

Fostering Reconciliation as a Goal of Military Ethics

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Abstract

In the Christian tradition—and the secular thought it has shaped—the proper goal of just war is peace. This follows from the characteristic prominence of the themes of forgiveness and reconciliation in Christian ethics. Accordingly, to be morally justified, war must include among its aims reconciliation with the enemy, repudiating any interest in their suffering or annihilation as such. Since a just war’s immediate goal is to rectify injustice, it is punitive; but since that rectification includes ultimate reconciliation, it is not vindictive. Insofar as it intends reconciliation with the enemy and regards them with compassion, just war is forgiving and so qualified by love. Nevertheless, the interpersonal paradigms of love, forgiveness, and reconciliation should be distinguished from their weaker political or inter-state analogues. The peace intended by just war is better specified as political “accommodation” or “co-existence” than “reconciliation.” The intention of political co-existence usually shapes military action indirectly by constraining its belligerent means. Sometimes, however, armed forces can be directly engaged in diplomatic efforts to persuade a hostile enemy into peaceful politics.

The Christian Just War Tradition and the Goal of Peace

The notion that peace is the ultimate goal of war is common sense. There are, however, significantly different kinds of peace. One is the peace that reigns when the enemy people have been annihilated: this is typically the goal of wars motivated by racial hatred. Another is the peace that reigns when the enemy people have been ruthlessly suppressed: this is the goal of wars of political domination. A different kind of peace is that which reigns when a grave wrong has been righted by the military disabling of those fighting in support of it: this is the goal of a war fought according to the canons of the just war tradition. In the West, the notion that war should be engaged upon only reluctantly and only

insofar as the achievement of a just peace requires it is one that has entered the bloodstream of Western thinking and international law very largely thanks to the influence of Christianity.¹

Whether or not Hannah Arendt was correct to make the ambitious claim that “[t]he discoverer of the role of forgiveness in the realm of human affairs was Jesus of Nazareth” (Arendt 1958, 238), forgiveness certainly enjoys a remarkable prominence in the New Testament’s accounts of Jesus’ sayings and practice and in its apostolic teaching. Jesus exercises forbearance in keeping company with “sinners” (e.g., Matthew 9:10–12). He teaches his disciples to forgive others as God has forgiven them (e.g., Matthew 18:23–35). Asked by Peter how often he should forgive, Jesus replies “not seven times, but seven times seven”—that is, without limit (Matthew 18:21–22). More specifically, he enjoins love for enemies (e.g., Matthew 5:43–44; Luke 6:27–28, 6:35). And in the Gospel of Luke, as if to encapsulate the gist of his message, Jesus is described as looking down from his cross upon the soldiers who have nailed him there, saying, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). What the Gospels attribute to Jesus, St. Paul echoes: “Do not repay evil for evil” (Romans 12:17).² And what is the purpose of forgiveness? The overcoming of mistrust and alienation between victim and wrongdoer: the reconciliation of enemies.

Given the prominence of the themes of forgiveness and reconciliation in the originating events and foundational documents of Christianity, any attempt by Christians to justify the use of armed force is bound to operate within their terms. And in the Christian just war tradition, this is what it does. The tradition’s patriarch, St. Augustine of Hippo (354–430 AD), justifies armed coercion by appeal to Jesus’ command that we should love our neighbors and especially our enemies. For example, he invokes this command in his letter (2001, 189) to the military tribune, Boniface, before proceeding shortly afterwards to discuss the propriety of a Christian serving as a soldier (Augustine 2001, 215–16) and to prescribe peace as the proper end of a just war (2001, 217), and he does it again in

¹ The Christian just war tradition does have its analogues in both the Islamic and Confucian traditions: see Chapters 29 and 30 in this volume and Kelsay (2007), Lo (2012), Twiss and Chan (2012), and Zhang (2012). I regard the Christian tradition as paradigmatic because it is that which has informed international law.

² There is reason to suppose that Paul is here enjoining Christians in Rome not to respond vengefully to provocation by local Jews.

another letter (2001, 220) to Boniface, when enjoining “single-minded love” toward the enemy, even while treating them with “an unpleasant severity” (2001, 222). But even when Augustine makes no overt reference to the dominical injunction, he affirms it implicitly by consistently describing just war as a benevolent response to injustice, which intends just peace. So in his letter (2001, 138) to another tribune, Marcellinus, after initially arguing that Christians should eschew the passion for revenge and intend to persuade the wrongdoer to repent and embrace peace (2001, 35–6), he then articulates what this implies: namely, that just war is waged out of a benevolent concern for the interests of the unjust enemy (2001, 38). And in the *City of God* (XIX.7, 12) he defines just war as a necessary response to injustice (Augustine 1972, 862), which intends just peace (1972, 866). This same definition is the one that, just over eight centuries later, Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225–74) endorsed (Aquinas 1972, 81–93).

In the Christian just war tradition, therefore, armed force may be justly used only when motivated by love. In the first place, “love” here refers to care for the innocent victim of wrongdoing, which expresses itself immediately in the use of coercion to fend off further injury. In the second, place, however, it also refers to care for the unjust perpetrator. This expresses itself in the use of coercion to prevent further sin, to elicit repentance, and so to make peace or reconciliation possible. Insofar as coercion is disciplined by those purposes or ends, it has no interest in the suffering or annihilation of the enemy as such. Rather, it forbears from hatred and vengefulness, and it works to create the conditions under which repentance is forthcoming and reconciliation possible. In this sense, therefore, it is forgiving.

Just War as Punitive

This raises the question of how, exactly, we should understand “forgiveness.” Before a response is offered, however, a further feature of the Christian conception of just war needs to be brought into focus. According to the Christian tradition stemming from Augustine and running through Aquinas and beyond, the use of armed force is justified when it is motivated in the first place by love for innocent neighbors who are subject to some grave injustice, and when it intends to rectify that injustice by achieving a just peace—that is, when the criteria of just cause and right intention, among others, are satisfied. The use of armed force, of course, is a hostile act, and when deployed against injustice it becomes an act of punishment. One cannot rectify injustice without punishing its perpetrator—by

forcing him to stop, by deterring him from resuming, and ideally by provoking him to think again and change his aggressive ways forever. By this definition punishment is retaliatory, but it is not vengeful or vindictive; for it has no interest in the suffering of the enemy—far less his annihilation—*as such*. Thus, writing in *A Reply to Faustus the Manichaeon* (22.74), Augustine said that “it is generally to punish these things [love of violence, revengeful cruelty, fierce and implacable enmity, wild resistance, and the lust of power], when force is required to inflict the punishment, that ... good men undertake wars” (Augustine 1956, 301). Later Aquinas followed suit when he justified war by analogy with the use of force by civil authorities to “punish criminals” (Aquinas 1972, 83). In the seventeenth century, Francisco Suárez (1548–1617) deployed the same analogy (Suárez 1944, 818), and Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) invoked Augustine in defining all just cause for war as the suffering of injury (Grotius 2005, 393), writing that “the desire of inflicting punishment is often the occasion of war” (Grotius 2005, 1018). This punitive view is one that contemporary Christian just war proponents have confirmed. Jean Bethke Elshtain, for example, wrote that “[t]he presupposition of just war thinking is that war can sometimes be an instrument of justice ... by using force to stop wrongdoing and to punish wrongdoers” (Elshtain 2003, 50–52). And, while Oliver O’Donovan differentiates punishment from defense and reparation, he affirms all three as necessary elements of justified armed force: “while these forms of judgment can be distinguished, they cannot be separated. Any concrete act of armed force will depend in some measure upon each of the three, and will combine defensive, reparative, and punitive objectives” (O’Donovan 2003, 53).

While the conception of just war as basically punitive is thoroughly embedded in Christian tradition, it is now very controversial. Contemporary critics such as Anthony Lang, David Rodin, and Jeff McMahan variously accuse it of fostering moral self-righteousness, loosening the reins of war, improperly ascribing to one state an impartial authority to judge and punish another, and requiring the blunt instrument of war to mete out a discriminate and proportionate retribution of which it is incapa-

ble (Lang 2005, 59–67; Lang 2008, 61; McMahan 2008, 78–84; Rodin 2002, 174–9).³ Against these charges, the following defenses can be offered.

First, the basic point of thinking of war in terms of punishment is to say that it is about justice and that it is therefore a *moral* enterprise. It is not just about defending whatever borders history or positive law happen to have posited. Nor is it about maintaining a stable regional status quo, regardless of the evils being perpetrated behind those borders or the justice that could be done in transgressing them. It is true that this moralized conception of war does encourage intervention and therefore conflict, while proponents of amoral *Realpolitik* would decry the naive, messianic moralism that disturbs the peace. But naivety attends the latter's own distinction between war and peace. The fact that the West turned its back on Rwanda in 1994 meant that it spared itself war and left the Hutus in peace—to slaughter the Tutsis. And the fact that Europe spared itself war in Bosnia until August 1995 left Ratko Mladić at peace to supervise the July massacre at Srebrenica. Less conflict was good for the West, of course, but not so good for those whom it declined to defend. If peace were always simple, then war could never be preferable. But peace is seldom simple.

Second, it is true that those who make moral judgments against others risk becoming “judgmental.” They risk buying into a Manichaean vision of things according to which the basically good (the judges) battle against the basically bad (the judged), and where the bad, being basically so, deserve to be fought without restraint. Just wars, if understood in this way, do stand in danger of becoming crusades. Nevertheless, just wars need not become crusades, and if they remain faithful to the logic of Christian just war thinking, then they will not. As a Christian, the just warrior cannot stand to the unjust perpetrator as clean to unclean, righteous to unrighteous, good to evil. He can only stand as one sinful creature to another. Even the enemy partakes of an equal dignity that deserves respect. According to the Christian view, therefore, cleansing the world of wickedness cannot be an aim of just war, because wickedness lies within as well as without, *here* as well as *there*. Just war is only ever a police action, never a crusade—always proximate, never ultimate.

³ See also O'Driscoll (2008, esp. Chapter 3 and 134–8). For a fuller and more nuanced account of the history of Christian thinking about the concept of just war as punitive, see Biggar (2013, 160–71).

Third, Christian just war thinking considers that all states, like all individuals, are commonly accountable to natural moral law. It therefore supposes that, where international judicial arbitration is unavailable, one state might still judge and punish another correctly by direct appeal to such law. Christian thinking does not follow Hobbes in regarding individuals or states basically as lone wolves fighting for survival in original anarchy, nor in regarding social contracts—and the institutions built on them—as the only source of moral obligation. On the contrary, it holds that individuals are originally sociable, originally subject to the natural law, and originally their brother’s keeper. Therefore equals may and should judge one another in the exercise of fraternal correction. For sure, the integrity of such judgment cannot be taken for granted. Of course, it can be distorted by private interests. And the risks of distortion are greater where a state is judging in its own case. But even publicly authorized judicial process can be corrupt, and sometimes natural justice, though rough, can still be fair. Grotius tells a subtle story here. According to the natural law, he writes, it is not absolutely necessary that punishment be carried out by a superior, “unless we mean the voice of a superior in the sense that one who does wrong is by that fact considered to have made himself inferior to another.”⁴ “It is lawful for any one who is judicious and prudent, and not guilty of the same, or of like a fault, himself, to inflict punishment” (Grotius 2005, 963–4).⁵ However,

because we are apt to be partial in our own cases or of those that belong to us, and to be hurried on too far by passion, therefore as soon as many families came and lived together in the same place, that liberty which nature indulged them in of vindicating every man his own quarrel, was then taken away, and judges appointed to determine all controversies between man and man. (Grotius 2005, 968)

⁴ The translation here is mine. The Liberty Fund edition of *The Rights of War and Peace* renders Grotius’ Latin as “unless by superior we mean him who is innocent” (Grotius 2005, 955). The original is more nuanced and convoluted: “*nisi vox superioris eo sumatur sensu, ut is qui male egit, eo ipso se quovis alio inferiorem censeatur fecisse*” (Grotius 1993, 466). The sense is made clearer a few lines later: “*Cui consequens est ut saltem ab aequae nocente aequae nocens puniri non debeat*” (1993, 466: “The consequence of which is, that a man ought not to be punished by one who is equally guilty with himself” [2005, 955]).

⁵ It is notable that Grotius refers the reader here to Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae*, 2a2ae, q. 33, whose topic is “fraternal correction.”

Notwithstanding this, “the antient [sic] liberty, which the law of nature at first gave us, remains still in force where there are no courts of justice,” or when they malfunction—for example, “when complaint having been made to the judge, he does not render justice in a certain time” (Grotius 2005, 970).⁶ In the absence of well-functioning courts, fraternal punishment—and war as a form of it—might be justified.

Fourth, there is no doubt that war is a blunt instrument and that the justice of its punishment is rough. As a hostile response to injustice, just war is directed against those who are responsible for causing it. How far those responsible are also culpable will usually be impossible to ascertain with any certainty in the course of war-fighting. Under those circumstances just warriors may presume that the enemy are culpable and deserve the harms that proportionate punitive defense, vindication, deterrence, and reformation impose on them. However, after victory has been won and the end of defense achieved, more might still remain to be done to complete the work of vindication, deterrence, and especially reformation. Then it might be possible to make punishment less rough and more discriminate—to single out the masterminds of injustice from the minions, to determine their guilt, and to impose fitting penalties. This discriminate kind of *post bellum* retribution is not something that just warriors *as warriors* are optimally equipped to dispense. It is far better done in considerate courts of law rather than in the maelstrom of the battlefield.

Forgiveness, Punishment, and Reconciliation

Now we are in a position to answer the question of how best to understand forgiveness. If just war is supposed to be motivated by love—even by forgiveness—and to intend peace, how can it also be punitive? Surely forgiveness and punishment are mutually exclusive? They can be, but need not be, depending upon what they are taken to mean. If “forgiveness” is taken to denote the unilateral and unconditional offer of peace in the absence of repentance, then no role remains for punishment of any

⁶ See also Grotius 2005, 975: “even in this punishment [for the satisfaction of the offended party] ...

there remain some footsteps of the antient [sic] right in those places, and among those persons, who are not subject to any established courts of judicature; and even among those too who are so subject, in some particular cases.”

kind. And if “punishment” reflects a retributivist understanding of justice as consisting in the infliction of proportionate suffering, in order to compensate for liberties unfairly taken in the committing of crime, then “forgiveness” is unjust. On this view one can either forgive or one can punish, but one cannot consistently do both at the same time.

There is, however, an alternative conception of forgiveness, which is compatible with an alternative conception of punishment. The relevant conception of forgiveness distinguishes it into two moments, compassion and absolution.⁷ “Compassion” refers to the moment when the victim lets his or her feelings of resentment be moderated. The springs of this moderation are of two kinds. One is a prudential awareness that immoderate resentment can poison the victim’s own soul. The other is a measure of sympathy for the wrongdoer—a sympathy born of awareness of the universal human subjection to social and psychic forces, which push human agents to do wrong and over which they sometimes have very limited control. This forgiveness-as-compassion is unilateral and unconditional; it does not need to wait upon the wrongdoer’s repentance.

The second moment of forgiveness, absolution, is when, paradigmatically, the victim addresses the perpetrator and says, “I forgive you. The trust that was broken is now restored. Our future will no longer be haunted by our past.” Forgiveness-as-absolution should not be granted unilaterally and unconditionally. To proffer trust to someone who has shown himself to be untrustworthy and who is unrepentant about it is foolish. But it is also careless of the wrongdoer, for it robs him of the salutary stimulus to reflect, to learn, and to grow. Even worse, it degrades him by implying that what he does is of no consequence (Swinburne 1989). Out of respect and care for the wrongdoer, then, forgiveness-as-absolution should wait for signs of his genuine repentance—all the while looking upon him with the eyes of forgiveness-as-compassion.

Within the two moments of forgiveness—one inaugural, the other conclusive—there is room for a certain kind of punishment. This is not retributivist, either motivated by vengeance or aiming to achieve an equality of suffering for its own sake. Rather, in addition to defending the victim and repairing the damage (as far as possible), such punishment intends to communicate to the wrongdoer the

⁷ For further elaboration, see Biggar (2011).

fact that he has done wrong, in order to induce his repentance and enable reconciliation. As punishment, it will impose penalties upon the wrongdoer and cause him to suffer. The value of this, however, is not intrinsic but instrumental, for it aims at peace or reconciliation.

Such punishment is compatible with forgiveness in both its inaugural and conclusive moments. Forgiveness-as-compassion provides the motivation; forgiveness-as-absolution provides the object of its intention. Here forgiveness governs and qualifies punishment; it does not displace it.

The Reconciliation of Love and Justice

This conception overcomes the tension that is commonly supposed to obtain between love and justice—most famously by Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971) (Biggar 2010). On the one hand, Niebuhr writes of Christian love (Biggar 2010) as rising in “sublime naïvete” (Niebuhr 1960, 53) above the mean calculations of prudence (1960, 57, 257, 263, 265–6) and in “sublime madness” above immediate enmities (1960, 255). Here he refers specifically to what he sees as the crown of the ideal of love (Niebuhr 1979, 137)—forgiveness, self-sacrificially transcending the claims of remedial justice by absolving injustice unilaterally and unconditionally. Niebuhr thinks it both unrealistic and inappropriate to expect such forgiveness to find expression in relations between large social bodies at the level of national or international politics. This is because social injustice *deserves* coercive opposition, perhaps punishment:

The victim of injustice cannot cease from contending against his oppressors, even if he has a religious sense of the relativity of all social positions and a contrite recognition of the sin in his own heart. Only a religion full of romantic illusions could seek to persuade the Negro to gain justice from the white man merely by forgiving him. As long as men are involved in the conflicts of nature and sin they must seek according to best available moral insights to contend for what they believe to be right. And that will mean that they will contend against other men. Short of the transmutation of the world into the Kingdom of God, men will always confront enemies. (Niebuhr 1979, 140–41)

On the other hand, Niebuhr does recognize that justice—and the coercion it inevitably involves—needs to be leavened by love: “[a]ny justice which is only justice soon degenerates into something less than justice. It must be saved by something which is more than justice” (Niebuhr 1960, 258). In a

rare (and probably inadvertent) allusion to just war thinking, he acknowledges that violent coercion can be governed by benevolence (1960, 170, 172), in which case “its terror must have the tempo of a surgeon’s skill and healing must follow quickly upon its wounds” (1960, 220). He thinks that love can qualify coercive justice in several ways. It can curb the element of vengeance, increase the intention of reform (Niebuhr 1979, 67), and restrain the use of violence. This it achieves, partly through an appreciation of the transcendent and equal worth of the life of the enemy (Niebuhr 1960, 255; 1979, 65) and partly through the spiritual disciplining of resentment (1960, 248–9) by placing the moral agent “under the scrutiny of [God’s] omniscient eye” (1960, 51, 60), thus generating contrite acknowledgment that the enemy’s moral frailty is also his own (1960, 254–5). At least at one point Niebuhr ascribes this disciplining of resentment to forgiveness, when he explicitly identifies the latter with “the demand that the evil in the other shall be borne without vindictiveness because the evil in the self is known” (Niebuhr 1979, 137). What this implies is that even Niebuhr sometimes acknowledged that love-as-forgiveness *can* shape coercive justice.

The reason for Niebuhr’s inconsistency over the relationship between forgiveness and coercion lies in his failure to distinguish clearly between vengeance and punishment and in his mistaken tendency to identify forgiveness with the self-sacrificial abandonment of all claims to justice. While forgiveness always involves the absolute self-sacrifice involved in swallowing one’s impulses to vengeance and in suffering discipline by the motive of compassion and the intention of peace, it need not and should not always involve the by-passing of justice and proportionate punishment.

The analysis of forgiveness into the two components of compassion and absolution affords the advantage of enabling it to incorporate coercive justice. According to this conception, the process of reconciliation contains not only initial compassion and final absolution, but between them also the coercive contradiction of injustice by the meting out of proportionate punishment. Forgiveness-as-compassion qualifies but does not replace coercive punishment. It makes it a medium of communication intended to persuade the wrongdoer of the wrong he has done, to elicit his repentance, and so to enable forgiveness-as-absolution and consequent reconciliation. By ordering punishment toward reconciliation, it saves it from vengeance.

However, there is coercion and there is coercion. Emotional coercion that takes the form of furrowed brows or pursed lips and physical coercion in the form of a refusal to shake hands or forcible confinement is one thing. Physical coercion that wounds or kills is surely another. How can that be an expression of forgiveness-as-compassion? It can be so insofar as it refuses vengeance, intends to stop the wrongdoer doing wrong, is content to achieve that by persuading him to surrender, and restrains the use of violence against him accordingly.

This integration of forgiveness with hostile, coercive punishment, sometimes wounding and lethal, confers a further advantage, since it enables us to discern how forgiveness could find fitting political expression in circumstances where simple absolution would be breathtakingly naive and inappropriate—that is, in circumstances of hostility born of grave injustice from which there has been no repentance. And insofar as forgiveness is a defining feature of a Christian ethic of response to wrongdoing, this conception spares such an ethic from having to choose between relevance and plausibility.

Take this example. In response to the armed campaign of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) in Northern Ireland during the “Troubles” of 1971–98, it would have been ludicrous for the UK government to have addressed the guerrillas and said, “We forgive you. We will not let what you have done sour our regard for you. We will continue to treat you as friends.” If such absolution were the sum of forgiveness, then it could have had no plausible place in the government’s reaction. If, however, forgiveness can take the form of compassion as well as absolution, then it could have had two plausible roles. First, it could have ordered the use of force toward the end of peace, and disciplined it away from vindictiveness. Indeed, it actually did this, insofar as the British military effort was integrated into a political strategy designed to induce the IRA to make peace. Second, it could have moved the UK government to entertain the possibility that, though Republican violence was unjustified overall, not all of its roots were simply malevolent and irrational, and that among its motives lay genuine grievances deserving sympathetic attention. In fact, the British government did recognize this and, in addition to opposing Republican violence with military force, took steps to address unfair sectarian discrimination against Catholics in housing and employment. In these ways, forgiveness did in fact have plausible political purchase even where belligerent punishment was appropriate.

The Military Analogues of Forgiveness and Reconciliation

Christian just war thinking, when combined with the two-moment conception of forgiveness, holds that punitive coercion, even belligerent, can and should be qualified by forgiveness and can and should intend reconciliation. The relevant moment of forgiveness is the first one, not the last—compassion, not absolution. Compassion can qualify punishment; absolution sets it aside.

A distinction needs to be made, however, between what obtains in interpersonal, and what obtains in political or inter-state, relations. In the case of relations between hostile strangers, forgiveness-as-compassion is not quite the same as in relations between estranged intimates; it is an emotionally attenuated analogue of it. That said, in war compassion precludes regard for the enemy as sub-human and enjoins a sense of common humanity, of common human subjection to the forces of temptation, and of common human weakness in the face of them.

If the idea of the belligerent use of force as forgiving is counter-intuitive, so is the idea that it should intend reconciliation. Surely the purpose of waging war is to dominate and beat the enemy, not to be reconciled with him? Surely war and peace stand to one another as alternatives, not as a means to its end? Of course, it is true that the immediate purpose of any military action is to dominate the enemy, if not to vanquish him decisively. Nevertheless, military activity is not its own, self-sufficient justification. Military efforts almost invariably do serve political goals and, according to the Christian just war tradition, the overarching political goal should be to rectify a grave injustice and so to build a sufficiently just peace.

It is true, however, that as we must distinguish between the forms taken by forgiveness-as-compassion in interpersonal relations and its forms in political or inter-state relations, so we must distinguish the forms of reconciliation. There is a gap between interpersonal reconciliation and political and inter-state peace. The paradigm of reconciliation is interpersonal, and a paradigmatic illustration of it is Rembrandt's depiction of the Prodigal Son, on his knees, being embraced by his forgiving father. Here, reconciliation is about the healing of a ruptured relationship between intimates. At the political and inter-state levels, however, the hostile parties are usually strangers, and the ending of violent conflict is more likely to be signaled by an arm's length handshake—at best—than an embrace. This is illustrated in a striking photograph, which was taken during a post-conflict ritual of reconcilia-

tion in Rwanda, which features a *génocidaire* standing next to a relative of his victim. The good news is that they are standing well within an arm's length of one another, the bad news is that the wrongdoer is looking up at the sky to his left, while the victim's relative is looking down at his feet to the right. At least in the immediate aftermath of conflict, the relationship between victor and vanquished will probably be characterized by a high level of mistrust. For this reason, it is more appropriate to specify the peace at which just war aims using words such as "accommodation," "co-existence," or a "settlement," rather than "reconciliation." As an analogue of the latter, it is similar in certain respects: it involves the ending of armed hostilities, agreement on alternative political means of negotiating conflict, and a sufficient measure of trust that the other party will hold to its side of the agreement. But since it is analogous, rather than identical, it is also different: there is no original relationship of intimacy to restore and trust is highly qualified and cautious.

Military Force and "Reconciliation"

How far military forces themselves will be involved in post-war reconstruction and settlement will vary from case to case. Often they will be necessary to maintain law and order during a period of occupation. In the past, they have also been involved in meting out rough and summary justice to the leaders of the defeated enemy. However, the Nuremberg Trials of 1945–6 stand as implicit testimony that, if the victor's justice is to be distinguished from sheer vengeance—both in fact and in appearance—it is best delivered by international courts.

Nevertheless, even where the role of military force is expected to cease at the moment of victory, the political goal of just peace should shape the choice of military means for the duration of the armed conflict. Classically, it should constrain the amount of damage inflicted to that which is proportionate to success, not only military but also political, and in particular it should constrain the number of civilian casualties by enjoining adherence to the principle of discrimination and thus forbidding the direct, intentional targeting of non-combatants. So, for example, while aggressive counter-insurgency tactics might be militarily effective in the short term, they could be both politically and militarily counter-productive in the long term: the greater the aggression, the higher the number of non-combatant casualties (whether intended or not), the greater the alienation of the populace, the larger

the pool of recruits for the insurgency, the lower the political trust, and the more difficult the post-war settlement.

There is at least one kind of situation, however, in which military forces can find themselves directly involved in diplomatic negotiations with a view to achieving a kind of reconciliation. These circumstances obtained toward the end of NATO's involvement in counter-insurgency operations in Afghanistan, in the opening years of the second decade of the twenty-first century. British soldiers were then involved in trying to persuade certain Taliban groups to abandon armed insurgency and to be "reconciled" with the political institutions of the central government in Kabul. Why was the military involved? Because the front-line conditions were considered too dangerous for professional diplomats. What this diplomatic role meant for the manner of military operations was that they were designed, not to defeat the enemy, but rather to convince him that he needed to change his ways and to make him open to political negotiation and settlement. In other, more interpersonal words, they were designed to induce the enemy to "repent" by costing him sufficiently dearly as to persuade him that he would not get what he wanted by continuing his violence, and so to induce him to come to political terms. This combined military-diplomatic strategy was the same one that had been eventually adopted in Northern Ireland during the "Troubles" and which had proven ultimately successful against the IRA. It had also been applied in Oman in the early 1970s. There, according to Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup:

the [insurgent] Dhofaris had to understand that continued resistance was going to be a life-shortening experience; but at the same time they had to believe that there was a much more attractive alternative. There had to be carrot as well as stick. And so reconciliation became the second major plank in the counter-insurgency effort ... The military line cannot deliver strategic success, but it is essential to its delivery. Military action should at all times support the political line; the purpose of raising the cost to insurgents is to persuade them to make the right positive choice. (Stirrup 2009, C1-2)

Conclusion: Fostering Peace as the Ultimate Goal of Military Endeavor

Not every military ethic does regard peace as the proper, ultimate goal of war: some, for example, hold the demonstration of a warrior's prowess to be a sufficient purpose. According to the Christian

tradition of just war thinking, however, the ultimate intention of a just peace is required to justify any belligerency. This intention is motivated by love, in the first place, for the innocent victim of grave injustice, but also in the second place for the wrongdoer himself. In the latter case love takes the form of forgiveness-as-compassion. Such an understanding of the justification of war is certainly characteristic of Christian tradition and at least relatively distinctive.

The motive of forgiveness-as-compassion and the intention of peace should constrain and qualify, rather than exclude, the choice and use of punitive means. They should contain and shape punitive justice, not displace it. Nevertheless, when applied to political or inter-state relations, “forgiveness” and “reconciliation” do not mean quite the same things as they do in the paradigmatic interpersonal context: they become attenuated analogues. As a rule, one should talk more modestly of political peace as a reciprocal “accommodation” or “settlement,” rather than as a full-blown “reconciliation.”

Usually, the peace-making role of military forces will be limited to proportioning their military means during war and providing basic security during a post-war occupation. In counter-insurgency operations, however, the military might find themselves directly involved in trying to “reconcile” the enemy to a political process of peace-making by persuading them of the futility or intolerable cost of continued fighting. In such cases, pacific diplomacy and violent warfare will proceed hand-in-hand.

How, then, might peace be fostered as the ultimate goal of military endeavor? In part, this can be done by training troops to observe the laws of war concerning proportionality and discrimination, since these already incorporate the view that the annihilation of the enemy per se is not the proper purpose of just warfare. Just warfare intends to inflict such damage on the enemy as to cause him to stop fighting. The killing of the enemy who is wounded, disabled, and surrendered, therefore, is unnecessary, disproportionate, immoral—and now illegal.

Beyond this, what is needed is a well-developed plan for post-war reconstruction and the careful integration of wartime political and military efforts into a single strategy. These are among the most important lessons that have been drawn from recent Western interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan. The squandering of the fruits of the Coalition’s military victory over Iraq in the invasion of 2003

through inadequate planning for the post-war peace is already infamous, and the failure to coordinate political and military operations in Afghanistan, so that the former might exploit and secure the successes of the latter, is a common complaint about British policy in Helmand Province, for instance. Modern history, however, furnishes famous successes as well as infamous failures. For example, during the “Malayan emergency” of 1948–60 British strategy combined military suppression of communist insurgents, most of whom were ethnically Chinese, with several political initiatives. Crucially, these included a resettlement program, which involved giving resettled Chinese peasants title deeds to their new property, granting ethnic Chinese the vote and key positions in government, and promising Malaya independence after the insurrection was over. Thus the Chinese population was given “a stake in the British idea of the future” (Smith 2005, 204) and the swamp of insurgency was drained of popular support.

The integration of military and political strategies—or, rather, the integration of military strategy into a larger political one—is a basic acknowledgment that the ultimate purpose of a justified war is the achievement of a peace that is sufficiently just to enable the political “reconciliation” of enemies. Except in particular cases where the enemies (say, in a civil war) were actually former friends or even members of the same family, this reconciliation will generally not amount to the paradigmatic interpersonal embrace. Rather, it will be something analogous, weaker, cooler, more calculated, and wary—accommodation or co-existence. But it will still be peaceful.

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