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# Justice and the Just War Tradition: Human Worth, Moral Formation, and Armed Conflict

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passion, nonproliferation, as becomes clear when the book concludes with a series of policy recommendations. While there are a few ideas involving nuclear force posture or arms limitation, such as a ban on forward nuclear deployments, the thrust of the package is on preventive nonproliferation.

These are real weaknesses. But they do not detract from the real strengths here that commend this as a worthy addition to the nuclear weapons literature. At its best, *Underestimated* succeeds admirably in synthesizing the swirling policy debates surrounding these complex and interrelated issues, framing them in a wider context that is also widely accessible.

DAVID COOPER



*Justice and the Just War Tradition: Human Worth, Moral Formation, and Armed Conflict*, by Christopher Eberle. New York: Routledge, 2016. 252 pages. \$140.

War presents many opportunities and temptations to do wrong and to choose injustice and evil over good. How are we to know how to act when situations are not black-and-white, or when emotions cloud our judgment? These questions are not new, and the discussion surrounding them has been going on since Saint Augustine of Hippo penned the first recognizable form of just war theory in the fifth century. Philosopher Christopher Eberle brings his clear thought and humble wit to the discussion using his particular viewpoint as both a professor at the U.S. Naval Academy and a Christian.

Viewing the just war tradition as the best available framework for reflecting on the

morality of war, Eberle aims to “provide a conceptual and propositional resource that citizens, soldiers, and statesmen can employ as an aid to moral formation.”

This book is a natural outgrowth of his weighty responsibility to form the morals of the nation’s future warrior-leaders. What makes his voice particularly worth listening to about this topic is that, while he is a philosopher interested in discussing ideas, he translates these ideas into practical wisdom using historical and generic examples that are easy to follow for anyone interested in the topic. This book is valuable to a range of people, from undergraduates through adult learners who have a basic familiarity with just war theory to seasoned experts in the field. Dr. Eberle brings a Christian element into a discussion that is often bereft of it, as well as an examination of the interior mind and intent, which also are often ignored.

Eberle’s Christian faith is valuable in that he presents just war theory from the perspective out of which it was created: the heart of Western Christianity. This brings us to his second aim: “to provide an understanding of the morality of war that is open to religious contributions both to the justification and limitation of military violence.”

This is particularly important given how Osama Bin Laden framed the events of September 11, 2001—as religious “just war.” It is only by considering a just war theory reunited with religion that one can meet these claims accurately and reveal them as false. This reunification of just war theory and religion is the raw material that forms the core of what Eberle uses to guide all decision making with regard to right action in war.

In his discussion, Eberle focuses narrowly on the justificatory and

motivational core of just war theory. These are the main concepts that draw the boundaries or build the framework for any discussion about whether a war is just. Their purpose is to shape the way we perceive and discipline our minds and hearts about violent communal conflict so as to conduct ourselves justly when we find ourselves involved.

One of the basic elements of Eberle's application of just war theory is the idea that every human life has great and equal worth. Human beings are created as moral agents who naturally want to be good and to do good in their moral relations with others. However, every human being is also a sinner who at times chooses evil as a "good"—resulting in acts of violence around the world. Morally speaking, any violence that kills a human being deprives him or her of this inherent worth and must be seen as a moral wrong. And just as violence by one human being against another is morally wrong, organized violence by one human community against another is morally impermissible.

There are times, however, when this can be overridden, including when one community commits an act or a series of egregious acts that seriously injures another community. According to Eberle, the victimized community can incur an obligation for war to correct the moral injustice. This obligation can be overridden, however, when the evils the war would cause or create exceed the moral good sought.

Eberle shows how just war theory can be used to determine the threshold for egregious action that gives justification for war; what constitutes a proportional response; what actions, thoughts, and emotions in warfare are and are not morally permissible; and

when warfare must be stopped. His discussion of each of these topics is tidy, conversational, and a delight to read—fulfilling the book's goal of being a practical handbook to guide citizens, statesmen, and soldiers in making right moral decisions when it comes to war.

The book's most controversial aspect is its conclusion. After artfully building the case for a just war theory, Eberle muddies the waters by writing: "Reliance on the [theory] tempts its adherents to amplify the destructiveness of war in morally troubling respects. When . . . human beings are caught up in violent communal conflict, their adherence to the just war theory can render them less likely to fight in accord with the demands of justice than would otherwise be the case." He continues, writing that "this deficiency is not merely a contingent fact about the uses to which some bad actors happen to put the just war theory. Rather, it derives partly from enduring facts about the human condition and partly from the just war theory's core justificatory requirements." Eberle does allow that a just war could be escalated by adding additional war aims. However, given human nature, this also becomes a temptation to misuse the theory to seem to justify escalated warfare and carnage under the guise of avenging the now-exaggerated precipitating moral wrongs.

Here I believe Dr. Eberle overburdens his analysis of just war theory with the problem of human nature. According to traditional Christian doctrine, humans are sinful beings who often choose apparent "goods" over actual goods. As such, people can choose to misuse or abuse any doctrine, theory, or instruction, no matter how ironclad. Still, I do not consider a just war theory that is

open to abuse to be a defective theory; if anything, because of that potential it is a realistic one. I highly recommend this work as a useful resource for practical moral formation in just war theory.

ALI GHAFFARI



*Rockets and People*, by Boris Chertok, ed. Asif Siddiqi. Vol. 3, *Hot Days of the Cold War*. Washington, DC: National Aeronautics and Space Administration, History Office, 2010. 796 pages. \$65.

In this third volume of his memoirs, ably edited by acclaimed space historian Asif Siddiqi, Boris Yevseyevich Chertok, who was the most senior surviving Soviet space engineer until his death at age ninety-nine in 2011, offers a unique, firsthand window into Cold War history as he lived it over his six-decade career. He spent most of it at the uppermost level of the OKB-1 design bureau (now S. P. Korolev Rocket and Space Corporation Energia), where he participated in every major project through 1991.

In this series, volume 1 details Chertok's rise from aviation factory electrician to official in charge of extracting Nazi rocket expertise, volume 2 the post-1946 emergence of the Soviet missile program. In volume 3, Chertok recounts and reflects on the golden age of Soviet cosmonautics, from Yury Gagarin's historic orbital flight in 1961 to the death of key figures in the Soviet space program in and around 1967. Volume 4, released in early 2012, covers the U.S.-Soviet moon race. Chertok's personable, technically informed, and somewhat politically detached perspective, as well as his frankness regarding credibility of sources and

where he lacks information, makes for an accessible, historically useful account.

From his perch in the Soviet missile bureaucracy, Chertok observed the Cold War as a scientific-technological-military competition. Manned space-flight was regarded as an indicator of national prestige—and socialist superiority: “There was an ongoing battle at the front line of the Cold War’s scientific-technical front. Rather than soldiers, it was scientists, engineers, the ‘generals’ of industry, and workers who determined the battle’s outcome. And warriors of another sort came on the scene—cosmonauts” (p. 61). Each side fed off the other in constant one-upmanship, Chertok stresses: “American operations had a very strong effect on our plans. American historians of aeronautics assert that our successes were the primary reason why the United States converted its space programs into a top-priority, nationwide challenge” (p. 246).

Central to this competition, for some time, was a race to land a man on the moon. On August 3, 1964, Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers Resolution 655-268, “On Work for Lunar and Space Research,” recommitted Moscow to “land a man on the moon and return him to Earth by 1967–68” (p. 397). This goal was restated in a similar decree of October 25, 1965 (p. 568). This competition was very real, and there was no substitute: “[N]o matter how successful [other] programs might be, they could not compensate for our loss of superiority if the Americans were to become the first to fly around the moon” (p. 523).

Then, despite suffering a major setback in the Apollo 1 fire of 1967, the United States started pulling ahead. The Soviet