

Just war military ethics

[Philosophy](#)



Just War/Military Ethics

Just War Just War Just war in the criteria by which nations lawfully and ethically qualify war to be a correct of action for particular reasons. The theory of just war dates back to the works of early Greek and Roman philosophers, Aristotle and Cicero who brought about the discussion on justifiable reasons to take life or go to war with proper rules of conduct. the idea have deep roots in the religious doctrines of Abrahamic origin (Islam, Judaism and Christianity) which tries to harmonize the fact that killing is sin but at some cases it may be purposeful to take human life (Walzer, 2008). . This paper seek to harmonize the different principles that qualifies a war to be just.

Just war as a theory have open boundaries of interpretation, there exist as many understanding of the concept of the concept as there are philosophers pursuing the same. not everyone have the same view towards the fruits of just war, some argue that killing is wrong no matter the purpose for which life is taken, they believe that force and killing is one way a government can enforce its interest (Orend, 2009) .

The first principle considered in many ancient literature to justify a war is the just ad bellum (justifications for war to be begin); it deals with what it takes for one to go into war. The second principle is just in bello (justice in the cause of war), which concern itself with conduct of two parties at war. The third principle of just war is just post bellum (justice after an event of war), which considers what is just to be done after the war has ended (Walzer, 2008).

According to early Christians, killing was treated as a sin and as such, no

Christians were allowed to kill, but as more Romans converted to Christianity, the question arose whether is it possible for a Roman soldier to be a Christian considering their chances of taking lives. This issue was addressed by early Christian theologians; Augustine of Hippo wrote several articles trying to explore the fate of Roman soldiers. His ideas were synthesized by St. Thomas of Aquinas in the Catholic Church and he came up with guidelines to qualify war to be just (Walzer, 2008). . Today, these principles are widely used to judge wars, they include:

1. Good intention- a just war only exists when one fights to make a wrong right or in the event of self-defense against an armed attacker.
2. War as a last resort- for war to be just, it must be the last option when all other peaceful methods have been exhausted to the point that war becomes a solution.
3. Chances of success- there must be possibilities that war will solve all the problems, a war that leads to loss of lives and injuries for no fruitful results cannot be considered ethical.
4. Beneficial results- a war that results in better conditions than when the war would have not taken place is just, otherwise it is unjust.
5. The violence and suffering should be proportional to victory gained for war to be justifiable.

Some argue that this theory has some shortcomings, for instance, they believe that taking life for any purpose is unjust before God and humanity. They also argue that war should waste the minimum time possible and therefore any method that brings victory at the earliest opportunity should be used, including interfering with civilians, this is why against human rights (Robinson, 2013).

The discussion details main facts about the theory of just war, the benefits and problems that it brings. The theory bridges theoretical and applied ethics, since it demands an adherence, or at least a consideration of meta-ethical conditions and models, as well as prompting concern for the practicalities of war, a few of those practicalities have been mentioned here (Robinson, 2013) .

References.

- Orend, B (2009). War and International Justice. Wilfrid Laurier Press.
- Robinson, P (2013) Just War in a Comparative Perspective. Ashgate.
- Walzer, (2008). Just and Unjust Wars. Basic Books.