terrorism*, 205.
19. Brown, *Introduction*, 775.

The responsibility of the Christian is to provide the conditions in which others may be open to this love.

From the Christian perspective, the book of Revelation remains one of the most significant sources for apocalyptic narrative in the New Testament. However, there are many misleading interpretations of this literature. One example is the *Left Behind* series, a popular fiction and television series, in which the text of Revelation 19:11–21 is interpreted as an historical period and where there occurs the destruction of countless unbelievers at the command of a stern and merciless Christ figure.[20] Yet Revelation was written when the Roman Empire was the dominant political and religious system of the known world, where the social circumstances among the majority were characterized by the relative calm and prosperity of *pax Romana*; the book offered a message of hope for Christians who, in a context of suffering and crisis, were to resist the persecutions of the empire with patient endurance.[21] If a holy war were to be fought, it was to be fought within the human heart and fought against the inclinations to violence in oneself, rather than by the bloody conflict of actual physical war.

Certainly, the mythic narrative of the book of Revelation presents us with some unnerving scenes, such as the scene found in chapter 12. There is a war in heaven and Satan is unmasked (Rev 12:7–9) and cast down to earth, where Satan makes war on the woman about to give birth. But the weapon for defeating Satan is not some instrument of warfare; rather, it is the blood of the Lamb, a reference to the salvific action of Christ through his death and resurrection.[22] The Lamb does not cling to physical life in the face of death but hands over his life to the heavenly Father out of love for the Father and for humankind. The blood of the Lamb becomes the site of purification for all believers, indicating the site of vindication of all who suffer for the sake of their faith, reminding believers that their suffering is never forgotten by God and that no service in love is ever without fruit. The Sword of God is always and only the Word of God and the truth that it proclaims (Heb 4:12).

---

20. The "Left Behind" series is a set of twelve novels by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins, told from an apocalyptic and premillennialist perspective that has achieved sales of over 50 million copies. It focuses on an underground Christian resistance movement that confronts the Antichrist, Nicolae Carpathia, who, as a charismatic political leader, seeks world domination. See http://www.leftbehind.com. Authors such as Harvey Cox and Barbara Rossing are concerned with the series' tendency to resacralize violence. See also Bergen, "New Apocalyptic," 1–16.

21. Brown, *Introduction*, 774–79. Lamoureux and Wadell, *Christian Moral Life*, 213: "Patient endurance in the midst of suffering or 'bearing wrongs patiently' . . . does not mean passively accepting a bad situation . . . Properly understood neither patience nor endurance is passive in nature for both are active responses to suffering."

22. Brown, *Introduction*, 790–91.

So, while the book of Revelation is an unflinching portrait of the judgment of God over evil in the world, bloodshed is never attributed to God but only to empire. The distorted schemes of recurrence characterized by irrationality, distorted values, and systemic injustice can be exposed for what they are only through a new way of dismantling evil, namely, by forgiveness, sharing, fellowship, and truth.

The Development of the Just War Tradition

Returning now to the just war image referred to in the previous chapter as one of Coates's four images of war, we recall that it is a fourth horizon of expectations and values that influences a moral response to war. I offer it as a foundation for a constructive engagement with warfare. Just war thinking has developed in a religious culture shaped by the command to love God and love one's neighbor, yet with the obligation to defend the citizenry against unjust aggression. However, I am convinced it is important to examine the just war tradition from an Islamic perspective, too, since, as John Kelsay cogently argues, similar principles can be found in Islamic moral thinking on warfare.[23] While Juergensmeyer provides many examples of religious believers linking violence, religious justification, and militarism, I believe that it is important to argue an alternative moral perspective that may facilitate more constructive decisions on warfare.

Since the Constantinian era, engagement in war has prompted theologians such as St. Augustine of Hippo (in an unsystematic manner) and, much later, Thomas Aquinas (in a thoroughly systematic manner) to theologize on the nature of war and what constitutes responsible action on the part of Christians in war.[24] Most notably Aquinas presented three criteria for a just war: just cause, sovereign authority, and right intention. Following Aquinas's systemic approach, these criteria were to be interpreted under the guidance of the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love. This tradition provides overarching principles to rulers on the practice of statecraft, guidance to commanders in battle, and help for individuals in the formation of their consciences.

23. Kelsay, *Just War in Islam*, 97–124. Kelsay explores the historical deposit of thinkers—such as the Iraqi Mohammad Al-Shaybani (750–805), who wrote extensively on Islamic ethics and military jurisprudence and Al-Mawardi of Basra (d. 1058)—to indicate a rudimentary examination of criteria within Islam that would guide recourse to war, such as legitimate authority, just cause, and righteous intention.

24. Charles, *Pacifism and Jihad*, 123; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II–II q.40a. Ic, q.83 a.8 ad.3; Finnis, *Aquinas*, 284–91.

The Just War Tradition: Methodological Issues

The accounts of Girard and Taylor in chapter 2 show how authentic Christian belief unmasks the destructive violence of warfare used mistakenly by power groups to transcend personal and social sin. In the Christian tradition, destructive conflict has always been understood as the inevitable consequence of a sinful world. However, Christian hope leads the believer to affirm that warfare is not inevitable and can even be avoided. When warfare is enacted, the harmful consequences are great, and therefore the violence of warfare ought to be subject to moral restraint and seen as a last resort from the very beginning of a discernment process that seeks to resolve a war-threatening crisis.[25] A moral decision to engage in war ought to be couched within a context of statecraft and the moral responsibility of political leaders who try to discern the common good.

Yet one of the most significant challenges for the twenty-first century is to take a tradition that has evolved out of a unified vision of life, which included belief in God and a discerning community of religious faith, and to dialectically engage with it in a setting that is often secular, sympathetic to liberal ideas (and rather different from the way in which the tradition had been understood in previous centuries), and that sees international agreements principally in legal rather than ethical terms.

A hermeneutic of recovery toward an ethical approach to war must begin by addressing certain methodological issues pertaining to the just war tradition. The first methodological issue pertains to the proposed grounding of the tradition in natural law, if the tradition is to provide a basis for a universal ethic and a global moral discourse for governments and other groups. Fuchs suggests that natural law ethics pivots on two ideas: "law" and "nature."[26] The idea of "law" prompts us to think of morality in terms of commands or rules, yet with the challenge of showing how such laws bind humanity in a genuine common good that is interiorly founded and not simply externally imposed. The idea of "nature" claims that we can justify binding obligations on free persons based on the essence of what it means to be human, by which, as Fuchs notes, reason therefore must ask "nature" about the ethical and legal order that derives from *it* in order to discover what is correct in the total context of the human person.[27]

Two points follow. First, natural law ethics may be effective from a pedagogical point of view to dictate a clear set of rules that help verify where

---

25. Himes, "War," 977.

26. Fuchs, "Natural Law," 669–75.

27. Ibid., 671.

there is compliance, where there is noncompliance, and how to avoid the error of relativism. Nevertheless, this ethical approach contains a number of problems. For example, it may miss the interior elements of intention, motive, conscience, and personal freedom. No observance of the law can do away with the need for the self-appropriation of one's attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, responsibility, prudence and goodness exercised by persons in any particular context. Second, associated with the legal idiom of "natural law," is the presupposition that decisions are made within an ideal "moral situation without any acknowledgement of the evils that affect the human condition," prompting the objection that if natural law is to be conceived, it must acknowledge a history of decline "in the victimisation of the other, in social dynamics of envy, and in the totalitarian use of violence."[28]

Therefore a universally applicable natural law, according to Lonergan's intentionality analysis, must include the subject's openness to conversion and a shared orientation with others to self-transcendence. Kelly states that "the more these self-transcending imperatives are heeded, the more attuned we are to the inner law of our being—without which natural law can be nothing more than external imposition."[29] To achieve this level of self-transcendence, a shift in consciousness is required where the subject moves from theory to interiority, helping the subject identify the norms immanent and operative in consciousness, thus allowing the subject to understand conflicting moral viewpoints and the kind of questions that generate their starting points. Interiority then becomes the common foundation moving ethics from a closed system to an open system, from a system dominated by logic to one guided by considerations around method, and from a conceptual system imposed from without to an ethics founded on personal authenticity and conscience properly understood.

The second methodological issue pertaining to the just war tradition concerns the irreducibly social dimension of moral knowledge and evaluation, as identified by Kenneth Melchin.[30] The just war tradition is a set of principles to guide decision making, hopefully directing people along a path of progress and goodness. Melchin argues that such prescriptive notions "are essentially dynamic notions pertaining to patterns of changes in human living."[31] Since moral knowing is concerned to direct human action toward the future from a past and present state of living, "the content of moral knowledge pertains to the development, maintenance, and ongoing transformation

28. Kelly, "Natural Law," 11.
29. Ibid., 18.
30. Melchin, "Moral Knowledge."
31. Ibid., 523.

of the cooperative systems of social relations which condition the emergence and satisfaction of a wide range of individual desires and feelings."[32]

Therefore, moral evaluation toward a course of action prescribing war must be attuned to the effect of decisions on social schemes of recurrence, the flow of goods whose delivery they condition, and the manner by which social schemes can influence individuals in their desires.[33] Melchin argues that "citizens in any society come to understand their welfare as implicated in the wider fabric of social relations."[34] Individual desires become inseparable from wider social concerns. But, equally, it is very possible that people locked into any scheme of social order may not easily appreciate the need to change even when the system becomes destructive.[35] In this case, fundamental heuristic notions such as justice, political freedom, right intention, leadership, and democracy remain important cultural meanings and values for deliberations, orienting our moral enquiry in a specific direction.[36] The commitment to these values highlights the importance of the social structure and its ability to deliver goods toward progress through an elimination of biases and the quest for authenticity. To ascertain moral truth, Melchin argues that we must analyze concrete situations carefully, armed with questions and criteria from both the level of social structures and the level of cultural meanings and values.[37]

The Criteria for *Ius ad Bellum:* A Critique

As a moral reflection on the action of war, the just war tradition distinguishes between *ius ad bellum* (recourse to war), *ius in bello* (conduct in war), and *ius post bellum* (conduct upon the termination of hostilities).[38] While stating that all three dimensions are important, Mark Allman and Tobias Winright argue that insufficient attention has been given to how just peacemaking as a postwar justice matter relates to the just war tradition.[39] I would like to focus on the first of these dimensions, *ius ad bellum*, although I would agree that there exists an interrelationship between all three in any

32. Ibid., 501.

33. Ibid., 521.

34. Melchin, *Living with Other People*, 57.

35. Ibid., 58.

36. Ibid., 59.

37. Ibid., 60.

38. Flynn, *War on Terror*, 19–22; Charles and Demy, *War, Peace and Christianity*, 159–66, 205–8.

39. Allman and Winright, *After the Smoke*, 55–56.

process of moral evaluation concerning warfare. With *ius ad bellum*, the tradition identifies three major and five minor criteria for a moral recourse to war. The major criteria are just cause (*iusta causa*), legitimate authority (*legitima auctoritas*), and proper or right intention (*recta intentio*). The minor criteria are last resort, reasonable chance of success, proportionality, the aim of peace, and comparative justice.[40] Primarily focusing on the major criteria for *ius ad bellum*, I wish to show the importance of a dialectical engagement with each of them.

The major criterion of just cause relates to the imperative by a state to be able to identify an injury inflicted by another group as truly unjust, while enacting a response motivated by the concern to rectify or prevent injustice, which may include not only a defensive but also a punitive dimension.[41] This criterion proceeds on the assumption that human beings are equipped to understand the difference between justice and injustice, genuine wrong and mere harm. At present, when the term "war on terror" has some currency among secular Western countries, just cause is being evaluated in response to the threat of or actual terrorist attacks, where the attack constitutes an offense against the equilibrium of a just order. It could be argued that restoring balance requires both a defensive and a punitive dimension to help restore or rebuild the equilibrium that has been so severely damaged by terrorist acts.[42] As a moral criterion, just cause represents a necessary but not a sufficient reason to justify having recourse to war.

Within the criterion of just cause, however, there are various challenges. The first is the relationship between religious and moral dimensions in the evaluation of justice. According to Kenneth Melchin, the challenge is for Christian faith to help us name the prethematic expectations that structure our way of thinking about and evaluating a just order.[43] Security and psychological anxiety can shape the expectations about the whole of our lives and the notion of the good can shrink to simply what is comfortable and physically secure. Melchin states that faith "calls us to cultivate these expectations in a specific direction, a direction that bears upon the question of ultimate justice. Christian faith makes a claim about God's justice. It acknowledges massive structural decline but does not allow this evil to have the last word. This is because faith is the expectation of the encounter with

---

40. Charles, *Pacifism and Jihad*, 123–35.

41. Ibid., 132–33. It should be noted that the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (par. 2309) defines just war as being solely defensive and not punitive, a moral position possibility borne from the sad history of warfare in the twentieth century.

42. Mooney, "Old Wine," 216.

43. Melchin, *Living with Other People*, 109.

God's liberating grace in the midst of our experience of sin and evil."[44] This stands in contrast to the mindset of pragmatism, an ethic of control, and *realpolitik* that have people convinced of their own ability to eliminate evil for the sake of balancing power through the imposition of force.

The second challenge within the criterion of just cause is to work out the relationship between just cause and the other criteria for recourse to war. There is a difference between recourse to war based on a presumption against injustice and recourse based on a presumption against war.[45] The presumption against injustice prioritizes restoring a just order and treats the other criteria as less important. The presumption against war would give weight to the other criteria, especially last resort, in which war would be initiated only when there is no other choice.

Lonergan argues that appropriating our own self-transcendence inherently leads to respecting the self-transcending existence of others. All our efforts to be just require that we take into consideration a threefold structure of human living when it comes to selecting or rejecting data that bear upon moral knowledge: the needs of individuals; recurrent schemes to deliver goods; and, importantly, values. The Christian ideal of self-sacrificing love challenges us toward a form of justice that leaves behind egoism and a strict calculation of what is owed. Therefore, just cause grounded in a presumption against war would emphasize a number of elements: limiting war to a defensive approach; recognizing a propensity to exceed moral limits in war; valorizing reconciliation over punishment; being healthily skeptical about the provisional nature of judgments made by leaders; and recognizing comparative justice, that is, that both sides may have some perceived sense of just cause, with one side having a more actual just cause.[46]

The third challenge within the criterion of just cause is the relationship between *ius ad bellum* and *ius in bello*. If the criteria of recourse to war have been established, but a war is prosecuted with multiple acts of injustice, do these actions render the decision to go to war also unjust? It could be argued that a decision to go to war cannot possibly predict the unforeseeable future. However, for such a decision there must be a reasonable expectation that it be fought in substantial accord with *ius in bello* principles.[47]

The second major criterion for *ius ad bellum*, which is legitimate authority, identifies the ability to declare war as a legal and political process made by political authorities. The burden of waging war morally requires,

---

44. Ibid., 110.

45. Lee, *Ethics and War*, 107.

46. Ibid., 107.

47. Ibid., 101.

therefore, that legitimate authority act for the common good, exercising a moral responsibility toward peace among those governed.[48] At present, proper authority includes yet goes beyond ideas of democratic elections by the people, proper representation for the people, valid forms of government, and the separation of powers. Proper authorities need to be attuned to a host of moral considerations that include the economic interests of a nation. However, given the increasing transnational and international interdependence of countries, legitimate authorities need to work in cooperation with international bodies, such as the United Nations, and according to international law and shared conventions. Even in the case of nations opposing terrorism, it seems important that restraints be placed on unilateral action to more effectively avoid the presence of bias.

As I noted in my account of Lonergan in chapter 3, the political order is a higher integration of economy and technology. However, legitimate authority is grounded in a movement from inauthenticity to authenticity through a self-transcending process of inquiry.[49] Human authenticity is a constant journey of conversion—religious, moral, and intellectual. A sustained commitment to the desire to know and intend the good is conditional upon being in love in an unrestricted manner (religious conversion). The criteria for responsible choices in political life are the norms discovered through the process of moral enquiry (moral conversion). The criteria for affirming reality require a shift from appearances to insight and properly grounded judgments (intellectual conversion). The effort to recognize and identify with those norms in human consciousness requires a shift to an interiorly differentiated consciousness.

Yet, leadership with authenticity is very difficult to realize where cultural and social processes work against authenticity. When there is distortion of the social dialectic toward the pole of practical intelligence, authorities under the sway of limited and instrumental reasoning are likely to disregard far-reaching solutions in their desire to focus on practical short-term economic and political considerations. Political authorities are likely to diminish, abolish, or simply be blind to genuine values when they avoid symbols that speak to the human heart and the drama of living as flourishing human beings.[50] In this case, the common good is no longer a good of order to deliver goods underpinned by concretely prioritized values but, rather, merely the satisfaction of particular needs and desires. In this case

48. Charles, *Pacifism and Jihad*, 133–34.

49. Lonergan, *Third Collection*, 5–6.

50. Lonergan, *Insight*, 238. Lonergan warns that political authorities often may use feelings and symbols to evoke an intersubjectivity that is primarily focused on ideological justification.

the purpose of government too easily reduces to the ability to protect civil rights to property, and liberty shrinks narrowly to the freedom to create institutions that will assure security.

The third major criterion of *ius ad bellum*, which is right intention, is also crucial to any moral evaluation. Evoking the notion of interiorly differentiated consciousness, Kelly notes the many registers of human consciousness by which right intention is all too easily not realized: the "impulsive" who hurry past all the relevant data; the "obtuse," who refuse to raise all the relevant questions; the "immature," who make judgments of fact based on mere impressions; and the "vicious," who cannot see beyond the limits of their own selfishness or group interest.[51] Right intention signals that a just response is founded on four interrelated aspects: first, the greater good of a just peace that goes beyond the sentiments of hatred, vengeance, sovereign pride, reputation, national aggrandizement, blood thirst, or territorial expansionism; second, the moral understanding that the goal of war is not so much killing but rather stopping the aggressor;[52] third, a cultural critique that recognizes that unjustly invading another country for the sake of profit or gain causes deterioration in human living in both the country invaded and the country invading;[53] and fourth, the leader's attention to the social consequences of entering on a war footing. Therefore, when one is dealing with terrorist groups within a country, a central feature must be the winning over of hearts and minds and doing so by seeking to fully address the social conditions that may have motivated or prepared the ground for the actualization of the terrorist threat.[54]

Conclusion

Juergensmeyer presents two positions on warfare. The first position is the horizon of the religious agent motivated to violence who envisages war as primarily a religious matter by which the agent would achieve victory over antireligion. I have argued that Christian religious experience founded in transcendent love privileges self-sacrificing love in the manner of Jesus. Yet the Christian tradition does not negate legitimate self-defense, especially defense of the innocent. A careful investigation demonstrates that the just war tradition is a means to control violence, while also humanizing its conduct during a conflict and in the postwar reconstruction stage. Juergensmeyer's

---

51. Kelly, "Natural Law," 19.
52. Charles, *Pacifism and Jihad*, 134–35.
53. Melchin, *Living with Other People*, 39–40.
54. Mooney, "Old Wine," 218.

second position on warfare is the horizon of secular leaders who envisage war primarily as a matter of political and economic power. Following on from the previous chapter on warfare, I have argued that it is possible for secular leaders to implicitly draw upon religious images to justify political goals and these religious traditions require dialectal engagement.

However, we have seen that there are complex methodological issues around the ethical basis of the just war tradition, as founded in natural law, presenting problems for those who would argue that only a natural law basis can provide a cross-cultural or global reflection on the morality of war. We have also seen that through a dialectical engagement with the three major criteria of *ius ad bellum* that decisions regarding recourse to war cannot be separated from specific cultural frameworks for understanding just cause, legitimate authority, and right intention.

In the next chapter, we will examine Juergensmeyer's second symbol for understanding the link between violence and religion, namely, heroic martyrdom.