

Coppieters, Bruno, and Nick Fotion, eds. Moral Constraints on War: Principles and Cases. Lanham MD, Boulder CO, New York and Oxford: Lexington, 2002.

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Coppieters, Bruno, and Nick Fotion, eds. *Moral Constraints on War: Principles and Cases*. Lanham MD, Boulder CO, New York and Oxford: Lexington, 2002.

The articles in this volume seek to analyze war and justice within the context of Just War theory. In the preface, the editors note that scholars working on what they term "war ethics" have done so within the confines of "domestic discussions," and that this "compartmentalization" is at odds with the growing international character of military actions. (p. xii) Just War theory is useful, in their opinion, because it provides a set of transcultural concepts and principles by which the morality of a war and the actions taken in it may be discussed and assessed. *Moral Constraints on War* attempts to provide just such a perspective on ethics and war by including chapters by scholars from Belgium, the Peoples Republic of China, Russia, and the United States. The book is divided into three distinct parts following an informative introduction which discusses war, ethics, and justice from the perspectives of Realism, Militarism, Pacifism, and Just War theory.

Each chapter of Part One is devoted to a single Just War principle governing *jus ad bello*. The chapters on "Just Cause" (Carl Ceulemans), "Legitimate Authority" (Bruno Coppieters), and "Last Resort" (Bruno Coppieters, Ruben Apressyan, and Carl Ceulemans) clearly define and deftly analyze not only these principles, but also the complexities surrounding their interpretation and application in real world situations. "Likelihood of Success" (Nick Fotion and Bruno Coppieters) and "Proportionality" (Nick Fotion) are best read as a unit, and would have been more effective if dealt with in a single chapter. There is less on theory here, and more emphasis on explanation through examples, which is largely effective if disappointing given the excellence of the theoretical material provided in the other chapters mentioned above. The weakest chapter in Part One, however, deals with "Right Intentions" (Bruno Coppieters and Boris Kashnikov). The authors' contention that this principle is the most problematic of the six is well taken, but their analysis of the subtleties involved is less clear, and their use of sources for the various views presented is not as thorough as it might be. The authors' conclusion that the principle of right intentions ought to be viewed with skepticism because "moral abuse" of it "is a real risk" and because "scholars are not able to give a quick answer to the question" of what a state's intentions are or were when going to war is also troubling. (p. 76) If we accept this sort of rationale, then all six principles of Just War theory analyzed in this part of the book are open to the same criticism and the foundational structure of the work is compromised.

Part Two continues the presentation of the theoretical components of Just War Theory, but focuses on the *jus in bello* constraints of "Proportionality" (Guy Van Damme and Nick Fotion) and "Discrimination" (Anthony Hartle). In the introduction to Part Two, Guy Van Damme briefly traces the history of the regulation of actions taken during hostilities, noting that "laws" of war were largely customary and unwritten until the nineteenth century. He also explains that lawyers and philosophers work from different disciplinary approaches when dealing with concepts like *ius in bello* and *ius ad bello*,

although both groups "refer to the protection of fundamental human rights during armed conflicts and more precisely to the humanitarian protection of civilians and civilian objects during such conflicts. (p. 125) For the purposes of this volume, Van Damme continues, the authors writing in Part Two analyze the moral regulation of war from a specifically philosophical rather than legal point of view and they complete this task eloquently and well. Anthony Hartle's analysis of discrimination is especially impressive and useful when dealing with non-combatant immunity and the "contemporary challenges" of economic sanctions, terrorist activity, international peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian intervention. (pp. 154-157)

Part Three of *Moral Constraints on War* builds on the theoretical chapters by assessing the morality of several recent conflicts in light of Just War principles. All of the conflicts discussed are well presented, and the authors do a uniformly superb job of presenting their analyses in a step-by-step, easy to follow style. The primary strength of this section, however, lies in the three chapters which present multiple, and at times diametrically opposed, views on the same conflict – NATO's intervention in Kosovo in 1999 (Ceulemans; Kashnikov; Shi and Shen). It is here that readers can most fully appreciate the usefulness of Just War Theory in international discussions on war and ethics. It is here also, that they can see the not insignificant problems inherent in such a discourse. While just cause, legitimate authority, right intentions, likelihood of success, proportionality (*ad bello* and *in bello*), last resort, and discrimination may have been accepted across international boundaries as transcultural concepts, the application of these concepts to actual military operations results in anything but transcultural consensus. The editors' argument in the conclusion that Just War principles may be termed universal in that they are grounded in the existence of a widely held historical notion of humanism, misses the point and glosses over significant cultural differences in the meaning and application of this term. The value of these principles need not lie in any similarity of intellectual tradition; it is enough that they have been accepted and used by modern scholars from widely divergent cultural backgrounds.

Moral Constraints on War is an important book that will be useful to scholars and advanced students alike. Its reasoned presentation of the principles of Just War Theory followed by its application of these principles to concrete military conflicts breaks new ground in the fields of conflict studies, international relations, and philosophy, as does the international makeup of the contributing scholars. The editors and contributors are to be commended for their efforts and one can only hope that this volume represents only the first of many such collaborations.

Jasonne Grabher O'Brien is Assistant Professor of History at Fairleigh Dickinson University. Her current research focuses on laws regulating war and sanctioned violence in the Middle Ages.