Saint Augustine and the Theory of Just War

John Mark Mattox

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Saint Augustine and the Theory of Just War

John Mark Mattox

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To my beloved wife,
Kathryn,
my undeviating and eternal friend

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* * *

Because the author is a serving officer in the United States Army, it should be noted that the views expressed in this work are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or any other United States Government entity.

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Preface

Aurelius Augustinus – Saint Augustine – is by some accounts the single most significant figure in the development of the Western philosophical tradition. The questions he raises and the solutions he proposes are so deeply rooted in the Western world-view that most Westerners are likely not to think of them particularly as reflective of 'Western' concerns per se, but merely of 'human' ones. As a result, the prism through which the West tends to view the world bears the unmistakable hallmarks of Augustinism. These hallmarks include a fascination with questions related to the emergence of order out of chaos, freedom of choice and personal responsibility in a universe whose governance seems in some sense determined, and a linear conception of man's existence.

These and similar issues converge prominently in Augustine because his philosophy constitutes an important intersection between the postulates of ancient Greek (particularly Neo-Platonic) thought and Augustine's interpretation of Christianity, with which he found the Platonic tradition to be in some sense compatible. This juxtaposition is evident throughout the entire complex of doctrines which are not inappropriately referred to as the 'Augustinian Complex'.

Perhaps nowhere in this complex is the juxtaposition more prominent than in the case of 'just war', the theory of which Augustine is regularly said to be the father. Indeed, the Augustinian theory of just war is a double juxtaposition. First, the term 'just war' is itself a juxtaposition: the voices which decry the evils of war are the same voices which admit with resignation that war seems to be a permanent fixture in the present order of human existence; the voices wishing war away at the same time acknowledge the seeming futility of the wish. The second juxtaposition results from the nature of the Augustinian synthesis itself. Augustine recognizes the tension that the idea of a just war presupposes, and he brings to bear all of the philosophical tools at his disposal in an effort to resolve the tension.

This volume aims to provide a comprehensive account of just-war thought as manifested in the writings of Augustine. Admittedly, that aim poses a

daunting challenge, because any effort to examine a single aspect of Augustinian thought in isolation subjects the inquirer to two formidable difficulties. First, it is impossible to decontextualize Augustine. Everything in his system is just that: a part of *his system* and can only be comprehended when understood as such. Second, because of the intricate interconnections that bind together the Augustinian complex of doctrines, one who picks up one of the doctrines for detailed inspection in reality picks up *all* of them. Nevertheless, these realities present an enticing invitation to those who would venture to glimpse into the mind of one of the greatest contributors to the intellectual history of the world. Although there is much in Augustine's theory of just war that the author finds intellectually appealing and of contemporary applicability, this exposition is, nevertheless, intended to be a descriptive interpretation and analysis of his theory, and not necessarily an attempt to advocate his views in all of their particulars.

On the one hand, because of the very nature of the subject matter, this volume certainly falls short of its goals – a fact for which the author accepts full responsibility. On the other hand, because one cannot fully appreciate the nature or development of the just-war tradition in the West without appreciating the extent of Augustine's contribution to its formation, if this volume proves to be illuminating to that end, either as it answers old questions or raises new ones, then the author shall feel amply rewarded.

List of Tables

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List of Abbreviations

NPNF: *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, published by Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

ANF: *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, also published by Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Whenever these abbreviations appear in the notes, they are followed by the volume number (in Roman numerals) and the page number (in Arabic numerals).

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Biblical quotations (except for those embedded in quotations from other authors) are from the Authorized (King James) Version of the Bible.

1

Saint Augustine and the Just-War Tradition

The father of just-war theory in the West

Traditionally Augustine is regarded as the father of what has developed as the Western theory of 'just war'.[1] That such a lofty title should be bestowed upon the man who, in Christian philosophical literature, also is widely known as the great 'Doctor of the West',[2] the 'Doctor of the Church',[3] or 'the great African Doctor',[4] was designated by the medievals as '*Doctor Gratiae*',[5] and has been heralded as 'the second founder of the faith'[6] is, perhaps, something that one familiar with Augustinian literature would not find surprising. Nevertheless, the title deserves some explanation.

Augustine certainly is not the first person in the West to attach philosophical significance either to 'justice' or to 'war'. A significant number of pre-Augustinian philosophers discuss war in a moral-philosophical context. For example, Plato argues that 'the state must be organized for violent survival in an unruly world',[7] and he assigns specific wartime roles to the state and its citizens. Plato's 'Athenian' in the *Laws* observes that waging war is the prerogative of the state, and never that of its individual citizens – a theme that Augustine will emphasize repeatedly.[8] In the *Republic*, Plato represents Socrates as holding that neither Greek civilians nor their habitations should be regarded as targets of wanton destruction (even if similar restraint was not deemed necessary when fighting non-Greeks).[9] At war's end, Greeks among the vanquished could not be reduced to slavery.[10] These limitations thus accorded a special status to non-combatants – another theme Augustine will highlight. Xenophon, in his *Cyropaedia*, chronicles the measured response of Cyrus to an Egyptian division, which had lost all means to resist but continued fighting.[11] Euripides, in the *Heracleidae*, notes constraints on the treatment of enemy prisoners of war.[12] Polybus offers a commentary on the 'laws of war'[13] that bears strong resemblance to the kind one encounters in Augustine's expositions.[14] These examples, among others that could be cited, plainly attest that many well before Augustine's time – philosophers, historians, playwrights, and

warriors – concerned themselves with the way in which wars justifiably could be initiated or prosecuted. Neither can one claim for Augustine the distinction of having been the first person to use the words 'just' (or 'unjust') and 'war' in tandem (that distinction may well belong to Aristotle[15]).

Moreover, the idea of a just war is not an exclusively Western innovation. The ancient Chinese, the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Hindu of India, and others discussed the moral dimensions of war in writings that antedate anything in the Latin West.[16] For example, Laotse, Chinese philosopher and founder of the Tao religion, writing in the sixth century BC, argues that war should be undertaken only with the utmost reluctance; and even then, it should never be continued beyond the point minimally required to achieve the purpose for which it was initiated.[17] The ancient Egyptians observed a surprising array of humanitarian practices in war.[18] The ancient Babylonians 'distinguished those responsible for initiating the war from those soldiers who fought in it'[19] in terms of the moral burden of responsibility that each should bear; the great Babylonian leader Sennacherib observed just such a distinction after the campaign against Jerusalem in 690 BC.[20] The Hindu *Book of Manu* (*c.* fourth century BC) contains detailed regulations regarding the humane conduct of warfare.[21] Antedating all of these writings is one non-Western source to which Augustine had access: Deuteronomy chapter 20, which sets forth the laws of war revealed to Moses for the Israelite conquest of Canaan.

Some are content to designate Augustine by the title of 'father of *Christian* just war doctrine'[22] rather than by the more general title of 'father of just war theory in the West'. However, this designation seems not to take account of the fact that just-war issues receive attention in the writings of earlier Church Fathers.[23]

In what sense, then, *is* Augustine fairly to be regarded as the father of just-war theory in the West? He is to be thus regarded in the sense that *the whole Western just-war tradition that follows from the fifth century* AD *on, in both its Christian and secular varieties, traces its roots not to Plato or Aristotle, nor even to earlier Church Fathers, but rather to Augustine.* It may be that just-war theory has secured a permanent place in Western philosophy in part because a figure of Augustine's stature deemed it of sufficient significance to address it repeatedly. Indeed, the fact that *he* addresses it lends a stature and a sense of philosophical seriousness to the subject that otherwise might not have obtained in the West, perhaps for many centuries. For example, even though Aquinas later takes up the topic, he introduces it by quoting Augustine. In any case, it may be said that Augustine is to just-war theory in the West as Christopher Columbus is to the discovery of America: not the first to come in contact with it, but certainly the one whose contact with it, unlike all those who came before him, made a lasting impression upon the entire subsequent development of the Western world. That lasting impression comes as the direct result

of the synthesis which Augustine achieves between the Western philosophical tradition – particularly Neo-Platonism – and fifth-century Christianity, which found itself confronted with the practical mandate to reconcile itself to the immediately pressing concerns of the mundane world of emperors and armies.

Over the course of the sixteen centuries that have passed since Augustine's day, secular Western society has reorganized itself on the basis of operating assumptions very different from those used by Augustine. Nevertheless, even if most contemporary attempts to elucidate the theory of just war do not obviously rely on Augustine's assumptions, his influence becomes evident as one examines the similarities between Augustine's actual statements on just war and contemporary statements on the same or similar issues. This is true even if earlier or later authors in diverse societies also addressed similar just-war themes, and in a more systematic way. Thus, one finds just-war literature peppered with observations like these:

> No writer of the early Church has contributed more to the development of Christian attitudes regarding war, violence and military service than St. Augustine. (Swift)[24]

> Augustine . . . treated the problem [of just war] more systematically than anyone before him, placing it in the context of a theological world-view that stressed the work of charity in transforming history; thus he shaped just war doctrine in a definitive and lasting way for those after him. (Johnson)[25]

> Augustine . . . was the first great formulator of the theory that war might be 'just,' which thereafter has mainly directed the course of Western Christian thinking about the problem of war. (Ramsey)[26]

> Of all the giants of the Patristic Age, none . . . left so indelible a mark on Christian thought, indeed upon the entire intellectual development of the West, as Saint Augustine. Not the least of his accomplishments was the synthesizing of Ciceronian and Christian ideas about war. To this day, his synthesis is at the base of both Roman Catholic teaching and the teaching of the leading Protestant denominations. (Martin)[27]

> St. Augustine is quite properly considered the founder of the Christian just war doctrine. It was he who synthesized the hesitant and oftentimes equivocal views of his Christian predecessors into a statement which justified participation by the Christian in the military profession. (Hartigan)[28]

> St. Augustine himself has given us the Christian theory of a just war. . . . Those knights, crusaders, of the Middle Ages – when they spoke of war, endeavoring to see if there might be a way to make wars and fighting less brutal – invariably cited the arguments of the Augustinian doctrine of just war. Those arguments were later taken up by St. Thomas [Aquinas], and he did not add anything to them or take anything away. (Bigongiari)[29]

> The die for the medieval just war was cast by St. Augustine, who combined Roman and Judaeo-Christian elements in a mode of thought that was to influence opinion throughout the Middle Ages and beyond. (Russell)[30]

Indeed, the just-war ruminations of Augustine constitute the *fons et orgio* for the thoughts of a long line of just-war theorists that follow.[31]

The question of 'theory'

Does Augustine actually have a theory of just war?

In spite of this recognition, surprisingly little has been done to provide a comprehensive, systematic, treatment of Augustine's writings on just war. The first explanation one generally encounters is that Augustine gives us no system to treat: 'The just war in the work of Augustine was not a unified theory at all. Unlike Aquinas, Augustine never took up the problem directly nor did he present a unified, internally consistent position.'[32] Similarly, 'Nowhere do we find in his works anything that could be called a "theory of the just war" and we are on safer grounds if we speak about his *attitudes* and his *approach* to the issue rather than his "doctrine" of the just war.'[33] The readiest support for claims like these comes from the fact that, of Augustine's 116 extant works, not one of them deals exclusively, or even particularly, with just war. Moreover, none of his ten known but lost works bear titles that suggest they contain a particular treatment of the subject.[34]

It is not incorrect to say that 'His remarks on the subject [of just war] are scattered through a great variety of his works including sermons, commentaries, letters and apologetic pieces, which were written over a period of more than thirty years.'[35] As a result, the contexts in which the subject arises are equally varied. Sometimes he presents his views in the setting of a 'formal treatise'.[36] Sometimes just war is a principal topic of a chapter or section.[37] At other times, the reference to just war is merely peripheral. At still other times, Augustine addresses the theme 'in the manner which is suitable to the conversational familiarity of a letter',[38] so that the addressee might enjoy the discretion of selectively communicating the letter's contents to those who are 'prepared by the piety of faith to give ear to it'.[39] 'For', says Augustine, 'there are many things'

from which the minds of the spiritually or philosophically ill prepared 'may in the meantime shrink and recoil, which they may perhaps by and by be persuaded to accept as true, either by the use of more copious and skilful arguments, or by an appeal to authority which, in their opinion, may not without impropriety be resisted.'[40] Indeed, wherever his comments on just war appear, they are 'concerned, for the most part, with other issues. This fact inevitably affected the kind of problems he chose to discuss and the way in which he handled them.'[41] Moreover, 'there is little in his writing on war which springs from theoretical musings or from a dispassionate examination of the question'.[42]

Although Augustine does not actually present a systematic treatment of the theory of just war, that concession does not lead unavoidably to the conclusion that Augustine does not have a system in mind. Although when viewed separately, his just-war statements may appear fragmentary, when woven together, they constitute a remarkable tapestry. Upon careful inspection of that tapestry, one cannot but be struck by the unity that is readily apparent in his just-war thought. Augustine also addresses a number of themes allied to the topic of just war (such as the use of violence by the state in the punishing of criminals or in coercing religious practice),[43] which, if carefully considered in tandem with his just-war pronouncements, do much to illuminate his views on just war. The consistency evident in his expression of these varied but related ideas leads fairly to the assumption that Augustine's just-war statements arise from a consistent set of premises, which guide him to his conclusions; in other words, they reveal the presence of an underlying, if unstated, *theory*.

Augustinian rhetoric

Augustine's rhetorical method itself obscures theoretical structure that becomes discernible upon close examination. Gilson observes that 'no Augustinian suffered as much as Augustine himself from his native inability to organize his thoughts'.[44] Indeed, 'although Augustine also has his technical moments, his usual style is rather the free flow of late-classical eloquence'.[45] Moreover, 'his terminology manifests a certain looseness and flexibility'[46] such that terms like '*societas*, *civitas*, *populus*, *res publica*, *regnum* are frequently interchangeable or at least so closely related that the meaning must be derived from context'.[47]

To Augustine's great credit, virtually everything in his thought 'stands together and holds together'.[48] However, unfortunately for his readers, the resulting monolith is such that even Augustine himself 'cannot lay hold of one link in the chain without drawing the whole chain',[49] and one 'who tries to examine it link by link is in constant danger of putting too much strain upon it and breaking it wherever he sets a provisional limit'.[50] Attempting to

separate out the intricately interrelated ideas that constitute what has come to be called the 'Augustinian complex' of doctrines is like trying to separate the strands of a spider's web: it can be done if great care is exercised, but not without the risk of doing damage to the whole. This problem applies not only to any attempt to systematize Augustine's just-war theory, but also to Augustine's writings in general – and indeed, to the writings of those philosophical figures later influenced by Augustinism. As Gilson observes, 'it is a persistent fact in the history of philosophy that doctrines wherein Augustine's inspiration predominates do not readily lend themselves to synthetic exposition'.[51] '*Digression*', he adds, '*is Augustinism's natural method. The natural order of an Augustinian doctrine is to branch out around one center.*'[52] Often in the same passage – even in the same sentence – Augustine is prone to explore multiple themes, or the same theme from multiple perspectives, thus making the resulting mosaic one with which the beholder is reluctant to tamper. Nonetheless, if one is willing to venture, 'Augustine's spontaneous reactions, . . . as they appear at random in his sermons and letters, will often provide us with material that throws quite as vivid a light on his basic assumptions as do his professed formulations of political theory.'[53]

Augustinian priorities

Augustine the just-war thinker is also Augustine the philosopher and theologian – although it is often difficult to tell from which vantage point he is writing at any given time. However, one must continually bear in mind that Augustine the philosopher and theologian is, first and always, a rhetorician and skilled polemicist. Hence, his points are often made in the form of refutations of his opponents' arguments rather than as positive points intended to form the conclusion of arguments of his own making. Precisely because 'much of his work is polemical in character . . . he often employs his opponent's principles without holding them himself, while at the same time he may reject a particular application of an idea which is at home within his own thought'.[54] Indeed, among his polemic excursions one finds expressions, which, in the light of the entire Augustinian project, reveal a great lot about his feelings with regard to the justified use of violence in war.

Yet another reason cited as justification for the claim that Augustine does not actually have a theory of just war is the relatively minor role its discussion plays in the Augustinian corpus.[55] Nevertheless, it is also true that his reflections on war span the whole of his literary career – a period of over four decades. From as early as AD 388, the year after his baptism and the year when he began writing *De libero arbitrio*, until AD 429, the year before his death when he last wrote to Darius, he directly addresses just-war themes. Hence, if one views Augustine's just-war writings merely as a 'minor aspect'[56] of his work, one

runs the risk of missing the very significant point that war specifically, and issues related to the application of violence generally, occupy Augustine's mind throughout his philosophically productive life.

The aim of Augustine's just-war writings

Miller argues that Augustine does not seek to formulate 'legal rules for regulating war'[57] and that his doctrine does not 'pretend to lay down principles for the law of nations'[58] – rather, that his doctrine is intended merely to be 'a workable ethical guide for the practicing Christian who also had to render unto Caesar his services as a soldier'.[59] Certainly, Augustine does not seek to do anything that could be construed as an attempt to lay the foundations for international law. However, Miller's observation might actually provide additional justification for the position that Augustine *does*, in fact, have a theory of just war. If Augustine's sole interest is nothing more than to provide 'a workable ethical guide for the practicing Christian',[60] then, unless one is to accuse Augustine of gross inconsistency (a condition which, if it existed, should be patently obvious to any thoughtful reader of his collected just-war statements), one must assume that his just-war pronouncements were sufficiently cogent so as to make sense to the philosophically unreflective, but nevertheless earnest and pious, fifth-century Christian soldier. However, cogency of that kind is not possible without the existence of a commensurately cogent set of underlying, if unstated, assumptions. It is perhaps for this reason that Bainton is willing to argue a position diametrically opposed to that of Miller's and go so far as to refer to Augustine's just-war statements as Augustine's 'code of war'.[61]

Systematizing Augustine's theory

In the phenomenal world, almost nothing overtly presents itself as a 'system'; nothing comes 'pre-classified' in nature. In every case, we *impose* classifications. Sometimes those impositions are more successful than others, but they always are impositions, and even the best of these will have some limitations. Moreover, the very act of reducing to a two-dimensional expository description the multidimensional phenomena of human experience requires, by definition, the adoption of some perspective, some frame of reference that inevitably will accentuate certain features of the phenomenon at the expense of others. This cannot be helped. The best that one can hope for, therefore, is to construct a theoretical framework that reveals the relevant features of the phenomenon in a way that minimally distorts the relationship of those features to one another and their relationship to the surrounding world. Among the fundamental tasks of the philosopher are to discern order, draw

connections, and postulate systems for the purpose of representing interrelationships in a productive way.

Augustine's genius lies, in part, in his ability to synthesize potentially disparate themes into unified wholes. There were many who came before Augustine and who had access to the same writings as he did but who failed to notice the subtle interconnections among biblical, patristic, and other philosophical writings in general, which constitute the foundation of Western just-war thought. If due consideration is given to these intricately woven interconnections, one can dissect the web without destroying the pattern and conclude, with Markus, that Augustine's 'theory of the just war' is actually quite 'easy to isolate from the web of concepts, assumptions, and attitudes which go into the making of a man's mind: particularly a mind as complex, subtle, and differentiated as Augustine's'.[62] In what follows, we shall seek to separate out the individual strands of Augustine's just-war thoughts and organize them under headings corresponding to what have come to be the traditionally accepted principles of just-war theory – principles upon which the influence of Augustinism is clearly evident. Some may argue that such a structural imposition claims for Augustine that which he does not claim for himself, and thereby runs the risk of distorting his intended meaning. Indeed, in fairness to Augustine, we must allow that, were he systematically to have presented his views on just war, he might well have produced a structure that differs from what we might attempt to reconstruct sixteen-hundred years later. However, anything short of such an attempt at reconstruction leaves one faced with the risk of failing to notice many *or any* of the important connections that transform merely random observations into a philosophical system; and it is difficult to conceive that a philosophical mind of the stature of Augustine's operated merely on the basis of random observations.

The traditional criteria for a just war

The modern theory of just war typically is presented under two major headings: *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*. *Jus ad bellum*, or 'the justice *of* war', seeks to specify principles which define the right of one sovereign power to engage in violent action against another. In contrast, *jus in bello*, or 'justice *in* war', specifies the limits of morally acceptable conduct in the actual prosecution of a war – in support of the claim that 'it is not permitted to employ unjust means in order to win even a just war'.[63]

The traditional list of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* principles typically varies in minor degree from author to author. This is not so much due to a basic disagreement as to what the principles should be as it is to one of presentation. Some authors tend to combine multiple principles under a rather more

general heading, while others opt for a greater range of distinctions. We shall tend to the latter approach inasmuch as this will enable us to examine the specific details of the theory of just war with a much higher degree of resolution than otherwise would be possible.

Jus ad bellum principles

Just cause The reason for resorting to war must, itself, be a just reason. Traditionally, just causes have included the defence of the innocent against armed attack, the recovery of persons or property wrongly taken, or the punishment of evil.

Comparative justice Although war exists as an ethical possibility, there also exists a *strong* presumption against the resort to war as a means to resolve difficulties. Comparative justice requires – in addition to a state's having a just cause for the prosecution of war: a position which, for good or ill, both (or multiple) parties to a conflict are likely to claim – that the claims of an aggrieved party also must be of such magnitude that the presumption against war is overridden.

Right intention The outward disposition of parties contemplating war is not a sufficient guide as to whether the resort to war is actually justified; the invisible (but no less real) inward disposition is also important. The internal motivation must itself be just. Evidence of right intention might include the pursuit of peace negotiations to avoid war, the avoidance of potentially unreasonable demands, etc. A right intention would not involve the desire for territorial expansion, intimidation or coercion, and it would be devoid of hatred for the enemy, implacable animosity, or a desire for vengeance or domination.

Competent authority The decision to go to war can be weighed and declared only by that person, or body of persons generally recognized, by virtue of position in the social framework, to possess authority to make such a declaration, namely, that person or body with no political superior.

Last resort Not even those authorized to declare war are justified in doing so if there be any reasonable means to avoid it. That is, the prevailing circumstances must clearly indicate that no means short of war would be sufficient to obtain satisfaction for just grievances or wrongs against the state.

Public declaration The aggrieved state must set forth the reasons that impel it to war as an indispensable part of its demonstration that all other means for

peaceful resolution short of war have been exhausted. Such a declaration serves, among other things, as an occasion for national reflection as to whether all means short of war truly have been exhausted prior to the commitment to the enterprise of the nation's resolve, energies, and resources. The declaration may come in the form of an ultimatum, which sets forth those remedies short of war that remain available, with the requirement that the offending party avail itself to those remedies prior to a specified time.

Reasonable probability of success Unless the cause that impels military action is of such importance as to merit defence even in the face of seemingly overwhelming odds, a war that presents little or no hope of serving as a vehicle for obtaining satisfaction for just grievances is not morally justifiable.

Proportionality The moral good expected to result from the war must exceed the amount of evil expected naturally and unavoidably to be entailed by war.

Peace as the ultimate objective of war The end of violence, the avoidance of future violence, and, to the greatest extent possible, the establishment or restoration of happiness and human flourishing – in short, a just and lasting peace – must be *the* end toward which the war is fought.

These nine principles, or similar expressions of them in different combinations, traditionally are taken to specify the *permissibility* criteria for a just war. That is, given that the conditions specified by these nine principles are met, a state normally would thereby be considered to have acquired moral *licence* to engage in war, although not necessarily the moral *obligation* to do so.

Jus in bello principles

The fundamental assumption of *jus in bello* is that even a just war can cease to be a just war if it is not fought in a just manner. Two *jus in bello* principles traditionally define the moral boundaries for the just application of force in a conflict already begun.

Proportionality Only minimum force, consistent with 'military necessity', may be used – and even then, only with an eye toward bringing the conflict to a just conclusion as quickly as possible. Violent means which cause gratuitous suffering or otherwise cause unnecessary harm fall outside the scope of what is 'proportional'. This principle prohibits torture and traditionally has served to justify limitations on, for example, the kinds of weapons that can be used. (This *jus in bello* principle differs from the *jus ad bellum* principle by the same name in that the latter is essentially a utilitarian calculation of expected

outcomes before the decision is made to go to war, whereas the former pertains to actions permissible to be taken once a war has begun.)

Discrimination Belligerent parties must distinguish between combatants and non-combatants, with the former normally constituting the only acceptable objects of violent action. Traditionally, non-combatants have included wounded soldiers, prisoners of war, clergymen, women not in the military, children, the aged, and the infirm, all of whom are presumed not to be engaged in the war effort.[64]

To these two *jus in bello* principles we may add a third (as Augustine appears to do), namely, the requirement to maintain *good faith* with the enemy by keeping promises made to the enemy, observing treaty obligations, etc.

Notes

1 Paul Christopher, *The Ethics of War and Peace* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1994): 30. The author is particularly indebted to Professor Christopher for his insights concerning the antiquity of the just-war tradition. See also Louis J. Swift, *The Early Fathers on War and Military Service* (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1983).
2 O. J-B. Du Roy, 'Augustine, St.', in *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967 edn.
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4 Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1985): Book 1, vol. 1, 40.
5 Albert C. Outler, 'The Person and Work of Christ', in *A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine*, ed. Roy W. Battenhouse (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955): 359.
6 See Richard N. Ostling, 'The Second Founder of the Faith,' *Time*, 29 September 1986, 76.
7 Paul Edwards, ed., *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company and The Free Press, 1972): s.v. 'Peace, War, and Philosophy', by F. S. Northedge.
8 Plato, *Laws* XII 955b9–c6 in *Plato: The Collected Dialogues*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961): 1500.
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2

The Historical and Philosophical Landscape

Augustine's ideological forebears

In order to appreciate the context for Augustine's statements on just war, one must view them, to some extent at least, as reactions and responses to, or reassessments of, positions taken by Cicero and Ambrose. In Augustine's estimation, Cicero seems to represent the very best of all that is Roman. Augustine's estimation of Ambrose is similarly exalted: Ambrose is to Augustine, with respect to Christianity, as Socrates is to Plato, with respect to philosophy.

Cicero, 106–43 BC

Augustine was a great admirer of Cicero, to whom he refers as one 'among the most learned and eloquent of all mankind',[1] whom he quotes no less than eighteen times in the *City of God*. Indeed, he credits Cicero for introducing him to philosophy via Cicero's now lost work, the *Hortentius*.[2] Augustine's admiration for Cicero as a just-war thinker is evidenced by the fact that it is to Augustine that we owe credit for the preservation of many of Cicero's statements on just war.

Cicero and the state

Cicero, like Plato and Aristotle, idealizes politics. In his view, the state is the highest form of society, and he regards its preservation as essential to the moral and physical well-being of the human race. According to Cicero, human flourishing simply would not be possible if the state ceased to exist. Hence, the death of any individual is less to be lamented than the extinction of the state: '[T]here is some similarity', Cicero asserts, 'between the overthrow, destruction, and extinction of a State, and the decay and dissolution of the whole universe.'[3] Thus, it follows that even the most extreme actions could be justified if necessary to ensure the state's preservation.

Ideally, the state has justice as its hallmark, but that does not mean that even a just state might not find itself threatened by injustice, perhaps in the form of violence from without. The state thus is faced with the question of whether it can justly engage in hostile action against its enemies. Cicero argues that it is permissible, but only if the peaceful alternative of 'discussion' is impossible.[4]

Cicero: *jus ad bellum*

Just cause

In his *De Re Publica*, Cicero states, 'a war is never undertaken by the ideal State, except in defence of its honour or its safety'.[5] This fragment, preserved by Augustine,[6] reveals much of importance about Cicero's (and later Augustine's) most fundamental views on war. It establishes, first and foremost, the Ciceronian premise that there exists, even for cases in which war is permissible, a *strong presumption against war*. There is no other premise that binds Augustine more securely to Cicero than this one. After asserting this initial negative presumption, Cicero goes on to establish the threshold claim of just-war theory, namely, that there exist certain necessary and specifiable conditions under which a nation can justly engage in war. According to Cicero, possible just causes include not only the defence of the state or its honour, but also the need to take punitive actions (for 'revenge', as Cicero puts it).[7] Augustine will later put a finer point on what justifies a war of revenge. Cicero holds that no war can be considered just that is not preceded by some wrongdoing by an enemy, for 'Those wars are unjust which are undertaken without provocation.'[8] At very least, wars fought 'in defence of . . . honour' would seem to include wars fought to aid or defend those peoples allied with Rome. As Cicero explains, 'There are two kinds of injustice – the one, on the part of those who inflict wrong, the other on the part of those who, when they can, do not shield from wrong those upon whom it is being inflicted.'[9] On this latter point, he notes elsewhere with apparent satisfaction that '[O]ur people by defending their allies have gained dominion over the whole world.'[10]

Comparative justice

Cicero generally advocates purity of national motive. If wars fought for 'honour' include wars fought for the glorification of Rome, Cicero seems not to regard such wars as categorically unjust, but he does seem to regard them as less just than wars fought for revenge or for defence of the Empire:

> [W]hen glory is the object of war, it must still not fail to start from the same righteous motives which I said . . . were the only righteous grounds

> for going to war. But those wars which have glory for their end must be carried on with less bitterness.[11]

Hence, although Cicero recognizes gradations in purity of motive, he does not utterly disallow wars fought with a less-than-perfect motive as unjust. Wars fought for glory must be carried on with less bitterness than are wars fought for revenge or for defence from invasion precisely because glory is less just a cause than revenge or defence. Cicero still allows for the propriety of wars fought for glory, albeit with some hesitancy. (In contrast, Augustine will recognize national honour in the sense of seeking for glory as a reason for why many wars occur, but he will positively condemn it as a bad reason.)

Right intention

If one understands Cicero to allow glory as a morally acceptable motivation for war, one notes a marked divergence between Cicero and Augustine on this point. For Augustine, motivation is absolutely fundamental in assessing the justice of a nation's participation in war. Because revenge and defence – either of one's own nation or that of one's allies – constitute the only reasons, according to Cicero, that fully justify waging war, Cicero necessarily would rule out as unjust wars fought merely for territorial expansion or as the result of a lust for power or bloodshed. Territorial expansion might result as the by-product of a just war, but its pursuit cannot constitute the motivation for going to war. Indeed,

> when a war is fought out for supremacy and when glory is the object of the war, it must still not fail to start from the same motives which . . . were the only righteous grounds for going to war,[12]

namely, to 'live in peace unharmed'.[13] For Cicero, to engage in war for a just cause is itself to engage in war with the right intention. (Augustine will refine the notion of right intention which, in Augustine's general ethical framework, plays a central role.)

Public declaration and last resort

For Cicero, these two *jus ad bellum* principles are almost inextricably linked: 'No war is just, unless it is entered upon after an official demand for satisfaction has been submitted or warning has been given and a formal declaration made.'[14] The requirement for both a public declaration of war and a demand for satisfaction prior to the onset of hostilities is deeply rooted in Roman culture. As early as 509 BC, Rome had special priests, the *fetiales*, who were

responsible for the conduct of religious ceremonies prefatory to a declaration of war. The *collegium fetialium* determined, by means of elaborate rituals, whether a foreign state had committed an injustice against Rome. If so, a delegate from among the *fetiales* would visit that state, inform its leaders of Rome's grievances, and swear an oath in the name of the Roman gods that the grievances were true, invoking their wrath upon the whole Roman population if the grievances proved to be false. The accused state was granted a waiting period of thirty (or by some accounts, thirty-three) days during which to make satisfaction to Rome.[15] The official visit and the waiting period that ensued constituted a public declaration of war in the form of an ultimatum, but it was also regarded as the last resort – the only option that remained short of war. That Cicero regards this entire procedure as common knowledge is evident from his matter-of-fact claim that rules for the humane conduct of war 'are drawn up in the fetial code of the Roman People under all the guarantees of religion';[16] so he views the procedure as requiring little or no argumentative justification.

Peace as the ultimate objective of war

Cicero advocates this principle with his claim that 'The only excuse for going to war is that we may live in peace unharmed.'[17] 'In my opinion,' he continues, 'we should always strive to secure a peace that shall not admit of guile.'[18] (Augustine repeatedly will state that peace is the ultimate aim of war, although he will allow for the utter destruction of an enemy in certain very specific circumstances.)

Cicero: *jus in bello*

Proportionality

Cicero considers, as Augustine will, the point that even wars entered into for an ostensibly just cause cannot themselves be just unless limitations are placed upon the manner in which they are fought. That is to say, Cicero recognizes – and Augustine affirms – that the fact that one state is wronged by its enemies does not justify the aggrieved state's committing unconstrained acts of violence against its enemies. Says Cicero:

> there are certain duties that we owe even to those who have wronged us. For there is a limit to retribution and to punishment; or rather, I am inclined to think, it is sufficient that the aggressor should be brought to repent of his wrong-doing, in order that he may not repeat the offence and that others may be deterred from doing wrong.[19]

Discrimination

Cicero specifies, as Augustine will, that those soldiers who cease from hostile actions should be accorded certain immunity from punishment, inasmuch as they were acting – not on their own behalf, but – as instrumentalities of the state: 'Not only must we show consideration for those whom we have conquered by force of arms but we must also ensure protection to those who lay down their arms and throw themselves upon the mercy of our generals, even though the battering-ram has hammered at their walls.'[20]

Cicero gives particular attention to the special moral status of soldiers. He makes clear that war in ancient Rome was quite a formal affair – that soldiers were not legally permitted to participate in war unless they had taken an oath of allegiance pertaining to their service under the Roman eagle in a *specific* military unit.[21] (Augustine will build upon this line of thought in a major way, arguing that citizens, when acting as agents of the state – as, for example, a law enforcement officer, executioner, or soldier – can engage in activities, such as the deliberate taking of human life, which would be utterly illegal and immoral if they committed the acts in a private capacity.)

Good faith

Of paramount importance to Cicero in the conduct of a just war is the maintenance of good faith with the enemy. If a promise is made to the enemy, either on behalf of the nation or on behalf of an individual soldier, it must be kept, even if the promise is made 'under stress of circumstances'.[22] Cicero forbids deceptions of the kind that arise when truces or other similarly recognized devices are used in a dishonest way for the purpose of gaining unfair advantage of the enemy – even though the cause for engaging in combat against the enemy be just. Likewise, he detests legalistic hair-splitting of the kind that results in the enforcement of the letter of international agreements in utter disregard for the spirit of the agreements: 'Injustice often arises also through chicanery, that is, through an over-subtle and even fraudulent construction of the law. This it is that gave rise to the now familiar saw "More law, less justice."' In the matter of a promise, one must always consider the meaning and not merely the words. (Augustine shares with Cicero this emphasis on the importance of intent as it applies to maintaining good faith with the enemy. Both he and Cicero are able to look beyond legalistic technicalities. However, Augustine is willing to allow the propriety of deliberately deceptive practices in warfare in a way that Cicero seems to refuse to countenance.)

Ambrose, AD 340–97

This Roman governor of northern Italy,[23] later Bishop of Milan (having been proclaimed bishop by acclamation while still a catechumen) and Augustine's well-known mentor, was heavily influenced by Cicero. However, the hallmarks of just-war discourse are more perspicuous in Cicero than they are in Ambrose.[24]

Augustine's respect for Ambrose, under whose hand Augustine received baptism in AD 387, was supreme. In the *Confessions*, Augustine gives credit to Ambrose as the person who, more than any other mortal, helped him acquire an appreciation of the interiority of the Gospel precepts – a notion that will later figure so prominently in Augustine's own just-war theory specifically and will pervade his theology in general. Augustine muses, 'I was pleased to hear that in his sermons to the people Ambrose often repeated the text: "The written law inflicts death, whereas the spiritual law brings life,"[25] as though this were a rule upon which he wished to insist most carefully.'[26]

Ambrose recognized that human laws have both an exterior and an interior aspect, the former being the legal code itself and the latter being the spirit or intent which gives life and, ultimately, meaning to the law. In this way, rather than viewing the taking of life as an intrinsic evil, he was able to view it as a conditional good. Thus, by 'arguing that martial courage and the spirit of love are not mutually exclusive, Ambrose could move quite far from the pacifist tendencies of earlier centuries while still insisting on the precepts of the Gospel'.[27] Both of these factors combine to mark Ambrose as a transitional figure between the resolutely pacifistic Christian writers who preceded him and Augustine who will impart both fuller form and greater substance to the notions which result from this dichotomy.

In terms of laying the philosophical groundwork for Augustine's treatment of just-war theory, Ambrose represents an advance beyond Cicero inasmuch as Ambrose considers just war in the context of Christianity. Indeed, he appears to be the first figure so to do in any substantive way. This, of course, is due largely to the fact that, unlike Cicero, Ambrose was faced with the challenge of understanding the conditions under which war could be waged and fought in the context of Christian theology and practice. (Augustine, of course, will inherit this challenge. In *The City of God*, Augustine will argue that the unavoidable consequences of war are not such as to preclude Christian participation in war on moral grounds.)

Ambrose 'saw the Roman Empire and the Christian Church as conjoint agencies of salvation'.[28] For Ambrose, the invasions which plagued the Empire in his day were evidence of 'divine indignation'[29] against the religious heresies that were abroad in the Empire – especially in those frontier provinces most affected by the invasions. Ambrose was able to justify Christian participation in

the defence of the Empire because for him, 'the defense of the empire coincided in his mind with the defense of the faith.'[30] (In concert with Ambrose, and against Cicero, Augustine will develop at length the idea that many wars – if not all, in some sense – arise as a reflection of that divine will which shapes the destiny of Man.) Wars fought by Rome champion the cause of Christians – the new 'chosen people'. By championing the cause of a now Christian empire, they facilitate the spread of Christianity, and they serve as retribution against those who war against the Empire, which now appears to have received the divine commission to spread – by war if necessary – the gospel of peace.

Ambrose introduces the discussion of the four cardinal virtues of antiquity (prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude) into Christian philosophy.[31] He speaks of fortitude in war as being a highly desirable and virtuous characteristic because 'it prefers death to slavery and disgrace'[32] and acknowledges the virtue associated with one's risking one's life in defence of one's country.[33] By way of example, he notes that 'Moses feared not to undertake terrible wars for his people's sake. . . . He put on one side the thought of his own safety so as to give freedom to the people.'[34] Again speaking of fortitude, of central importance is Ambrose's claim that 'he who does not keep harm off a friend, if he can, is as much in fault as he who causes it'.[35] Ambrose thus seeks to establish that for the Christian to engage in violent action in defence of others is not only permissible, but sometimes morally obligatory. Ambrose echoes Cicero[36] by noting that 'fortitude without justice is the source of wickedness'.[37] Because of this, Ambrose holds that 'in matters of war one ought to see whether the war is just or unjust'.[38]

Ambrose: *jus ad bellum*

Just cause

Turning to King David as a paradigm, Ambrose notes that 'David never waged war unless he was driven to it'[39] and that after his encounter with Goliath, 'he never entered on a war without seeking counsel of the Lord'.[40] As the result of his entreaties, Ambrose says, David 'was victorious in all wars, and even to the last years was ready to fight'.[41]

In Ambrose one finds expression of the traditional sentiment that recognizes a distinction between Roman and non-Roman: 'courage, which in war preserves one's country from the barbarians, or at home defends the weak . . . is full of justice'.[42] The larger implicit claim seems to be that while Roman wars fought against barbarians are just, any war initiated by the barbarians is unjust. This position is, of course, difficult to reconcile in the light of the Christian doctrine which holds the universal brotherhood of Man.[43] This problem becomes more acute as pertaining to the distinction which Ambrose is willing to allow between believer and non-believer. Consider, for example,

the case well known among Ambrose scholars in which, in AD 388, Christian rioting at Callinicum resulted in the burning of a Jewish synagogue. In his famous letter to Emperor Theodosius concerning the matter, Ambrose warns the Emperor against punishing the Christians by requiring them to make restitution. Referring to the synagogue as 'a home of unbelief, a house of impiety, a receptacle of folly, which God Himself has condemned',[44] he urges that, contrary to the position taken by the Emperor, the Christians should not be harshly punished for their actions. Concerning the Emperor's motive in assigning punishment to the Christians, Ambrose argues that, given the choice between 'a show of discipline' and 'the cause of religion', 'It is needful that judgment should yield to religion.'[45] There is thus a disturbing sense in which Ambrose seems to hold that the justice of one's cause is dependent upon one's formal association with the state Church of Rome, namely, the Christian Church. Ambrose does not comment on the status of non-Roman Christians – faithful 'barbarians' who by reason of their barbarian status are enemies of the Roman state, but by reason of their Christianity must on some account be regarded as friends of the state. (Augustine will seek to offer a more satisfactory account on this point than that offered by Ambrose.) Ambrose seeks to resolve the dilemma by advocating the imposition of fines upon heretics, the confiscation of their property, or other measures short of capital punishment,[46] in an effort to encourage them to rejoin the Christian fold.

In a famous passage, Ambrose argues that the justice of defence against violent action does not extend to self-defence:

> Some ask whether a wise man ought in case of shipwreck to take away a plank from an ignorant sailor? Although it seems better for the common good that a wise man rather than a fool should escape from shipwreck, yet I do not think that a Christian, a just and a wise man, ought to save his own life by the death of another; just as when he meets with an armed robber he cannot return his blows, lest in defending his life he should stain his love toward his neighbour. The verdict on this is plain and clear in the books of the Gospel. 'Put up thy sword, for every one that taketh the sword shall perish with the sword.'[47]

The importance of this passage cannot be overemphasized. Although earlier Church Fathers took note of these words of Jesus spoken to Peter and quoted here,[48] Ambrose is the first to interpret them as referring exclusively to *personal* engagement in violence and not to violent action in general (which would, of course, include war). As Swift observes, Ambrose 'denies to an individual in his own case a right which he *must* exercise in behalf of another'.[49] (Thus, Ambrose opens the door for Augustine's extensive development of this theme.)

Peace as the ultimate objective of war

Ambrose holds that although courage is a virtue, courage of the kind which is found operable in military settings has the potential to militate against the re-establishment of peace. Hence, for Ambrose, the whole reason why virtue and physical courage enjoy a proper place in the just war is to facilitate the re-establishment of peace. However, the external peace obtained through war pales in comparison to that internal peace which marks the proper disposition of the soul. Without that proper disposition, Ambrose holds, there can be no lasting external peace. Clearly, in light of the fact that Ambrose allows war to be an enterprise in which a Christian can justly participate, his emphasis on an internal peace does not mean that he is a pacifist in the sense advocated by the Church Fathers who preceded him. Rather, it means that he distinguishes between private and public peace. While both are highly desirable, the former is the more important of the two. (This idea, which appears in embryo in Ambrose, will receive Augustine's full attention.)[50]

Ambrose: *jus in bello*

Proportionality

Based on examples from the Old Testament, Ambrose takes the position that the treatment of a vanquished enemy depends upon the magnitude of the enemy's offence, and he cites a variety of Old Testament examples in an effort to establish his claim.[51] Ambrose seems to imply that those cases from the Old Testament in which great destructions were visited upon the enemy were also cases in which the destructions were divinely directed. In general, however, he seems inclined towards the merciful treatment of an enemy. Says Ambrose, 'it was seemly to spare an enemy, and to grant his life to an adversary when indeed he could have taken it, had he not spared it'.[52]

Discrimination

In concert with the Church Fathers who preceded him, Ambrose maintains the prohibition against the clergy's engaging in war:

> But the thought of warlike matters seems to be foreign to the duty of our office, for we have our thoughts fixed more on the duty of the soul than on that of the body; nor is it our business to look to arms, but rather to the affairs of peace.[53]

Ambrose practised his own preaching on this matter. When, in Milan in AD 385 – a scant two years before Ambrose will baptize Augustine there – imperial troops surrounded his basilica, threatened him and his congregation, and forcibly took possession of the basilica, Ambrose said, 'I cannot surrender the basilica, but I may not fight.'[54] (Augustine clearly maintains this prohibition in his own writings.)

Good faith

As in the case of Cicero, so in the case of Ambrose, special attention is given to the responsibility of those who would fight a just war to keep faith with the enemy. 'How great a thing justice is,' says Ambrose, 'can be gathered from the fact that there is no place, nor person, nor time, with which it has nothing to do. It must even be preserved in all dealings with enemies.'[55]

The Augustinian world-view

The world of Augustine

Augustine's world was very different from that of Cicero. Cicero lived in the day of Rome's expansion; Augustine lived in the day of its decline approaching collapse. In order to acquire a proper perspective on just how desperate things were in Augustine's day, it is instructive to note the socio-political circumstances prevalent during much of his life. The great migrations of barbaric peoples from northern Europe and central Asia constituted the Empire's single greatest challenge.[56] And since, as is so often the case in history, big problems seem to lend themselves to violent solutions, war was never far from being a reality – particularly in the form of civil war within the provinces of the Empire itself. However, in addition to the pressures being applied to the northern and eastern frontier, 'North Africa was being threatened by the Vandals – invaders whose depredations are so dreadful that the word "vandalism" lives on in the language to perpetuate their infamy.'[57] Augustine 'lived through the sacking of North Africa and the wanton destruction of churches by these Vandals'.[58] Even the circumstances of his death bespeak the woes of his world – a world turned upside down and a social order that was falling apart at the seams: he died reciting the penitential Psalms while the Vandals besieged the city of Hippo, where he was bishop. The Roman state and army ceased to exist in AD 476,[59] a mere 46 years after Augustine's own death.

Cicero lived in a Roman Empire that was officially and ideologically pagan; Augustine and Ambrose lived in a Roman Empire that was ostensibly Christian. The eternal Roman Empire of the pagans was never supposed to fall. Nevertheless, it gave way to Christianity. The Christian Roman Empire was seen by

many to be, to one degree or another, the realization of the kingdom of God on earth. Ambrose is one figure who, although not committed to the idea in the wholesale fashion of Eusebius,[60] is nevertheless inclined towards it. He envisages 'the Roman Empire as a society which was, or should be, a radically Christian society and the Church as called upon to mould its public life and institutions'.[61] In an epistle to the Emperor Theodosius, he clearly states his view that considerations of civil law are secondary to considerations of religion and that, if ever there is doubt, the latter should take priority.[62] However, he has no expectation that the connection between the sacred and the profane should be defined by a one-way street in which Rome does homage to the Christian God but is left without the guarantee of divine assistance in return. He assures the Emperor Gratian that in his campaign against the Goths, a Roman victory will follow in literal fulfilment of a prophecy of the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel.[63]

Nevertheless, in the face of assurances like these, the eternal city of the Christian empire fell to Alaric only thirteen years after Ambrose's death, and during the prime of Augustine's life (AD 410). That fall constituted a watershed event that occupied Augustine for the next fourteen years as he composed the *City of God*, his reply to the pagans who blamed the Christians for Rome's demise.

The Augustinian conception of justice and of the state

The effect of the fall of Rome upon the development of Augustine's just-war theory cannot be overstated. However personally Augustine may have bemoaned Rome's fall, it demonstrated conclusively to him that the city of Rome and the kingdom of God could not possibly be one and the same. It also gave him occasion to re-evaluate the Ciceronian view of the state, as well as to define the relationship of things political to things heavenly.

Augustine and Cicero agree that the preservation of the state is a desirable aim. However, their reasons for this position are very different; and it is this difference, perhaps more than any other, which distinguishes Augustine's approach to just-war theory from Cicero's. In the *City of God*, Augustine presents Cicero's definition of a state,[64] or commonwealth, as 'the weal of the people'.[65] He then argues that, given this definition of the state, or commonwealth, a Roman commonwealth never actually existed.[66]

Augustine's argument is a polemic response to pagans who argued that if Rome had not turned away from the worship of the traditional Roman deities as evidenced by her adoption of Christianity as the official religion of the state, the Roman state would not have come under the barbaric assaults of the kind that led to Alaric's sacking of Rome. Augustine seeks to establish that because of Rome's subscription to pagan worship, it was never truly *just*. Thus, in light

of what Augustine calls 'the irresistible conclusion'[67] that no commonwealth can exist without justice, he finds equally irresistible the conclusion that Rome was never a true state or commonwealth in the first place.

The fact that, until rather recently in Roman history, the Empire had not been 'Christian' and, hence, had only recently acquired, by Augustine's assessment, the capacity to practise such a measure of true justice as that to which humans can avail themselves is irrelevant. If that were Augustine's point, the pagans would have an easy rejoinder: had not the Empire been officially 'Christian' for well-nigh unto a century when Alaric stormed into Rome? How then could Augustine possibly claim that Rome was not truly just? Augustine's reply – precisely the kind of reply to such a question that one might expect from him – brings us closer to the heart of the matter: The fact that one claims citizenship in an ostensibly Christian state neither makes one truly Christian nor truly just. It is this *true* justice to which Augustine refers when he says, 'Remove justice, and what are kingdoms but gangs of criminals on a large scale? What are criminal gangs but petty kingdoms?'[68] The leaders of robber bands and the rulers of vast empires occupy, in all essential respects, the same position relative to those they lead, and both seem equally able to command the obedience of their subjects. Their only real difference is in the size of their respective domains. Augustine forcefully, if not sarcastically, makes this point in recalling Cicero's own anecdote[69] about a conversation between Alexander the Great and a captured pirate. When Alexander asked the pirate, 'What is your idea, in infesting the sea?', the pirate answered unabashedly, 'The same as yours, in infesting the earth! But because I do it with a tiny craft, I'm called a pirate: because you have a mighty navy, you're called an emperor.'[70]

By Augustine's account, no earthly state can lay claim to the possession of *true* justice, but only to some relative justice, by the examination of which one state can be called more or less just than another. Likewise, the legitimacy of any earthly political regime can be understood only in relative terms; the emperor and the pirate have equally legitimate domains if they are equally just. In no case, however, should one expect to find an earthly state that possesses true justice.

Not only do the Ciceronian and Augustinian conceptions of the role of justice within the state differ measurably, but also their respective conceptions of justice itself. The Augustinian notion of justice includes the traditional definition of justice, i.e. 'giving every man his due'. However, it is grounded in distinctively Christian philosophical commitments: 'justice', says Augustine, 'is love serving God only, and therefore ruling well all else'.[71] In order to understand the ultimate grounds upon which Augustine's just-war theory rests, one must bear in mind Augustine's definition of justice. Indeed, the overarching difference between Cicero's definition of the state and Augustine's is that Augustine's definition deliberately omits any reference to justice, or a

'common sense of right'.[72] This omission is no small thing. In fact, 'No more fundamental difference could very well be imagined, although St. Augustine seems to take the matter lightly; for Cicero's whole conception of the state turns upon this principle, that it is a means for attaining and preserving justice.'[73]

Augustine defines a 'people' as 'the association of a multitude of rational beings united by a common agreement on the objects of their love',[74] such that the character of a people can be determined by examining the objects of their love.[75] Thus, it is possible for the citizens of Rome to be just, but not by virtue of their Roman citizenship, for one does not become just as the result of membership in a state. Augustine makes plain that the divine law which includes the knowledge requisite for giving to each his or her due – that is, the knowledge requisite for having a sense of justice – 'is written in men's hearts and cannot be erased however sinful they are'.[76] By way of illustration, Augustine notes that not even a thief 'can bear that another thief should steal from him, even if he is rich and the other is driven to it by want'.[77] When justice is found, it appears as a characteristic of individuals and not of states. Men can justly engage in just wars, but the states under whose banner they fight can never claim perfect justice.

Augustine's two cities

However, the question arises, 'If *all* people know what is just and have the capacity to be just, and the state is composed of people, how is it that the state can never be just?' Augustine's reply is simply that human beings, beginning with Adam, are distinguished by the fact that, at one time or another, *all* have been guilty of acting contrary to that which they know to be truly right, truly just. Some individuals consistently choose evil; others at least try, with more or less consistency, to choose the good. The difference lies in the objects of the loves of these two kinds of people. One kind has the acquisition of earthly possessions and power as the object of their love, while the other loves things presently unobtainable, namely, those things associated with a heavenly reward in the kingdom of God. 'Observe ye two kinds of men,' says Augustine,

> the one of men labouring, the other of those among whom they labour: the one of men thinking of earth, the other of heaven: the one of men weighing down their heart unto the deep, the other of men with Angels their heart conjoining: the one trusting in earthly things, wherein this world aboundeth, the other confiding in heavenly things, which God, who lieth not, had promised.[78]

These two groups of people give rise to two distinctly different, absolutely incommensurable categories, to which Augustine metaphorically refers as 'cities': those 'predestined to reign with God for eternity', and those 'doomed to undergo eternal punishment with the Devil'.[79]

Citizens of the City of God are those human beings whose object of love is found not in this present world, but in heaven. They are 'pilgrims and foreigners'[80] who, because the object of their love is not immediately available for their present enjoyment, are very much out of place in a world in which no state, because states lack true justice, can be found which is identical to, or even part or parcel of, the City of God. 'The members of the earthly city, unlike the members of the City of God, are not pilgrims or sojourners on this earth; they are "at home" here, and it is here that they seek their ends and find their satisfactions.'[81] By Augustine's account, all people hold citizenship in either one city or the other, without any possibility of some kind of metaphysical 'dual citizenship'. The relative size of the two cities is in no way indicative of their relative goodness or relative success. The earthly city is, and as long as it remains will ever occupy, a vastly larger domain and enjoy much greater prominence than does, or will, the pilgrim City of God.[82] The triumph of the City of God will be realized only after the earthly city is no more. None need expect, therefore, that the peace, order, or *justice* of that city will ever prevail generally on earth.

Given Augustine's distinction, there is no rational incentive for any earthly entity to identify itself with the earthly city. On the other hand, there is substantial ideological ground to be gained by either the state or the Church identifying itself with the City of God. Let us consider, then, various candidates for identification with the City of God.

First, consider the state as candidate. One thing that Augustine would have us to understand is that he criticizes Cicero's definition of commonwealth or state not because he finds the entity which Cicero describes to be undesirable. On the contrary, he finds it supremely desirable. His criticism is that, owing to human foibles – the inherited result of Man's fall from grace incident to Adam's transgression, the commonwealth which Cicero describes (i.e. a group of people bound by one consent of law for the common good, and in possession of true justice)[83] cannot exist among human beings. It can only exist in the City of God. The identification of all earthly states with the City of God would, of course, be wonderful because, among other reasons, the problem of war (and, hence, just war) would disappear altogether. However, it is as impossible as it is wonderful because, just as the pirate suggests to Alexander the Great, every human association is, to a greater or lesser degree, merely a den of robbers,[84] and not exclusively a society of the elect of God.

Now, let us consider the institutional Church as candidate for the City of God. Of course, it would be all too easy to equate the 'City of God' with the

institutional Church and the 'earthly city' with the other associations of mortal men, pre-eminent among which is the political state. However, neither can the Church be equated with the heavenly city – the City of God – for two reasons. First, within the Church as within the state, both the elect and the reprobate are to be found. In an unmistakable allusion to the words of Jesus, that 'the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away',[85] Augustine argues that this intermingling describes precisely the membership of the Church as it is found in the earthly city. Indeed, these two cities are so inextricably mixed that their effective separation cannot occur before all men are brought to stand before the great Judge at the Last Judgment.[86] Second, not all of God's elect have yet found their way into the institutional Church; 'For, in that unspeakable foreknowledge of God, many who seem to be without are in reality within, and many who seem to be within yet really are without.'[87] Either way, any correspondence between the City of God and the Church, just as between the earthly city and the state, is purely accidental because their respective sets of members will never be identical. If the equation of institutional Church and City of God were possible, again the problem of just war would altogether disappear, but for a different reason: those wars waged by the institutional Church (if the Church waged any wars at all) would be just. Those wars waged by any other entity would be unjust. However, Augustine intends no such solution; and, indeed, the societal conception embodied in this dichotomy of the two cities necessarily takes his just-war theory in a very different direction. The reason why this second proposed solution to the just-war problem is impossible is, as Augustine repeatedly explains, because the two societies represented by the two cities are inextricably mixed. There is no human society on earth composed exclusively of one kind or of the other. 'But mingled are these kinds of men', says Augustine.[88] 'In truth, those two cities are interwoven and intermixed . . . and await separation at the last judgment.'[89] Precisely because every person holds citizenship in either one city or the other, there must be, on the individual level, some distinguishing marks which serve to designate one's affiliation. Augustine notes at least five: the holy versus the ungodly;[90] the proud versus the humble;[91] those who live by human standards versus those who live according to God's will;[92] those destined for salvation versus those destined for damnation;[93] and those who love themselves and glory in themselves versus those who love God and glory in him.[94]

This inextricable intermixing notwithstanding, it would be a mistake to assume the intermixing of their respective citizens in any way bespeaks any real community between the two cities. Indeed, 'the two cities are really ordered toward different ends',[95] such that:

> To transfer the rules obtaining on one level to the other is to confuse and upset everything. The earthly city has its own order, rights and laws; organized as it is to bring about a certain state of harmony and peace, it should be respected, defended, and maintained, the more so because citizens of the City of God live in it, share in the goods it guarantees, and enjoy the order it produces.[96]

Unfortunately, this mixing does not mean that because all human beings on earth find themselves in roughly the same general situation by virtue of being intermixed, they will, therefore, realize that it is in their mutual best interests to cooperate in harmony and peace. Rather, it means that among all peoples will be found those whose base desire for glory and domination inclines them to war. If anything, Augustine's world-view that features good and evil people thoroughly intermixed occasions a more pressing need than ever for a theory to make sense of the claim that such people could ever fight a just war.

The possibility of a Christian state

The conversion of Constantine was significant in light of Augustine's system because 'If the ruler of an empire be Christian, there is then a possibility of justice in the state.'[97] The state's existence is divinely appointed for the assistance and blessing of Man. Indeed, we might add that some of what states do merits divine approval; whereas, some of what those who call themselves 'Christians' do, does not.[98] Moreover, even if there is not a perfect correspondence between the institutional Church and the City of God, one could reasonably expect that, in theory at least, the correspondence between them should be closer than the correspondence of any other entity with the City of God. After all, their respective aims are ostensibly the same, because they presumably share the same object of their love.

The question fairly arises, therefore, concerning the case of the state (with the Roman Empire as the case in point) which openly embraces the institutional Church: Are not its wars bound to be at least comparatively *more* just than those fought by states which have not allied themselves with the institutional Church? On cursory inspection, Christianized Rome would seem to qualify for special status as a 'greater among equals' in the community of states, in terms of its enjoyment of true justice; and, on that basis, one might be tempted to embrace the view that its wars would be inherently more just than those initiated by its barbarian neighbours (or more just than those fought by pre-Christian Rome). Many of the Church Fathers see Rome as an empire with a divinely appointed destiny. Augustine also holds that the establishment and success of the Roman Empire was part of the divine plan of the true God.[99]

Nevertheless, Augustine also rejects 'the implicit equation of "Roman" with

"Christian"'.[100] Rather, he finds Rome to be 'a kind of second Babylon'.[101] In fact, although Augustine admits the presence of true Christians among the Romans, he 'seems never to have considered true Christians to *be* true Romans'.[102] Their status as true Christians – a status known only to, and knowable only by, God – identifies their citizenship with the City of God. Even if the head of state and the temporal head of the Church were one and the same – even if they merged so as to become institutionally the same – they would not *be* the same, because citizenship in the City of God is determined at the individual and not the institutional level. The state only can impose penalties for the outward conduct of individuals; it cannot inspect their hearts and wills.[103]

This is not to say that Augustine views Christianity as incompatible with the good interests of the Empire. Indeed, one of Augustine's main argumentative thrusts in the *City of God* is to show that they are not incompatible. Despite the effects of man's sin, beginning with Adam's transgression, it is still the case that Augustine considers civilization to be 'susceptible of moral improvement',[104] such that the influence of Christianity upon the Empire could be only salutary in its effect. '[W]ere our religion listened to as it deserves,' says Augustine, 'it would establish, consecrate, strengthen, and enlarge the commonwealth in a way beyond all that Romulus, Numa, Brutus, and all the other men of renown in Roman history achieved.'[105]

While Augustine doubtless holds that it is better for Rome to be Christian than not, he clearly recognizes that embracing Christianity does not automatically transform earthly states into the City of God; nor does it transform unjust wars fought by those states into just ones. However, at very least, an empire in earnest pursuit of justice properly understood would be bound to act more justly in the way it fought its wars and in the way it chose which wars to fight than it otherwise would. Certainly Rome's reliance on pagan deities for justification of its causes led only to absurdities: if Rome's vast expansion were accomplished merely through waging just wars, the Romans surely would 'worship the Injustice of others as a kind of goddess'.[106] Augustine notes sarcastically that, indeed, it was with the aid of two such goddesses that Rome expanded into the vast empire that it became: the goddess of Foreign Injustice, which 'stirred up the causes of war', and the goddess of Victory, which 'brought the war to a happy conclusion'.[107]

Augustine, unlike Ambrose, 'deserves credit . . . for not having transferred his political allegiance to a theocratic model of the state'.[108] But even if Augustine had advocated some kind of theocracy – either Caesaropapism of the kind that emerges in Byzantine times, a cooperative Church–state relation such as appears in the Holy Roman Empire under Charlemagne, or some similar arrangement[109] – he would still be quick to point out, we must suppose, that the merger of mortal institutions in no way implies the actual merger of the two cities. For while it may be that the 'very temporal mingling' of citizens

from the two cities 'bringeth it to pass that certain men belonging to Babylon, do order matters belonging to Jerusalem, and again certain men belonging to Jerusalem, do order matters belonging to Babylon',[110] yet the two cities are forever distinctly separate, 'against each other mutually in conflict, the one for iniquity, the other for the truth'.[111]

Neither Rome nor any other state is truly just, because so many citizens of these states reject the thing that could best bring justice to an imperfect world, namely, the teachings of Christ. In particular, Augustine opines that if Christian teachings on justice and morality were practised by all – to include soldiers and their political masters, 'the Roman commonwealth would now enrich all this present world with its own happiness, and would ascend to the heights of eternal life to reign in felicity'.[112]

Augustine's prognosis for the state

Augustine does not seem to suggest that the opportunity to change is for ever lost; Rome could, given its full and sincere embracing of Christianity, even now 'ascend to the heights'. However, Augustine's whole tenor in the *City of God* is that, if the past is any predictor of the future, there is no reason whatsoever to expect that Rome ever would be anything different than what it is. Hence, Augustine urges that Christ enjoins His servants – to include kings, princes, judges, and soldiers – to submit willingly to the viscissitudes of life in even utterly corrupt states, that thereby they might demonstrate their fitness for a glorious reward in the heavenly city, where God's law is practised and injustice has no place.[113]

In so claiming, however, it should be clearly understood that Augustine does not wish ill for Rome. Quite the contrary, he supplicates God for Rome's welfare: 'The city [Rome] which has given us birth according to the flesh still abideth, God be thanked. O that it may receive a spiritual birth, and together with us pass over into eternity!'[114] Rome is the home of the Empire to which, in temporal terms at least, Augustine belongs. It is Rome that he sees as the last bastion against the advances of the pagan barbarians who surely must not be allowed to overrun the mortal embodiment of Christendom that Rome represents. Nevertheless, Augustine cannot be overly optimistic about the future of the Roman state as such – not because it is Rome, but because it is a state; for any human society other than the City of God is part and parcel of the earthly city, which is doomed to inevitable demise, even though it may embrace such goods as this world has to offer.[115] Ironically, these 'goods', which characterize the highest aspirations of the earthly city of which most men are citizens, are often sought and obtained by war.[116] Any society thus 'divided against itself'[117] by having 'risen up in war against another part'[118] can neither endure, nor possibly be composed primarily of citizens of the City of God.

Augustine's conception of war

The place of war in human history

Inasmuch as the history of human society is largely the history of warfare, it seems quite natural for Augustine to attempt an explanation of the place of war in the unfolding plan (and for Augustine it is both a deliberate and divine plan) for human history. 'Over the course of the centuries,' Augustine asks in one of his letters,[119] 'have we ever had a time when the world was not scourged by war in one place or another?' And in the *City of God* he provides an answer by arguing that, human nature being what it is and human affairs being what they are, no people can claim ever to have enjoyed a condition of peace and tranquility such that all anxiety associated with the thought that they might fall prey to life-threatening hostile action was altogether done away with. Enduring peace and tranquility is a state found only among eternal beings in the heavenly city.[120]

War is as inevitable for Augustine as it is for Heraclitus, Hobbes, and Marx, albeit for different reasons. For Augustine, anything that exists as so inextricable a feature of human existence as war seems to owe its existence at least to the permission, and more likely to the design, of God. Man enjoys the power of individual agency, but only as a divinely bestowed endowment. Neither Man nor Man's freedom exists independently of the will of God who, according to Augustine, created all things *ex nihilo*.[121] Hence it is that, in order for even the possibility – even the idea, and certainly the realization – of war to exist in the first place, God must have ordained either that wars exist, or that Man, through the exercise of his agency, be able to engage in war. The God who is the object of Augustine's worship controls or allows all things according to His pleasure, to include 'the beginning, the progress, and end even *of wars*',[122] which He ordains 'when mankind needs to be corrected and chastised by such means'.[123] Hence, for Augustine, far from being an aberration of the divinely appointed lot of Man, wars owe their existence to the will of God, just as everything does that exists in the universe; and just like everything else that exists in the cosmic order, wars too serve a divinely appointed purpose. Even the duration of wars is divinely dictated: in accordance with His justice and mercy, God chooses 'either to afflict or console mankind, so that some wars come to an end more speedily, others more slowly'.[124]

War as a means to reward the righteous and to punish the wicked

According to Augustine, all of God's acts, including wars, are manifestations of His love for His human creatures. Accordingly, it follows for Augustine that all men – and particularly righteous men – stand to benefit from war: God, in His providence, constantly uses war to correct and chasten human wrongdoing,

but also to train people in a more 'righteous and laudable way of life'.[125] Some of the righteous thus either chastened or trained are permitted to escape death so that they can be of 'further service'[126] in this present state. Others are removed to a 'better state'[127] as a reward for their labours.

Hence, Augustine's comment comes as a response to those who would ask how a just God can permit war to be visited upon the righteous. Those righteous who taste of death as the result of war are removed to a 'better state', and the righteous who are spared have at very least the satisfaction of knowing that, in the divine economy, they were deemed fit instruments for continued use on earth in the hands of the Almighty. On the other hand, Augustine's words would suggest that the wicked who are chastened by war have no right to complain, for they received nothing more than their due.

In Augustine's view, then, wars serve the function of putting mankind on notice, as it were, of the value (at least to the extent that it makes sense to strive to live righteously in Augustine's theology, which views each human being as predestined either to salvation or damnation) of consistently righteous living. One may not (indeed cannot) predict with perfect surety whether a war will come or, if it comes, whether one will be involved in it. Nevertheless, if one is righteous, he or she cannot help but benefit from the war, whether in life or in death. The wicked, however, enjoy no such guarantee. If they die, they merely receive their just deserts. Moreover, even if they survive the war, it will still be the case that *had* they died in the war, they inevitably would have had to suffer the dire consequences of disobedience, which Augustine outlines in considerable detail.[128] Likewise, we might note that on the societal level, Augustine's

> analysis of war closely parallels his discussion of punishment and earthly justice within the state. The just war is the punishment imposed upon a state and upon its rulers when their behavior is so aggressive or avaricious that it violates even the norms of temporal justice.[129]

The justice of applying war as a punishment for wrongs

In this light, one might feel moved to call upon Augustine to defend the notion that God can, with propriety, use so terrible a vehicle as war to chasten the wicked. On this matter, however, two points must be kept in mind. The first is that, for Augustine, all of God's acts are, by definition, just,[130] even if the application of that definition to specific cases of the human experience eludes human reasoning. There is, however, a more philosophically intriguing question that arises at this juncture: Is it just to compel people to do good who, when left to their own devices, would prefer evil? If one were forced to act righteously contrary to his or her will, is it not the case that he or she would

still lack the change of heart that is necessary to produce a repentant attitude – an attitude that results in genuine reformation? Perhaps; but Augustine is unwilling to concede that it is better, in the name of recognizing the agency of others, to let them continue to wallow in evil practices:

> The aim towards which a good will compassionately devotes its efforts is to secure that a bad will be rightly directed. For who does not know that a man is not condemned on any other ground than because his bad will deserved it, and that no man is saved who has not a good will?[131]

Exactly how God is bringing about his good purposes through the process of war may not be clear to Man in any particular case. What must be clear to any who would acquire a glimpse as to why the divine economy operates as it does, Augustine would urge, is that one who truly is possessed of a good will does not hesitate to administer to an erring fellow being, at God's direction, the punitive discipline that war is intended to bring. Moreover, he or she who is possessed of a good will administers that discipline with the intent of moving that erring fellow being towards repentance and reformation. Above all, it should be understood that, given the circumstances that precipitate the need for the chastening that war can bring, cruelty is not manifested by those of good will in the administration of punishment but, rather, in the withholding of punishment. '[I]t does not follow,' Augustine states, 'that those who are loved should be cruelly left to yield themselves with impunity to their bad will; but in so far as power is given, they ought to be both prevented from evil and compelled to good.'[132]

What if, however, the violence of war serves only to subdue the wrongdoings of the wicked and fails to produce the change of heart that would characterize the transition from a bad to a good will? An Augustinian point of view would seem to justify the conclusion that it is always better to restrain an evil person from the commission of evil acts than it is to permit his or her continued perpetration of those acts. As for the evil but unrepentant person, it would seem that he or she will have failed to reap the intended benefit of God's chastening, which, reckoned by any Augustinian measure, is a great tragedy indeed.

For Augustine, even the death of the mortal body, as ultimate a penalty it might seem to be from the mortal perspective, is not nearly so serious a consequence as that which would ensue if one were left to wallow in sin: '[I]t was not death itself that would injure those who were being punished with death, but sin, which might be increased if they continued to live.'[133]

Augustine's preoccupation with the justice of war

If, however, the presence of war serves as a defining characteristic of the earthly city, the question properly arises as to why Augustine is so concerned to specify what counts as a *just* war. Why not pursue the course taken by virtually all of the Latin patristic writers who preceded him and label war and military service as merely a 'worldly' concern that should not occupy the attention of true Christians, much less hold any attraction for them? The answer to this question is of supreme importance in the present context: Augustine's world-view differs from those of many of his predecessors in terms of his lack of optimism about the inclination of Man to strive to comprehend the ultimate verities, live in an orderly manner, and find his way back to God. He becomes quite pessimistic in his view of human nature and of the ability and willingness of humans to maintain themselves in order, much less righteousness. Because of the tendency to do evil that all men exhibit as the result of Adam's fall, pride, vanity, and *libido domini* – the lust for domination – entice men towards waging wars and committing all manner of violence. Augustine holds that, given the inextricable mixing of citizens of the two cities, the total avoidance of war or its effects is a practical impossibility for all men, including the righteous. He further holds that the day will come when, coincident with the end of the earthly city, wars will no longer be fought. For, says Augustine, commenting on Psalm 46,

> yet are there wars, wars among nations for sovereignty; among sects, among Jews, Pagans, Christians, heretics, are wars, frequent wars, some for the truth, some for falsehood contending. Not yet then is this fulfilled, 'He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth;' but haply it shall be fulfilled.[134]

On the one hand are the wicked who are not particularly concerned about how just the wars they fight might be. On the other hand are the righteous who, try as they may, cannot hope to avoid being affected by wars while in this present state. Rather, the best that they can hope for is that such wars as do get fought be just wars, as opposed to unjust ones. This is by no means a perfect solution; but, then again, this is not a perfect world. If it were, all talk of just wars would be altogether nonsensical. Perfect solutions characterize the heavenly City of God, and its pilgrim citizens sojourning on earth can do no better than to try to cope with the present difficulties and imperfections that characterize life on earth. Thus, for Augustine, *the just war is a coping mechanism for use by the righteous who aspire to citizenship in the City of God.* In *jus ad bellum* terms, it is a coping mechanism for righteous sovereigns who would ensure that their violent international encounters are minimal, to the greatest extent

possible a reflection of the divine will in the specific case at hand, and, in any case, just. In *jus in bello* terms, it is a coping mechanism for righteous subjects who, by divine edict, having no choice but to 'be subject to the higher powers',[135] seek to ensure that they prosecute their war-fighting duty as justly as they possibly can. Sometimes that duty might arise in the most trying of circumstances, or under the most wicked of regimes.[136]

In sum, why would someone like Augustine, whose eye is fixed upon attainment of citizenship in the heavenly city, find it necessary to delineate what counts as a just war in this lost and fallen world? In general terms, it is because the demands of moral life are so thoroughly interwoven with social life that the individual cannot be separated from citizenship in one or the other city.[137] In more specific terms, it is because, as Markus observes, 'The moral demands made by war do not differ radically from other moral demands made on the just man by an immoral society.'[138] The just man who walks by faith has as much need to understand how to cope with the injustices and contradictions of war as he needs to understand how to cope with all other aspects of the present world where he is a stranger and pilgrim.[139]

Augustine's definition of *bellum*

Given the political–military circumstances of the Roman Empire at the dawn of the fifth century, Augustine's personal acquaintance with war came largely in the form of internal police actions. Hence, when he refers to just wars, he almost certainly has in mind wars intended to quell internal rebellions with the end objective of restoring the peaceful temporal order, or defensive wars waged to protect the borders of the Empire. Certainly, he is not referring to wars of adventuristic, imperialistic expansion of the kind that typified the Empire in former centuries. But that does not mean that his theory cannot accommodate international crises or that Augustine is oblivious to the international applicability of just-war principles. By the same token, it is useful to bear in mind that the Ciceronian model from which his basic definition of the just war derives does not have reference merely to internal police actions.

Augustine's conception of peace

Alternative kinds of peace

Integral to a thorough understanding of Augustine's world-view in general, and of his theory of just war in particular, is an understanding of his conception of peace. According to Augustine, God designed that all humanity should live together in 'the bond of peace'.[140] However, the Fall of Man gave rise to the presence of the two main divisions of human society: those who seek to act

in concert with the divine will and those who oppose it. The two cities are distinguishable in several important ways, not least of which is the kind of peace they seek. Some men's choices reflect their desire to live merely by 'the standard of the flesh',[141] while the choices of others reflect their desire to pursue a life governed by 'the standard of the spirit'.[142] The desires which lead men to embrace one or another of these standards also lead them to embrace one or another kind of peace; 'and when they achieve their aim', Augustine says, 'that is the kind of peace in which they live'.[143]

In *City of God* XIX, Augustine delineates three kinds of peace: the ultimate and perfect peace which exists exclusively in the City of God, the interior peace enjoyed by the pilgrim citizens of the City of God as they sojourn on earth, and the peace which is common to the two cities.[144] What is abundantly clear in Augustine's writings is that, sadly, temporal peace is rather an anomalous condition in the totality of human history and that perfect peace is altogether unattainable on earth.[145] As pertaining to the lot of the Church itself, Augustine opines that there may, in fact, be no set upper bounds – at least none discernible to human reckoning – to the suffering which Christians may encounter during their mortal sojourn as part of the Church in the earthly city.[146] He can only suppose that persecutions will continue right up to the winding-up scenes of the current state of human history incidental to the Second Coming of Christ. What is of interest here is the fact that Augustine gives no suggestion whatsoever that, while this violence against the Church continues, the rest of the earth will be at peace. On the contrary, the entire tenor of his argument suggests that this violence is merely typical of the violence and disorder that will accompany the human experience until the Second Coming.

However, Augustine insists that, by any estimation, it is in the best interest of everyone – saint or sinner – to keep the peace. The 'basic and fundamental task that the state is expected to perform'[147] is, first and foremost, the establishment of 'an earthly peace'.[148] It accomplishes this by imposing limits even on those harmonious agreements of citizens 'concerning the giving and obeying of orders'[149] by specifying those things which are appropriate and inappropriate for its citizens to do, thus establishing 'a kind of compromise between human wills about the things relevant to mortal life'.[150]

While there is no agreement on which kind of peace to seek, all agree that peace in some form is the end they desire to achieve. Even in war, all parties involved desire – and fight to obtain – some kind of peace. Ironically, although peace is the end towards which wars are fought, war seems to be the more enduring, more characteristic of the two states in the human experience. War is the natural (albeit lamentable) state in which fallen Man finds himself. The flesh and the spirit of Man – although both are good – are in perpetual opposition. That perfection which comes from the 'Highest Good'[151] is

unattainable in this life, no matter how much one might desire it. One can, however, with divine assistance, determine not to be 'dragged to the perpetration of sin'[152] as the result of indulgence in 'the desires of the flesh'.[153] Augustine teaches that with God's help, human beings at least can hope for, if not achieve while in this present world, a situation in which they do not succumb to sin against their will.[154] However, as long as Man's fallen nature remains, even this divine help will not enable humans entirely to overcome the opposition between spirit and body. Similarly, war among men and nations cannot be avoided because it is characteristic of the present existence. The contention that typifies war is merely the social counterpart to the spirit–body tension that typifies every individual person. However, humans can, through the general application of divine precepts contained in Scripture and through the pursuit of virtue as dictated by reason, manage that tension both on the individual and societal levels in such a way as to obtain a transitory peace. Of course, this peace is in no sense to be equated with that ultimate peace which is part and parcel of the enjoyment of the Ultimate Good. Even this transitory peace is almost always bound to lapse into contention – the individual spirit contending with the body, and body politic contending with other such collectivities.

Augustine the pacifist?

Because Augustine regards war as ultimately inescapable in the present existence, one does not find in Augustine the kind of pining that the generality of modern pacifists express, namely, that all that people have to do is to stop fighting and start loving. War and peace are two sides of the same Augustinian coin. Owing to the injustice that is inherent in the mortal state, the former is presently unavoidable and the latter, in its perfect manifestation, is presently unattainable.

* * *

Substantial risks attend any effort to specify which ideas served as the proximate causes for this or that historical or philosophical development. Almost always it is the case that the significant developments in the history of philosophy were precipitated by many factors, *some* of which were external to the person of the author in question. Indeed, what remains of the record of the influence of Cicero and Ambrose upon the development of Augustine's thinking on just war affords what is at best an imperfect account. By the same token, Augustine did not operate in a vacuum, and these particular influences are so prominent that they cannot be ignored, even if there are other influences upon his thinking which deserve attention. Likewise, the influence of the milieu in which Augustine lived must be taken fully into account. For,

although he was the bishop of a relatively minor diocese far distant from Rome, his autobiography and his voluminous writings reveal him to be a man who was extraordinarily alert to events in the world around him. It is virtually impossible, therefore, to imagine Augustine as having been oblivious to the real-world concerns which precipitated his responses to questions concerning just war.

In sum, Augustine acknowledges Cicero for his role as one of the stellar figures of Roman history who distinguished himself by calling his countrymen 'back to first principles'.[155] Through the instrumentality of Ambrose, Augustine was converted 'to what was the orthodox Christian view of moral problems'.[156] Ambrose the Roman (just like Augustine the Roman) is a direct heir to Cicero's theory of just war. Ambrose the Christian is an innovator in that he recognizes the need for a new solution to the problem of Christian military service specifically and to the problem of providing an adequate Christian appraisal of the moral status of war in general. Thus, the partial synthesis achieved by Ambrose can be expressed as 'a limited acceptance of Christian participation in the use of force together with established secular Roman traditions on the legitimization of war'.[157] Augustine the Christian philosopher achieves a full synthesis of the Roman and Christian values associated with war in a way that recognizes war as a legitimate instrument of national policy which, although inferior to the perfect ideals of Christianity, is one which Christians cannot altogether avoid and with which they must in some sense make their peace.

Notes

1 Augustine, *City of God* XXII.6, 1030.
2 See Augustine, *Confessions* XIII.7, trans. R. S. Pine-Coffin (New York: Penguin Books, 1981): 169.
3 Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Re Publica* III.xxiii, in *De Re Publica and De Legibus*, trans. C. W. Keyes (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928): 211–13. See also Augustine's commentary on this point in *City of God* XXII.6, 1031–2.
4 Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Officiis* I.xi, trans. Walter Miller (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1913): 37.
5 Cicero, *De Re Publica* III.xxiii, 213.
6 Augustine, *City of God* XXII.6, 1031.
7 Cicero, *De Re Publica* III.xxiii, 213.
8 Ibid.
9 Cicero, *De Officiis* VII.xxiii, 25.
10 Cicero, *De Re Publica* III.xxiii, 213.
11 Cicero, *De Officiis* I.xii 38, 41.
12 Ibid., I.xxxviii, 41.
13 Ibid., I.xxxvi, 37.
14 Cicero, *De Officiis* I.xi, 39.

15 See Arthur Nussbaum, *A Concise History of the Law of Nations* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1954): 10–16.
16 Cicero, *De Officiis* I.xi, 39.
17 Ibid., I.xi 35, 37.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid., I.xi 33, 35, 36.
20 Ibid., I.xi 35, 37.
21 Ibid., I.xi 36, 39.
22 Ibid., I.xiii 40, 43–5.
23 Christopher 1994, 25
24 James E. Dougherty, *The Bishops and Nuclear Weapons* (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Book, 1984): 39.
25 2 Corinthians 3.6.
26 Augustine, *Confessions* VI.4, 115, 116.
27 Louis J. Swift, 'St. Ambrose on Violence and War', *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 101 (1970): 541–2.
28 Frederick H. Russell, '"Only Something Good Can Be Evil": The Genesis of Augustine's Secular Ambivalence', *Theological Studies* 51 (1990): 715.
29 Ibid.
30 Bainton 1960, 90.
31 See John Eppstein, *The Catholic Tradition and the Law of Nations* (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne Ltd., 1935): 61–2.
32 Ambrose, *Duties of the Clergy* 1.41.211, *NPNF* X, 34.
33 Ibid., 3.3.23, *NPNF* X, 71.
34 Ibid., 1.28.135, *NPNF* X, 23.
35 Ibid., 1.36.179, *NPNF* X, 30.
36 Cicero, *De Officiis* I.xix, 65.
37 Ambrose, *Duties of the Clergy* 1.35.176, *NPNF* X, 30.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid., 1.35.177 *NPNF* X, 30.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid., 1.27.129 *NPNF* X, 22.
43 Consider, for example, Acts 17.24–6: 'God . . . had made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth.'
44 Ambrose, *Letter* 40.14, *NPNF* X, 442.
45 Ibid.
46 Swift 1983, 106.
47 Ambrose, *Duties of the Clergy* 3.4.27, *NPNF* X, 71.
48 Matthew 26.52.
49 Swift 1970, 537.
50 For a full discussion of the notion of peace in Ambrose, see Swift 1983, 100–10. See also Geraldo Zampaglione, *The Idea of Peace in Antiquity*, trans. Richard Dunn (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1973): 294–5.
51 Ambrose, *Duties of the Clergy* 1.29.139, *NPNF* X, 24. See also 3.14.86, *NPNF* X, 81.
52 Ibid., 3.14.87, *NPNF* X, 81.
53 Ibid., 1.35.175, *NPNF* X, 30.
54 Ambrose, *Letter* 20.22, *NPNF* X, 426.

55 Ambrose, *Duties of the Clergy* 1.29.139, *NPNF* X, 23, 24.
56 Michael Grant, *The Army of the Caesars* (New York: Charles Schribner's Sons, 1974): 284.
57 Eileen Egan, 'The Beatitudes, the Works of Mercy, and Pacifism', in *War and Peace? The Search for New Answers*, ed. Thomas A. Shannon (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1982): 181.
58 Ibid.
59 Grant 1974, 285.
60 As Swift notes incisively, but with full justification, 'Eusebius' unsophisticated endorsement of imperial power and authority was as simplistic an answer to the problem [of just war] as Tertullian's pacifism was' (Swift 1983, 97).
61 J. H. Burns, ed., *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought: c. 350–c. 1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988): 97.
62 Ambrose, *Letter* 40.11, *NPNF* X, 442.
63 Ambrose, *Of the Christian Faith* II.XVI, *NPNF* X, 241. See also Ezekiel 38 and 39.
64 Actually, the definition is Scipio's, but Cicero both records it and advocates it. See Augustine, *City of God* XIX.21, 881.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid., 881–4.
67 Ibid., 882.
68 Ibid., IV.4, 139.
69 Cicero, *De Re Publica* III.xiv, 203. Augustine is the source for this Ciceronian anecdote, and it is included in the reconstruction of *De Re Publica* on the strength of Augustine's testimony.
70 Augustine, *City of God* IV.4, 139.
71 Augustine, *Of the Morals of the Catholic Church* XV.25, *NPNF* IV, 48.
72 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.21, 882.
73 Robert Warrand Carlyle and Alexander James Carlyle, *A History of Mediaeval Political Theory in the West* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1953): 1:166.
74 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.24, 890.
75 Ibid.
76 Augustine, *Confessions* II.4, 47.
77 Ibid.
78 Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* LII.2, *NPNF* VIII, 197.
79 Augustine, *City of God* XV.1, 595.
80 Ibid., XVIII.32, 803; Hebrews 11.13–16.
81 Herbert A. Deane, *The Political and Social Ideas of St. Augustine* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963): 30.
82 Augustine, *On the Catechizing of the Uninstructed* 19.31, *NPNF* III, 303.
83 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.21, 881–3.
84 Ibid., IV.4, 139.
85 Matthew 13.47, 48.
86 Augustine, *City of God* XVIII.49, 831.
87 Augustine, *On Baptism* IV.XXVII.38, *NPNF* IV, 477.
88 Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* LII.2, *NPNF* VIII, 197.
89 Augustine, *City of God* I.35, 46.
90 Augustine, *On the Catechizing of the Uninstructed* XIX.31, *NPNF* III, 303.
91 Ibid.
92 Augustine, *City of God* XV.1, 595.

93 Ibid.
94 Ibid., XIV.28, 593.
95 Gilson 1960, 174.
96 Ibid., 177–8.
97 Bainton 1960, 94–5.
98 Anthony Quinton, 'Political Philosophy', in *The Oxford History of Western Philosophy*, ed. Anthony Kenny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994): 292.
99 Augustine, *City of God* V.1, 179–81.
100 Burns 1988, 102.
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102 Oliver O'Donovan, 'Augustine's City of God XIX and Western Political Thought', *Dionysius* 11 (December, 1987): 98, *italics added.*
103 Deane 1963, 134.
104 Peter J. Burnell, 'The Problem of Service to Unjust Regimes in Augustine's *City of God*', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 54 (April, 1993): 180.
105 Augustine, *Letter* 188.2.10, *NPNF* I, 484.
106 Augustine, *City of God* IV.15, 154.
107 Ibid.
108 John Boler, 'Augustine: An Ideologue on Politics', *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 56 (1982): 54.
109 See Rex Martin, 'The Two Cities in Augustine's Political Philosophy', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 33 (April–June 1972): 196 note 2.
110 Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* LXII. 4, *NPNF* VIII. 252.
111 Ibid.
112 Augustine, *City of God* II:19, 70.
113 Ibid.
114 Augustine, *Sermon* LV.9, *NPNF* VI, 433.
115 Augustine, *City of God* XV.4, 599.
116 Ibid.
117 Ibid.
118 Ibid.
119 Augustine, *Letter* 199.10.35, quoted in Swift 1983, 119.
120 Augustine, *City of God* XVII.13, 743, 744.
121 Augustine, *Concerning the Nature of Good, Against the Manichæans* XXVI, *NPNF* IV, 356–7.
122 Augustine, *City of God* VII.30, 291, 292, *italics added.*
123 Ibid.
124 Ibid., V.22, 216, 217.
125 Ibid., I.1, 6.
126 Ibid.
127 Ibid.
128 Ibid., XXI.9, 983–5.
129 Deane 1963, 156.
130 See, for example, Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* XIX.11, *NPNF* VIII, 55.
131 Augustine, *Letter* 173.2, *NPNF* I, 544.
132 Ibid.
133 Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* I.20.64, *NPNF* VI, 27.
134 Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* XLVI.12, *NPNF* VIII, 159.

135 Romans 13.1.
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137 Gilson 1960, 171.
138 R. A. Markus, 'St. Augustine's Views on the Just War', *The Church and War: Papers Read at the Twenty-First Summer and the Twenty-Second Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society,* W. J. Sheils, ed. (London: Basil Blackwell, 1983): 11.
139 See Hebrews 11.13.
140 Augustine, *City of God* XIV.1, 547. Here Augustine echoes the words of Paul. See Ephesians 4.3.
141 Ibid.
142 Ibid.
143 Ibid.
144 The author is indebted to O'Donovan for this insight. See O'Donovan 1987, 99.
145 Augustine, *City of God* XVII.13, 743–4.
146 Ibid., XVIII.52, 837.
147 Deane 1963, 133.
148 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.17, 877.
149 Deane 1963, 133.
150 Ibid.
151 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.17, 877.
152 Ibid.
153 Ibid.
154 Ibid., XIX.4, 854.
155 Michael Grant, *Roman Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954): 259.
156 Ibid.
157 James Turner Johnson, *The Quest for Peace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987): 56.

3

Augustine's Just-War Theory

Principal sources

Considering the interrelationships among the 'Augustinian complex' of doctrines, it is not surprising that many Augustinian passages which have no ostensible relationship at all to his just-war theory actually do much to illuminate our understanding of it. However, it is also true that there exists within the Augustinian corpus a recognized group of writings which serve as the principal sources for his just-war theory. They include the following:

On Free Choice of the Will [*De libero arbitrio*] This important work contains a discussion of the moral status of killing and the role of intent in the commission of acts that result in the termination of human life. Although it does not discuss the justice of war *per se,* it provides essential insights concerning key points of what will emerge as Augustine's just-war theory.

In Answer to the Letters of Petilian, the Donatist, Bishop of Cirta [*Contra Litteras Petiliani Donastistæ Cirtensis, Episcopi*] The letters referred to here were written in connection with the Donatist controversy.[1] The second of Augustine's three letters contains much useful information concerning obedience to rulers.

Reply to Faustus the Manichæan [*Contra Faustum Manichæum*] Of present interest is Faustus' assessment, in most contemptible terms, of the Old Testament patriarchs and prophets (especially Moses) as pertaining to acts of violence committed by them. Augustine defends violent acts of the Old Testament patriarchs and prophets, especially Moses, from Faustus' attack. In the process, he supplies justification for various applications of violence, including war. In this regard, Book 22 is of particular interest.

To Marcellinus [Letter 138] Augustine addresses certain questions which Marcellinus had submitted to Augustine, and which centre on two overarching

themes: (1) what to say to those who charge Christianity with inconsistency on the ground that God is represented as having ordered one thing in the Old Testament and another in the New, and (2) what to say to those who assert that a good Christian must be a bad citizen.[2]

The City of God [*De civitate Dei*] It is here that Augustine's social-political philosophy is found in its most highly-developed state and with its most systematic presentation. It is, in Quinton's words, 'the first major attempt to deal with political topics from a Christian point of view'.[3] The nature of the work repeatedly calls for the discussion of topics related to war; and, as such, the *City of God* is the place from among Augustine's voluminous works where the topic of just war receives its clearest and most direct treatment.

To Boniface [Letter 189] Boniface considers that he might better serve God by forsaking his military career for a religious (i.e. monastic) life. However, Augustine dissuades him, noting that, while the religious life embodies a higher calling than does the military life, both are important – especially in the light of the Vandal invasion of North Africa, which Count Boniface is in the position to help stay. Augustine takes the occasion of this hastily written letter to describe to Boniface how he can discharge his duty before God in the calling of a soldier.

Questions on the Heptateuch [*Quaestionum in Heptateuchum*] This work contains important insights by Augustine on *jus in bello* matters. In the connection that concerns us here, Augustine gives special attention to the conquest of Canaan under Joshua.

To Darius [Letter 222] In this brief letter, Augustine makes some important comments about the nature of the profession of arms and about the role it plays, both in the temporal order and in the divine economy.

Jus ad bellum in Augustine

Just cause

'A great deal depends', says Augustine, 'on the causes for which men undertake wars.'[4] Augustine, like his predecessors in the just-war tradition, holds a 'just cause' to be the premier requirement for a just war. Of course, a basic assumption of just-war theory is that all *jus ad bellum* conditions recognized by the tradition – and not merely that of a just cause – must be fully satisfied prior to the initiation of hostilities and remain so throughout the period of hostile engagement. Nevertheless, Augustine, like his predecessors, regards, in a

particular way, the condition of 'just cause' to be the *sine qua non* for the just war. This is evidenced by the fact that he uses his famous definition for the just war as an occasion to catalogue some of the principal just causes for going to war:

> As a rule just wars are defined as those which avenge injuries, if some nation or state against whom one is waging war has neglected to punish a wrong committed by its citizens, or to return something that was wrongfully taken.[5]

We find in Augustine's words what Russell describes as 'the first new definition of the just war since Cicero'.[6] However, this definition (which, as we shall see, does not name all of Augustine's justifications for war) also represents, if not an advance beyond, then certainly an expansion upon, Cicero's definition. In Cicero's view, the justification for war is 'limited in its aims to securing redress of grievances and compensation for losses occasioned by crimes of the offending party to the persons, property (*res*) or rights (*iura*) of the aggrieved party'.[7] The aim contemplated by Cicero's definition is 'a simple return to the *status quo ante bellum*'.[8] Augustine's definition, like Cicero's, justifies an aggrieved nation in seeking redress and compensation via war when no other means will suffice. However, it also serves, not only as a means for restoring the *status quo ante bellum*, but also as an international sort of 'penal sanction analogous to the awarding of punitive damages in private law'.[9] Thus, Augustine's definition allows for compensation beyond that which would result merely from a return to the *status quo ante bellum*. As Augustine is aware, not all injuries are such as will admit of restitution. In that case, the aggrieved party must be willing to content itself with a result that falls short of the exacting 'a compensation in revenge'.[10] For, to take delight in the suffering of those upon whom even just vengeance is visited is itself an injustice, and thus to do so runs counter to the aims for which just wars are fought.

Augustine's definition contemplates material compensation for property unjustly taken or destroyed; but it also contemplates a moral compensation – a recognition and admission on the part of the offending state that its actions were morally reprehensible. Thus, for Augustine, 'injuries' refer not only to damages or losses sustained through violation either of national laws or of the customarily observed norms for relationships among nations, but also for violations of the moral order. Accordingly, violations of the laws of God, even those not specifically codified among the laws of Man, could be deemed worthy of punishment by violent action. In the Augustinian construal, because all 'sins' can be considered 'injuries' against God (even if in a particular instance a sin is not of the kind that normally would be considered as being against one's fellow human being – idolatry, for example), those undertaking war under the terms of Augustine's definition do not necessarily have to be

justified by reason of their having been aggrieved themselves. It is this line of thought which underlies one of Augustine's most famous statements on warfare:

> What is the evil in war? Is it the death of some who will soon die in any case, that others may live in peaceful subjection? This is mere cowardly dislike, not any religious feeling. The real evils in war are love of violence, revengeful cruelty, fierce and implacable enmity, wild resistance, and the lust of power, and such like; and it is generally to punish these things, when force is required to inflict the punishment, that, in obedience to God or some lawful authority, *good men undertake wars, when they find themselves in such a position as regards the conduct of human affairs, that right conduct requires them to act, or to make others act in this way.*[11]

Hence, while, in Augustine's view, such detestable emotions as the 'love of violence', 'fierce and implacable enmity', 'the lust for power', 'revengeful cruelty' or 'wild resistance' can never in and of themselves count as appropriate justifications for the resort to war, the righteous intention to punish these evils can. It is not the case, however, that Augustine urges that a nation be anxious to 'pick a fight', as it were. Injustices abound in an imperfect world, and a comparative few are of such magnitude that war should be resorted to in order to resolve them.

Augustine draws no distinction between offensive and defensive wars in the militarily relevant sense of those terms. Ideologically, it would appear that Augustine views all wars as defensive in nature. Clearly, Augustine, along with every other theorist in the just-war tradition, would easily grant that defensive wars as normally understood (i.e. wars undertaken in defence of the *patria* from invasion) are morally permissible. Augustine completely exonerates the Romans for fighting for the defence of the *patria* (even though he is otherwise quite critical of Rome's militaristic, expansionist ventures), because by so doing they were fighting 'to defend their life and liberty'.[12]

Augustine appears to justify wars undertaken as punitive actions, because he regards them as defensive actions. (This is so in spite of the fact that, militarily speaking, such a war would be considered offensive.) Since these wars constitute punishments for violations of the moral order, they are, from Augustine's perspective, necessary to preserve moral values.

In addition to the causes already considered, Augustine advances another cause which is, by definition, always just, namely, the case in which God directs a war to be fought. Augustine is very clear on this point:

> When war is undertaken in obedience to God, who would rebuke, or humble, or crush the pride of man, it must be allowed to be a righteous

> war; for even the wars which arise from human passion cannot harm the eternal well-being of God, nor even hurt His saints; for in the trial of their patience, and the chastening of their spirit, and in bearing fatherly correction, they are rather benefited than injured.[13]

Augustine sees in war a manifestation of the will of God who either directly authorizes the war through one of his divinely appointed oracles (as he did through Moses, Joshua, etc.) or indirectly through the medium of a political sovereign whom he permits to reign. The Old Testament is replete with examples of instances in which God directs Israel to go to war against other nations. And, of course, Augustine considers all of these wars to be just by reason of divine decree. For example, Augustine appeals to the wars fought by Moses as evidence of his claim that to wage a divinely directed war is a supremely praiseworthy act of obedience. Those wars, says Augustine,

> will not excite surprise or abhorrence, for in wars carried on by divine command, he showed not ferocity but obedience; and God, in giving the command, acted not in cruelty, but in righteous retribution, giving to all what they deserved, and warning those who needed warning.[14]

In the Old Testament, wars fought at divine command were not as exceptional as the modern reader might assume. Indeed, Zampaglione interprets Augustine as acknowledging the divine ordering of events (if not their actual divine direction) to be the primal cause of conflicts which had broken out before the time of Christ.[15]

The fact that Augustine considers at least some wars to be ordered by direct, divine decree is significant not only for an understanding of Augustine's just-war theory itself, but also for an appreciation of the theory's influence on the pacifist tradition, which constitutes the Western world's most significant rival to the just-war tradition as a moral theory of war. In this connection, Russell astutely observes, 'Nowhere is Augustine's defeat of early Christian pacifism clearer than in his treatment of wars endowed with a divine purpose.'[16] Augustine's allowing certain wars to be justified by divine decree potentially changes the whole character of the *jus ad bellum* framework. A divine decree can be seen as having the effect, for Augustine, of rendering superfluous all of the other *jus ad bellum* criteria; a divine decree could serve either fully to justify or else to mandate participation in war. Speaking of the spoiling of the Egyptians, which Augustine appears to regard as tantamount to war, he argues:

> In this Moses not only did not sin, but it would have been sin not to do it. It was by the command of God, who from His knowledge both of the

> actions and of the hearts of men, can decide on what every one should suffer, and through whose agency. The people at that time were still carnal, and engrossed with earthly affections; while the Egyptians were in open rebellion against God, for they used the gold, God's creature, in the service of idols, to the dishonor of the Creator, and they had grievously oppressed strangers by making them work without pay. Thus the Egyptians deserved the punishment, and the Israelites were suitably employed in inflicting it. Perhaps, indeed, it was not so much a command as a permission to the Hebrews to act in the matter according to their own inclinations; and God, in sending the message by Moses, only wished that they should thus be informed of His permission.[17]

If anything, one might be surprised that Augustine would find it necessary to justify why it was that 'the Egyptians deserved the punishment'.[18] He does, however, concede that he may be mistaken and that even if God merely 'informed' Moses of His permission, He still expected Moses to go to war:

> There may also have been mysterious reasons for what God said to the people on this matter. At any rate, God's commands are to be submissively received, not to be argued against. . . . Whether, then, the reason was what I have said, or whether in the secret appointment of God, there was some unknown reason for His telling the people by Moses to borrow things from the Egyptians, and to take them away with them, this remains certain, that this was said for some good reason, and that Moses could not lawfully have done otherwise than God told him, leaving to God the reason of the command, while the servant's duty is to obey.[19]

Conversely, it would seem clear that if God specifically directed a nation *not* to fight in a particular instance, then war in that case would thereby be automatically excluded from even the possibility of being considered a just war. In any event, Augustine would not expect a nation to weigh scrupulously the divine command as merely another factor to be considered in concert with the other *jus ad bellum* principles before the justice of the war could be satisfactorily established. A divine command to fight is sufficient in itself to establish not only the justice of the cause, but also to confer moral permission (if not impose moral obligation) to fight.

In the case of the divinely authorized or divinely decreed wars recorded in the Old Testament, the offending nation against whom Israel is sent to war is the provocateur; in some specific instances, the offending nation is guilty of such grievous sins that its destruction is divinely decreed. One of the cases to which Augustine specifically refers involves a nation's failure to observe a generally recognized convention of international relations, namely, the failure

of the Amorites to grant to Israel the right of innocent passage during the course of Israel's national exodus from Egypt to the land of Canaan:

> One ought to note how just wars were waged. Harmless passage, a right which ought to have been granted according to the most reasonable standards governing human society, was denied. But, to fulfill his promises, God assisted the Israelites on this occasion since the land of the Amorites was to be given to them.[20]

As Suarez notes,[21] this passage is particularly interesting in that it suggests that divine and human reasons can at times combine to constitute just cause for going to war. On the one hand, God directed the conquest of the Amorites, although ultimately for reasons best known to Him, nevertheless at least in part because of the fact that He had promised the land in which the Amorites dwelt as an inheritance for Abraham and his descendants.[22] On the other hand, it may be that the Israelites were justified, by Augustine's account, in engaging the Amorites in battle because of the Amorites' violation of the generally accepted right of innocent passage. Most likely, however, both reasons are part and parcel of the justification for war.

Upon cursory examination, Augustine's explanation of what constitutes a just cause might lead one to conclude that Augustine is prepared to allow almost any reason as a just cause for going to war. However, it is equally important to consider the circumstances under which Augustine positively disallows the possibility of a cause's being just. For example, Augustine devotes considerable energy to the task of enumerating cases in which he considers the expansionist wars of the Roman Empire to have been anything but just, and he questions whether Rome could have become the expansive Empire that it was if not for its engagement in continual warfare, and whether the greatness which it obtained really justified its sacrifice of peace.[23] Later, Augustine quotes Justinus extensively[24] concerning the expansion of the Assyrian Empire under Ninus – an expansion which, according to Augustine, exceeded even that achieved by Rome: How could an attack 'without provocation and solely from the thirst for dominion'[25] on neighbouring (and, in some cases, geographically remote) peoples be classified as anything other than banditry on a grand scale?[26] The phrase 'without provocation and solely from the thirst for dominion' is of particular interest; for while, in Augustine's scheme, 'the thirst for dominion' is never an acceptable justification for war, to attack without provocation sometimes is, namely, in the case of wars undertaken at divine command. In these wars, Augustine would hold that the provocation presumably has been made against God.

On a separate but related point, Augustine acknowledges the case in which a war which expands national territory sometimes must be fought in order to

preserve the nation's security. Indeed, he is willing to justify Rome in undertaking wars resulting from 'unprovoked attacks by their enemies', in order to 'defend their life and liberty'.[27]

In sum, Augustine justifies the state in going to war when doing so constitutes the best available remedy for righting injustices. Short of receiving a divine command (which overrides all other considerations), Augustine never approves of wars fought without the commission of some injustice against the state; and even in those biblical cases in which God commanded a war to be fought, Augustine is able to point to injustices perpetrated by those who become the objects of God's wrath. Augustine considers those injustices to constitute clear evidence of the justice of the divine command, even though he deems no justification to be required. Wars fought for the aggrandizement of the state are never permissible.

Comparative justice

Augustine does not take an explicit stand on the issue of *how* just a cause must be before it can be viewed as overriding the traditional presumption against the moral permissibility of war. He does, however, make an intriguing remark that comfortably lends itself to consideration under the heading of comparative justice: 'Now when the victory goes to those who were fighting for the *juster* cause, can anyone doubt that the victory is a matter for rejoicing and the resulting peace is something to be desired?'[28]

The principle of comparative justice does not receive much attention from Augustine, nor does it receive much attention from later medieval theorists. Russell speculates why this might be the case with respect to medieval theorists, but his speculations might be applied with profit to Augustine as well:

> While the notion of just causes on both sides may be defensible morally, it is juridically inoperable, for both belligerents can harm their enemy out of proportion to their share of justice, and a legal determination of where justice lay would have to be found for one or the other.[29]

In contrast, Bainton claims that 'Augustine assumed that a just war can be just on one side only'.[30] Although Bainton himself offers no textual support for his claim, it is, nevertheless, true that Augustine states in the *City of God* XIX that 'it is the injustice of the opposing side that lays on the wise man the duty of waging wars'.[31] In the light of this statement by Augustine, Bainton's claim becomes one which deserves due consideration. Says Bainton:

> To him [Augustine] it seemed obvious that the cause of Rome was just, that of the barbarians unjust. They were invaders. Not only would they

> commit injuries to property, life, and honor, but they would disrupt the order maintained by the empire.[32]

Augustine held, in concert with many of the early Church Fathers, that *pax Romana* was a divinely instituted state of affairs emplaced specifically for the purpose of ensuring the promulgation of the Christian faith. What is more, given the choice between order and chaos, Augustine the Neo-Platonist certainly would opt for the *status quo* – the orderliness of Roman government – instead of what was, perspectivally at least, the comparative chaos that would surely follow conquest by the barbarians. Surely God is on the side of order; God is also on the side of Christianity. Therefore (so the argument goes), how can God be anywhere *other* than on the side of Rome?

Nevertheless, it is to be expected that opposing parties in a conflict would conceive (or feign to conceive) of their respective causes as just. Likewise, it is conceivable that both could seek to wage war as justly as possible. While this may not have been the case with the barbarian invasions of the Roman Empire, Bainton nevertheless considers the possibility that Augustine would have held that both sides can be partially just, had he fully understood the actual political state of affairs in the Latin West. (As aware as Augustine may have sought to be of world affairs, Bainton notes that we today almost certainly have a better picture of the overall political situation that existed in the twilight years of the Roman Empire than that which Augustine could have obtained.)[33] For many years preceding Alaric's sack of Rome in AD 410, barbarians had been immigrating (on a controlled basis) into the Roman Empire as the result of pressure from central Asian hordes. Many of these barbarians joined the Roman Army. The presence of the barbarians should have been anything but a surprise to the Romans. In fact, at the time Alaric the Goth entered Rome, the city was being defended by Stilicho, another Goth! As the result of the subsequent rise of an old Roman party intent upon purging the Goths from the Empire, the Gothic general Gainas was treacherously murdered along with 30,000 of his soldiers. Similarly, when the Visigoths, pressed by the Huns, sought and obtained permission from the Roman Emperor Valens to settle one million of their number – most of whom were Christians – within the Empire, Valens met them at the Danube; and, instead of granting them the expected safe haven, he had them 'corralled by the forces of Rome and kept alive by a supply of dead dogs. The price for each dog was a child to be sold into slavery'.[34] Bainton concludes by observing that, whatever injustices the barbarians may have been responsible for, had the Romans observed good faith with the barbarians, 'the barbarian invasions might have continued to be a controlled immigration'.[35] However, whether or not Bainton's speculation is correct, the key issue is that a reasonable, sympathetic argument can be given on behalf of the barbarians, who were faced with

an enormous array of exigencies, just as well as one might sympathetically argue the cause of the Romans, who felt they were being overrun by immigrants. Therefore, viewing the political circumstances of the day to be a case of one side's being completely just and of the other side's being completely unjust seems overly simplistic. A much more realistic scenario is that in which one side might be held to be *relatively* just and the other side to be *relatively* unjust.

The question arises, therefore, as to whether Augustine holds that only one side in a conflict can be just or whether there could be a measure of justice on both sides, the side with the overridingly just cause being entitled to wage a just war. The latter interpretation holds appeal for two reasons. The first is that such textual evidence as can be brought to bear on the matter (namely, Augustine's reference to the side which fights for 'the *juster* cause')[36] seems to support it. Moreover, given this interpretation, Augustine's comment concerning 'the injustice of the opposing side'[37] can reasonably be understood to refer to the *relative* injustice of the opposing side. The second and more important reason is that it is difficult to imagine Augustine arguing for anything that sounds like absolute justice in favour of *any* mortal, Roman or barbarian. While his personal sympathies might understandably lie with Rome, his philosophy is not going to allow him to hold that the Roman Empire of his day, or of any preceding day, was ever absolutely just.

However, the fact that Rome was without absolute justice does not mean that it was altogether bereft of justice. Thus, Augustine seems to be compelled to adopt a position in favour of comparative justice at the risk of rendering his entire treatment of the question of just war nonsensical: if one must have absolute justice on his side before he can be justified in fighting a just war, and no-one is possessed of absolute justice, then no-one could ever be justified in fighting a just war.

It might be argued that the issue is not whether Rome was ever absolutely (or even relatively) just per se, but whether its *causes* were just (that is to say, at least more just than the causes of Rome's opponents). However, inasmuch as the wars of Rome were ostensibly defensive actions (and Augustine repeatedly asserts that they were), the wars were, by Augustine's own definition, actions founded on a just cause: the defence of the *patria*. Augustine makes abundantly plain that no earthly nation is composed solely of just (or unjust) citizens. Hence, Ramsey notes that 'If Augustine believed that there is always only one side that can be regarded as fighting justly in the wars in which a Christian will find himself responsibly engaged', then, by reason of his own philosophical commitments, 'he should not have believed this.'[38] A notable Augustinian exception to this would, of course, be the divinely directed and, hence, fully justified wars of annihilation recorded in the Old Testament. In these cases, in which the people of the nations marked by God for destruction

by Israel were regarded as 'fully ripe in iniquity',[39] it is reasonable to suppose that Augustine held either that (1) the Israelites were altogether justified by reason of their divine mandate to go to war, or else that (2) the righteousness of the Israelites so far exceeded that of their enemies that, for all practical purposes, the former were reasonably regarded as comparatively justified in going to war.

Another reason to believe that Augustine supports the notion of relative justice rather than absolute justice on one or the other side comes from his *jus in bello* principles. The fact that Augustine advocates mercy and forbearance on the part of combatants[40] may be viewed as a token that he does not envisage any case (short of those arising from a divine command to the contrary) in which an enemy is to be regarded as totally unjust.[41]

Thus, although Augustine acknowledges the possibility of justice residing in some measure on both sides of a conflict, the side (1) whose balance of justice is greater, and (2) whose balance of justice is at the same time sufficient to override the presumption against war, is the side which meets the *jus ad bellum* demand of comparative justice. It should be noted that advocacy of this interpretation of Augustine represents the minority view among just-war historians. For example, Holmes states, in concert with the majority view, that Ramsey 'breaks with tradition' when he 'reads Augustine as allowing that there may be justice on both sides in war'.[42] Nevertheless, the same author calls Ramsey's views on comparative justice 'strongly Augustinian',[43] and notes that the thing which makes it so is that 'the distinction between true and temporal justice was central for Augustine'.[44]

Right intention

In contrast to some of the interpretive issues that surround Augustine's position on comparative justice, nothing could be plainer than the role of intention in his just-war theory. Virtually every passage from Augustine that deals with war profitably could be included in a discussion of right intention. Indeed, Augustine held deeply the belief that in order for an act to be justifiable it must proceed from a rightly intended will. Accordingly, a rightly intended war is one which is 'waged by the good in order that, by bringing under the yoke the unbridled lusts of men, those vices might be abolished which ought, under a just government, to be either extirpated or suppressed'.[45]

Augustine's position on right intention as a *jus ad bellum* principle is perhaps clearest in his consideration of those cases in which he regards wars to have been waged *without* the right intention. Augustine begins one such discussion with the question, '*Can good men consistently desire to extend their dominion?*'[46] He then answers that to engage in war with the aim of territorial expansion is not the intention with which a good man goes to war. Such an aim is not at all just;

and therefore, it cannot possibly be regarded as flowing from a right intention. While the iniquities of Rome's neighbours may have presented just cause for Rome's military response, the justice of the cause did not, in and of itself, guarantee, according to Augustine, that Rome's military response was based on the right kind of intention. Evil men among the Romans rejoiced in the wickedness of enemy nations precisely because that wickedness afforded Rome a reason – a 'just cause' – to go to war. However, as Augustine pointedly notes, a good man, one acting out of right intention, could not possibly welcome the evil acts of Rome's neighbours because of the excuse they afforded for Rome to go to war. Rather, the righteous man would greet the news of such evil with remorse and sorrow, realizing that justice might require Rome to do that which it could not righteously rejoice in doing, namely, going to war.[47] It is as if the Romans had deified 'Foreign Injustice' along with 'Victory' and worshipped them both as part of Rome's already ridiculously extensive pantheon.[48]

Although the rightly intended person might deem the conquest of unruly – even unjust – neighbours as a case of extremely good fortune, such a person would at the same time recognize that the good fortune stemmed from the fact that a just war thus fought would serve to ensure that the unjust would not rule over the just. He or she would *never* view even a just war as anything to be desired in and of itself, but only as a 'stern necessity', which is better than the less just alternative.

In keeping with the spirit of Augustinism, the best intention is for all people to act, both as citizens of a nation, and as citizens of a community of nations, with such circumspection that provocation of the kind that could lead to a war of either the just or the unjust variety is never given. The universal practice of right intention would lead to the elimination of all war. Short of that ideal, it behoves all to be as rightly intended as humanly and circumstantially possible. Right intention utterly prevents one from taking delight in any kind of violence. Delight of this kind, evidenced by the 'lust for domination', has no other effect than to 'vex and exhaust the whole human race'.[49] Augustine criticizes Rome for allowing itself to be overcome by this vice in the case of its conquest of Alba when, 'to the popular acclaim of her crime she gave the name of "glory" since "the sinner," as the Bible says, [50] "is praised in the desires of his soul, and the man whose deeds are wicked is congratulated."'[51] Augustine argues by analogy that, although gladiators are rewarded with applause for the brutal fashion in which they fight, a man would be better off to receive punishment for cowardice than to receive glory, as he might suppose, for being willing to commit gladiator-like acts of brutality.[52] In Augustine's view, the nation that goes to war with the wrong intention is no better than the gladiators, who consistently reap Augustine's unremitting scorn.

Violence, even when justly undertaken, is not supposed to be a source of enjoyment or amusement. While Augustine concedes that 'the wise man . . .

will wage just wars',[53] he also points out that if the just man but reflects upon his own humanity, he surely will 'lament the fact that he is faced with the necessity of waging just wars; for if they were not just, he would not have to engage in them, and consequently there would be no wars for a wise man'.[54]

The responsibility to administer justice is a grave and onerous burden. As an illustration of the gravity of this duty, Augustine examines the case of the judge who is called upon to determine the guilt or innocence of one who has been accused of a crime.[55] The judge cannot see into the conscience of the accused, so he cannot know whether the offence was committed with criminal intent. The judge, therefore, turns to the generally accepted method for ascertaining guilt or innocence in late antiquity, namely torture. However, this merely creates yet another problem, because, whether or not the accused admits to guilt, the judge still cannot know whether the accused actually is guilty. The accused may admit guilt in order to avoid additional torture with the result that he is executed for a crime that he may not have committed. Conversely, he may resist admitting guilt and die as the result of the torture, which would have otherwise continued until a confession of guilt issued – again for a crime which the accused may or may not have committed. The judge can be exonerated from responsibility for the man's death in the eyes of his fellows by virtue of his judicial capacity. However, ultimate exoneration – in the sight of God – can only come if the judge acts with the right intention, with the righteous desire to safeguard justice. Hence, he is left to cry out, in the words of Augustine borrowed from the Psalms,[56] '"Deliver me from my necessities!"'[57] As Bainton appropriately notes, 'What Augustine said of the judge he would have said equally of the general.'[58]

Competent authority

Although Augustine does not share Cicero's exalted view of the state, he still holds unmistakably that human governments are ordained by God for the benefit of Man. In a clear allusion to the words of Jesus and Paul, he states, 'No one can have any power against them but what is given him from above.[59] For there is no power but of God,[60] who either orders or permits.'[61] Therefore, Augustine considers the political sovereign to occupy the role of God's lieutenant on earth whose decisions to wage war are, in some sense, reflections of the divine will. And, in words with which later Hobbesian philosophy will resonate, Augustine appears willing to attribute 'irresistible power' to the sovereign and lesser, but no less authoritative, power to those who act under his direction and ensure the enforcement of his commands.[62]

One of the prerogatives which God 'either orders or permits' the sovereign to exercise is the right to wage war. Moreover, this right belongs *exclusively* to the sovereign:

> for the natural order which seeks peace for mankind ordains that the monarch should have the power of undertaking war if he thinks it advisable, and that the soldiers should perform their military duties on behalf of the peace and safety of the community.[63]

Augustine also states that the power to wage war is one of the functions which properly belong to a 'just government'.[64] However, as argued above, if Augustine is to avoid the charge of inconsistency, the only thing he can possibly mean by the words 'just government' is one which is *relatively* just. Hence, for Augustine, it is the sovereign's position which confers temporal legal authority, including the authority to declare war, and not the degree of the sovereign's personal righteousness. The fact that 'one weareth purple, is a Magistrate, is Ædile, is Proconsul, is Emperor'[65] provides no guarantee that one so recognized can be counted upon to rule justly, 'because even the sons of pestilence sit sometimes in the seat of Moses'.[66]

None of this, however, has any bearing for Augustine upon the fact that citizens of duly constituted governments have a divinely appointed obligation to obey their sovereign. Because the sovereign rules either by divine ordering or divine permission – even if it is not clear which is the operative cause in a particular case, one can only assume that by rendering due obedience to the sovereign, he or she is therefore rendering due obedience to God.

> Since, therefore, a righteous man serving it [i.e. the state] may be under an ungodly king, may do the duty belonging to his position in the State in fighting by the order of his sovereign, . . . how much more must the man be blameless who carries on war on the authority of God, of whom every one who serves Him knows that He can never require what is wrong?[67]

Thus, the citizen owes absolute obedience to the sovereign and the sovereign's call to arms. There is one case, however, in which Augustine seems to recognize an exception, namely, the case in which the sovereign directs his subjects to act in a way that is diametrically opposed to the law of God. As a case in point, Augustine refers to the apostate Emperor Julian who, after Constantine had granted official recognition to Christianity as the religion of the state, sought to reinstitute pagan rites of worship in the Roman Army. Augustine calls Julian 'an infidel Emperor, an apostate, a wicked man, an idolater'[68] under whom Roman Christians nonetheless served as soldiers. He notes that whenever Julian commanded these soldiers 'to deploy into line, to march against this or that nation, they at once obeyed'.[69] However, when Julian directed them to worship idols or to burn incense after the pagan manner of worship, 'they preferred God to him'[70] and disobeyed his

commands. Augustine commends the actions of these soldiers, stating that 'They distinguished their everlasting from their temporal master; and yet they were, for the sake of their everlasting Master, submissive to their temporal master'[71] in those matters, such as the call to arms, over which their temporal master, the Emperor, could claim jurisdiction by divine appointment.

In granting this commendation, however, Augustine gives no indication that he absolves either soldiers specifically or citizens generally from the burden of personal responsibility that accompanies any deviation from the requirement for absolute obedience to the sovereign. The sovereign still has the power to punish his subjects for their disobedience. The sovereign is answerable to God, not to his subjects; and God will recompense the sovereign for his actions just as God will recompense all people. In any case, citizens must answer the call to arms. For, as Augustine clearly states, 'in obedience to God or some lawful authority, good men undertake wars, when they find themselves in such a position as regards the conduct of human affairs, that right conduct requires them to act, or to make others act in this way'.[72] Thus, if Augustine recognizes anything akin to a right of conscientious objection, it is not a right which, if exercised, would absolve citizens from the obligation to face the full weight of the consequences that surely would follow. At this juncture, we might venture to fill a hiatus in the Augustinian scheme. As for an alternative to violating the dictates of one's conscience, although Augustine does not explicitly state it, the general tenor of his position seems to be in consonance with the teaching of earlier Church Fathers: Be prepared to follow the example of the martyrs. However, this does not entail that Augustine in any way urged Christians to seek martyrdom, as some of the earlier Church Fathers seem to have done. For, in an ostensibly Christian state, presumably no such necessity exists. Another reason is that the entire thrust of Augustine's teaching on citizenship is an exhortation to obedience to duly constituted authority as part of the unfolding plan of divinely directed history. However, whatever interpretive room might exist as pertaining to Augustine's views on conscientious objection or civil disobedience, this much is certain: first, that Augustine attributes absolute power to the sovereign by divine right and makes him the conduit through which all rights that citizens enjoy in the context of civil society flow from God, for 'God has distributed these very human rights through the emperors and kings of this world';[73] second, that the right to declare war resides in the sovereign and in the sovereign alone; third, that just men will, by definition, obey the sovereign's call to arms.

Whether one is always justified in serving the state is a problem that Augustine may not have solved to universal satisfaction. Whether a universally satisfactory answer is possible is itself a question. However, as Cook observes, Augustine does offer an important insight to those who would serve the state in a military capacity in the hope that their service is not ultimately incompat-

ible with the ends of morality: if one is to serve the state as a *thinking* soldier, and not an automaton, one must serve the state *as it is*, not fancy that the state necessarily and always embodies the highest possible ideals and ambitions.[74]

Peace as the ultimate objective of war

Although the political leader who wields authority to wage war may not, himself, be upright and virtuous, it is nevertheless the case that he ought to be, as 'the Christian Scriptures have most unambiguously commended this virtue in a magistrate'.[75] The attitude of the political authority in this regard ought to be analogous to that of the loving father who, by virtue of his position, must occasionally administer even painful discipline to his son whom he loves, but whose love for his son is not thereby diminished.[76] 'And on this principle,' states Augustine, 'if the commonwealth observe the precepts of the Christian religion, even its wars themselves will not be carried on without the benevolent design that, after the resisting nations have been conquered, provision may be more easily made for enjoying *in peace* the mutual bond of piety and justice.'[77] Indeed, the very reason why 'the monarch should have the power of undertaking war' and 'the soldiers should perform their military duties' is in order to secure 'the peace and safety of the community'.[78] 'Hence it is an established fact that peace is the desired end of war.'[79] Indeed, men do not disturb peace because they dislike peace, 'but because they desire the present peace to be exchanged for one that suits their wishes'.[80] Therefore it becomes clear that 'their desire is not that there should not be peace but that it should be the kind of peace they wish for'[81] – a peace which they then can impose upon those whom they conquer.[82]

Augustine's insistence on this point is thoroughly dramatized by his appeal to the 'extreme case' of those who have banded together to operate outside of the law. Even these would doubtless fail of their nefarious objectives unless they took positive steps to 'maintain some sort of semblance of peace with their confederates in conspiracy'.[83] 'Even robbers', Augustine argues, desire to preserve peace among themselves so as 'to ensure greater efficiency and security in their assaults on the peace of the rest of mankind'.[84]

However, peace is not simply the ultimate objective, as a practical matter, toward which everyone fights – the just and the unjust; it is also the ultimate objective toward which the righteous *should* fight.

> For peace is so great a good that even in relation to the affairs of earth and of our mortal estate no word ever falls more gratefully upon the ear, nothing is desired with greater longing, in fact, nothing greater can be found.[85]

Not only ought the sovereign to desire the establishment or restoration of peace when he determines to go to war, but soldiers also should be cognizant of the fact that – beyond merely safeguarding the state's territory or reclaiming that which has been wrongfully taken or recompensing other nations which have acted contrary to the demands of justice and order – these causes, although just, are merely proximate ones; the attainment of a just peace is the true cause – the true object – for which they are called upon to fight.

> Peace should be the object of your desire; war should be waged only as a necessity, and waged only that God may by it deliver men from the necessity and preserve them in peace. For peace is not sought in order to the kindling of war, but war is waged in order that peace may be obtained.[86]

If peace can be obtained without the sword, all the better. As Augustine exhorts one correspondent:

> But it is a higher glory still to stay war itself with a word, than to slay men with the sword, and to procure or maintain peace by peace, not by war. For those who fight, if they are good men, doubtless seek for peace; nevertheless it is through blood. Your mission, however, is to prevent the shedding of blood. Yours, therefore, is the privilege of averting that calamity which others are under the necessity of producing.[87]

Jus in bello in Augustine

Although he gives more attention to *jus ad bellum* themes than to *jus in bello* themes, still Augustine uncontentiously accepts the proposition that a war, in order truly to be just, must be fought in a just manner. If so, then the absence from his writings of a lengthy list of exhortations to avoid perpetrating gross injustices in war is not surprising. As Tolstoy states, 'a father who exhorts his son to live honestly, never to wrong any person, and to give all that he has to others, would not [find it necessary expressly to] forbid his son to kill people on the highway'.[88]

Proportionality

Augustine acknowledges the horrors of war in a way that suggests he believes that, given the choice, the evil effects of war should be minimized; and to that extent, he advocates observance of the *jus in bello* principle of proportionality. War is horrible enough, even under the best of circumstances, and anyone who is not moved to sorrow upon contemplation of the evils which war entails

is a just object of pity as one who has 'lost all human feeling'.[89] For this reason, Augustine urges soldiers not to induce gratuitous suffering. Even in the special case of a war fought to mete out divine retribution, the aim is not merely to give one's enemies their just deserts, but to 'lead them back to the advantages of peace'.[90]

Augustine may well be the first figure in the just-war tradition to offer a version of what is now known as 'the doctrine of military necessity': that armies can justly take such violent actions as may be necessary to accomplish their assigned task, consistent with the aim of restoring peace and order. Augustine admonishes, 'Let necessity, therefore, and not your will, slay the enemy who fights against you.'[91] His point is that the doctrine of military necessity specifies the upper bounds of permissible violence – not the lower bounds. As a consequence, he urges that the taking of lives in war ought to be minimized to the greatest extent possible; and by so doing, he gives recognition to the founding principle upon which all future developments in the doctrine of *jus in bello* are based:

> For he whose aim is to kill is not careful how he wounds, but he whose aim it is to cure is cautious with his lancet; for the one seeks to destroy what is sound, the other that which is decaying. . . . [W]hat is important to attend to but this: who were on the side of truth, and who were on the side of iniquity; who acted from a desire to injure, and who from a desire to correct what was amiss?[92]

This suggests that Augustine generally would object to requirements such as unconditional surrender on the grounds that such demands could not be made of an enemy state consistent with the right intention to minimize the shedding of blood.

Discrimination

Augustine concerns himself with three topics relative to discrimination: the special moral status of soldiers, of non-combatants in general, and of the clergy specifically. '[T]he power of a king, the death penalty of the judge, the hoods of the executioner, the weapons of the soldier'[93] have in common the fact that they stand as examples of duties in which Augustine holds that the taking of human life can find legal and moral justification. He notes that 'in killing the enemy, the soldier is the agent of the law. Thus, he merely fulfills his duty.'[94] Moreover, Augustine assents to the proposition that 'If to murder means to kill a man, murder can occur sometimes without sin.'[95] As cases in point, he acknowledges the example of the soldier who kills an enemy, the judge or official who puts a criminal to death, and even the case of involuntary

manslaughter 'when, by chance, a man unwittingly or unwisely lets a weapon escape from his hand'.[96]

Augustine not only exonerates the soldier from moral responsibility for the taking of life, but goes so far as to impose upon him the *obligation* to do so when required:

> For when a soldier kills a man in obedience to the legitimate authority under which he served, he is not chargeable with murder by the laws of his country; in fact he is chargeable with insubordination and mutiny if he refuses. . . .Thus he is punished if he did it without orders for the same reason that he will be punished if he refuses when ordered.[97]

Even when a righteous man is called upon to act as an instrumentality of the state under an unrighteous king, he still has an obligation to

> do the duty belonging to his position in the State in fighting by order of the sovereign – for in some cases it is plainly the will of God that he should fight, and in others, where this is not so plain, it may be an unrighteous command on the part of the king.[98]

In either case, however, '*the soldier is innocent, because his position makes obedience a duty*'.[99]

The fact that one is employed by the state as a soldier does not mean, however, that the soldier enjoys the indiscriminate right to take human life at will or to take justice into his own hands, as it were. A soldier possesses the authorization to kill only when he is acting under the authority of the state. Implicit in this restriction is the assumption that the soldier is authorized to take human lives only under circumstances of which the state could justly approve. Thus, the fact that a life is taken in time of war might not constitute sufficient grounds to justify the soldier's actions. On the contrary, the soldier is only justified in taking those lives whose loss will facilitate the restoration of peace and order. For example, in the vast generality of cases, the taking of an enemy soldier's life is likely to facilitate the restoration of peace and order in a way that the taking of the life of a child would not. Hence, Augustine instructs that if a soldier were to take lives without the authorization to wage war, the soldier would have acted in a morally blameworthy way.[100] The distinction lies in the fact that,

> just as in the cases of different persons it may happen that, at the same moment, one man may do with impunity what another man may not, because of a difference not in the thing done but in the person who does it, so in the case of one and the same person at different times, that which

> was duty formerly is not duty now, not because the person is different from his former self, but because the time at which he does it is different.[101]

While this general explanation refers not specifically to soldiers but rather to changes in religious practices between the Old and New Testament, it is clear that this passage describes exactly what Augustine considers the soldier's situation to be: Augustine holds that the soldier possesses authorization to act only 'according to the commission lawfully given him and in the manner becoming to his office'.[102]

One might read the phrase 'manner becoming to his office' to include at least a dispassionate stance towards the task of killing, if not an ideal attitude of justice mixed with sorrow for having been called upon to send fellow human beings out of this world and to their eternal destiny. For, as he continues in the same paragraph, referring to the words of Jesus from the Sermon on the Mount, '"Resist not evil"[103] was given to prevent us from taking pleasure in revenge, in which the mind is gratified by the sufferings of others, but not to make us neglect our duty of restraining men from sin.'[104]

Augustine's *jus in bello* doctrine does not provide anything approaching a list of rules either for identifying or, once identified, for safeguarding non-combatants. Nevertheless, Augustine unambiguously advocates that a spirit of mercy and forbearance should be displayed towards all those who fall into the power of their enemies: 'As violence is used towards him who rebels and resists, so mercy is due to the vanquished or the captive, especially in the case in which future troubling of the peace is not to be feared.'[105] By way of example, he notes with approbation the mercy extended by the barbarians who, during the sacking of Rome, spared those who had taken refuge in Christian basilicas.[106]

Augustine gives specific attention to the status of the clergy during war. As the Vandals under Genseric were crossing over the Mediterranean from Spain and overrunning northern Africa, Augustine gave permission to the clergy to 'flee from one city to another'[107] and thereby to stay ahead of the invaders, provided that two conditions were met: First, those members of the clergy taking to flight had to be among those 'specially sought for by persecutors';[108] second, their departure could not leave the church without 'others who are not specially sought after' who could 'remain to supply spiritual food to their fellow-servants, whom they know to be unable otherwise to maintain spiritual life'.[109] In the case of a general emergency, however, the clergy were not to flee. Rather, they were to 'share in common' with all who were in danger – clergy and laity alike – that which God 'appoints them to suffer'.[110]

In the case of general emergency, he calls neither the clergy nor the general populace to arms. Rather than direct them to defend, he exhorts them,

wherever possible, to flee. In connection with these instructions given in some of Augustine's darkest hours at the twilight of his life, three observations seem appropriate. First, Augustine establishes beyond dispute that the clergy form a class of non-combatants. Second, Augustine seems to suggest that even the case of 'supreme emergency' (to borrow Walzer's term),[111] in which the very existence of the society is threatened – as indeed it was – does not automatically justify women, children, clerics, and men who would otherwise be non-combatants in taking up arms. Third, we might infer, consistent with his other *jus in bello* statements, that his reason for not urging the general civilian populace to fight is precisely because they are not soldiers and cannot therefore be justified in committing violence. If this concern were not the source of his reservation, it is difficult to understand why Augustine did not call at least the able-bodied male portion of the civilian population to arms. Indeed, one is reminded of the mobilization order issued in 1935 by a fellow African, Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, to his subjects, as his nation, threatened with invasion by Mussolini's forces, was faced with a 'supreme emergency':

> Everyone will now be mobilized and all boys old enough to carry a spear will be sent to Addis Ababa. Married men will take their wives to carry food and cook. Those without wives will take any woman without a husband. Women with small babies need not go. The blind, those who cannot carry a spear, are exempted. Anyone found at home after receipt of this order will be hanged.[112]

If Augustine had no scruples against directing civilians to violate their non-combatant status, there is no reason, in principle, why he could not have issued an order similar to this – substituting, of course, the threat of hanging with a threat of excommunication.

Good faith

Augustine addresses the moral problems associated with military deception by noting that God directed Joshua to set up ambushes in his battle for conquest of the city of Ai. Concerning tactical deceptions used in connection with the ambushes, Augustine observes:

> This teaches us that such things are legitimate for those who are engaged in a just war. In these matters the only thing a righteous man has to worry about is that the just war is waged by someone who has the right to do so because not all men have that right. Once an individual has undertaken this kind of war, it does not matter at all, as far as justice is concerned, whether he wins victory in open combat or through ruses.[113]

This passage presents some unusually perplexing problems which deserve separate treatment.[114] For the present, however, suffice it to say that, once it has been established that the war being fought is a just war, the Christian need not have scruples about the use of stratagems, ruses, or other deceptive tactics in war.

In contrast, Augustine urges that 'when faith is pledged, it is to be kept even with the enemy against whom the war is waged'.[115] Whenever a nation makes a pledge to another, the pledge is to be regarded as inviolable. Augustine tacitly acknowledges, then, and is understood by his interpreters throughout the Middle Ages[116] to acknowledge, that just warfare may properly involve deliberately deceptive acts – provided that they do not likewise involve breaches of good faith. Cicero certainly held the same opinion. However, Augustine notes a problem which seems to have eluded Cicero, namely, that it is not always possible to maintain good faith with the enemy and at the same time to maintain the safety of one's own nation or city – both of which Cicero considered to be imperatives.[117]

Augustine has a solution to the dilemma of why it is morally permissible to lie to one's enemy in certain wartime circumstances, but the solution is a transcendental one. Short of invoking the transcendental, Augustine can do nothing but hold that both maintaining the safety or security of the state and keeping good faith with the enemy are important; but it might not be possible to determine in advance of a particular crisis – or perhaps at all – which of the two should take precedence.

Significant parallels between Augustine's views on just war and his views on religious coercion

Throughout the Bishop of Hippo's long and illustrious career, he was plagued with the problem of what to do about the question of religious dissent.[118] Swift notes that, in addition to the fact that Augustine is 'commonly credited with being the author of the "theory of the just war"',[119] he is also 'the only theologian [or philosopher] in the early centuries of Christianity to endorse and to discuss openly the use of coercion for suppressing religious dissent'.[120] While his views on religious dissent need not, and probably should not, be seen as constituting part of his just-war theory, they do, nevertheless, shed considerable light upon the Augustinian logic for justifying the application of violence in any context. As Burns points out, while Augustine's thoughts on just war coupled with his allied thoughts on religious coercion are both 'themes less fundamental to his preoccupations', both themes are, nevertheless, 'of considerable importance for the future development of political

ideas'.[121] Indeed, some striking similarities exist between his just-war theory and his views on religious coercion[122] expressed in the context of the Donatist controversy;[123] and the recognition of these similarities cannot but illuminate one's understanding of his just-war theory.

Evolution of thought

Unlike Augustine's views on just-war theory, which remain quite consistent throughout his life, Augustine himself acknowledges that his views on religious coercion evolved throughout his episcopacy. During his early period, he writes to Maximin, the Donatist bishop of Sinitum (near Hippo):[124]

> I do not propose to compel men to embrace the communion of any party, but desire the truth to be made known to persons who, in their search for it, are free from disquieting apprehensions. On our side there shall be no appeal to men's fear of the civil power; on your side, let there be no intimidation by a mob of Circumcelliones.[125] Let us attend to the real matter in debate, and let our arguments appeal to reason and to the authoritative teaching of the Divine Scriptures, dispassionately and calmly, so far as we are able; let us ask, seek, and knock, that we may receive and find, and that to us the door may be opened, and thereby may be achieved, by God's blessing on our united efforts and prayers, the first step towards the entire removal from our district of that impiety which is such a disgrace to Africa.[126]

Augustine prefaces the above passage with an ultimatum that if Maximin fails to reply to Augustine's letter, he will make public its contents in an effort to dissuade faithful Catholics from casting their lot with the Donatist cause. However, so intent is Augustine upon avoiding violence in the resolution of matters of conscience that he adds, 'I shall not, however, do this [i.e. read my letter] in the presence of the soldiery, lest any of you should think that I wish to act in a violent way, rather than as the interests of peace demand; but only after their departure.'[127] And, at the conclusion of the passage, he adds, 'If you do not believe that I am willing to postpone the discussion until after the soldiery have left, you may delay your answer until they have gone; and if, while they are still here, I should wish to read my own letter to the people, the production of the letter will of itself convict me of breaking my word.'[128]

As Russell notes,[129] the Donatist controversy created two problems for Augustine in his role as bishop. The first and most obvious was that, as a heretical sect, the Donatists offered an enticing but dangerous doctrinal alternative to the orthodox faithful of the Catholic Christian community. (One possible enticement was the fact that persecution of the Donatists paved the way for

them to claim martyrdom, and thereby attract that element from among the Church that gravitated toward such things.) The second problem was one which moved the entire issue from the realm of purely doctrinal debate to another realm of greater secular interest, namely, that the Donatist clerics and Circumcillions committed acts of open violence against orthodox Christians and their churches. While, under the circumstances, Augustine's harsh denunciation of the Circumcellions is understandable, he unfortunately does not 'always distinguish the heresy itself from the violence of its partisans'.[130]

Perhaps such a distinction was ultimately impossible to make. In any event, Augustine undergoes an ideological evolution in which he comes to view the Church as a school 'from which divine revelation is announced – and if necessary enforced – for the benefit of all'.[131] He appeals to the example of the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar to establish his claim that secular authorities have a responsibility to safeguard, through violence if necessary, the interests of the Church. He notes that Nebuchadnezzar, after having witnessed the deliverance, by divine intervention, of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace in which he had decreed that they should die, not only rescinded their sentence, but also issued the following edict: 'Whosoever shall speak blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut off, and their houses shall be made a ruin.'[132] If a thoroughly pagan ruler like Nebuchadnezzar can safeguard the interests of the 'Church' as it were, then certainly, the argument goes, the Christian rulers of a Christian empire have a similar obligation to come to the rescue of the Church in Augustine's day and to protect it from its enemies. Hence, Augustine says, 'it concerns Christian kings of this world to wish their mother the Church, of which they have been spiritually born, to have peace in their times'.[133]

Augustine does not stop there, however. It is one thing to defend the Church from violence, and quite another to compel by violence those who otherwise would not cast their lot with it. Appealing again to Nebuchadnezzar, he states:

> In the age of the apostles and martyrs, that was fulfilled which was prefigured when the aforesaid king [Nebuchadnezzar] compelled pious and just men to bow down to his image, and cast into the flames all who refused. Now, however, is fulfilled that which was prefigured soon after in the same king, when, being converted to the worship of the true God, he made a decree throughout his empire, that whosoever should speak against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, should suffer the penalty which their crime deserved.[134]

Acknowledging that he had originally shunned coercion as a means of bringing men into the Catholic fold, he confesses in his famous letter to

Vincentius that he now recognizes its virtue, having seen its efficacious use in his own town, which,

> although it was once wholly on the side of Donatus, was brought over to the Catholic unity by fear of the imperial edicts, but which we now see filled with such detestation of your ruinous perversity, that it would scarcely be believed that it had ever been involved in your error.[135]

In the face of the available options, Augustine assesses the risks posed by allowing free rein to the Donatists as being unacceptably great. For, as he rails against Vincentius:

> How many supposed the sect of Donatus to be the true Church, merely because ease had made them too listless, or conceited, or sluggish to take pains to examine Catholic truth! How many would have entered earlier had not the calumnies of slanderers, who declared that we offered something else than we do upon the altar of God, shut them out! How many, believing that it mattered not to which party a Christian might belong remained in the schism of Donatus only because they had been born in it, and no one was compelling them to forsake it and pass over into the Catholic Church![136]

'Coge intrare'

These words, 'compel them to come in', taken from the Parable of the Feast recorded in Luke,[137] become Augustine's battle cry against the Donatists. He accepts them as a divine mandate to coerce, if necessary, the wayward back into the safety of the faith,[138] just as the loving shepherd who has no hesitancy to apply his rod to the task of bringing his wandering sheep back into the safety of the fold. [139]

At first blush, coercion back into the fellowship of the faith strikes one as a vastly different enterprise from the classic case of international conflict that is sought to be resolved by resort to arms. However, on closer inspection, one cannot help but be struck by the similarities between Augustine's just-war principles and the principles to which Augustine appeals in justifying his advocacy of coercive measures in the case of the Donatist controversy. Consider, for example, the following parallels.

Just cause

Why, Augustine asks, 'should not such persons be shaken up in a beneficial way by a law bringing upon them inconvenience in worldly things, in order

that they might rise from their lethargic sleep, and awake to the salvation which is to be found in the unity of the Church?'[140] Thus understood, coercion is like medicine administered to an unwilling patient for the patient's own good.[141] And, from the Augustinian perspective, what could possibly constitute a more just cause than this? As Swift points out,'Elsewhere, in what must be acknowledged as a partisan view, Augustine claims that the Donatists themselves recognized the benefit they received from the laws and punishments enacted against heresy.'[142] Augustine says, 'the laws which seemed to be opposed to them are in reality their truest friends; for through their operation many of them have been, and are daily being reformed, and return God thanks that they are reformed, and delivered from their ruinous madness'.[143] Whether Augustine's assessment of Donatist reaction to coercive practices is accurate is not nearly as important as is Augustine's assessment itself, namely, that the Donatists 'realized' that punishment was good for them. Augustine could have interpreted that 'realization' only as an additional (albeit *post hoc*) confirmation of the justice of his cause.

Comparative justice

Admittedly, the application of force is almost always accompanied by the potential for some moral trade-off such that the choice to coerce constitutes merely the lesser of two evils. For example, since religious belief and practice is largely a matter of conscience, the requirement to confess beliefs or to engage in practices contrary to the dictates of conscience would seem to defeat one of the principal purposes of the Christian enterprise: to inspire one to do the right thing for the right reason. Augustine is acutely aware of this, and so he takes pains to argue, for better or for worse, that this kind of coercion does not involve forcing one to act against one's will at all:

> the thing to be considered when any one is coerced, is not the mere fact of the coercion, but the nature of that to which he is coerced, whether it be good or bad: not that any one can be good in spite of his own will, but that, through fear of suffering what he does not desire, he either renounces his hostile prejudices, or is compelled to examine truth of which he had been contentedly ignorant; and under the influence of this fear repudiates the error which he was wont to defend, or seeks the truth of which he formerly knew nothing, and now willingly holds what he formerly rejected.[144]

Implicit in Augustine's argument is the claim that, while one does not lose free will *per se*, one rarely, if ever, is able to dictate the array of options from which one is allowed to choose. Sometimes the choices might be nothing

more than gradations of undesirable choices, such as giving the appearance of forcing the human will or allowing one to languish outside the fellowship of the Church, the portal to salvation. But that, Augustine would necessarily confess, is the nature of comparative justice.

Right intention

Augustine takes great pains to establish the rectitude of his intentions:

> Wherefore, if we were so to overlook and forbear with those cruel enemies who seriously disturb our peace and quietness by manifold and grievous forms of violence and treachery, as that nothing at all should be contrived and done by us with a view to alarm and correct them, truly we would be rendering evil for evil. For if any one saw his enemy running headlong to destroy himself when he had become delirious through a dangerous fever, would he not in that case be much more truly rendering evil for evil if he permitted him to run on thus, than if he took measures to have him seized and bound? And yet he would at that moment appear to be most vexatious, and most like an enemy, when, in truth, he had proved himself most useful and most compassionate; although, doubtless, when health was recovered, would he express to him his gratitude with a warmth proportioned to the measure in which he had felt his refusal to indulge him in his time of phrenzy.[145]

Here, as always with Augustine, the right motive for action is love. It is not the case 'that those who are loved should be cruelly left to yield themselves with impunity to their bad will; but in so far as power is given, they ought to be both prevented from evil and compelled to do good'.[146] Elsewhere he urges, 'whatever we do in our dealings with you, though we may do it contrary to your inclination, yet we do it from our love for you, that you may voluntarily correct yourselves, and live an amended life'.[147] Note that from Augustine's perspective, his addressees are not being forced to act against their will. They are merely being presented with the dire consequences of violence as an incentive to act in accordance with a good will.

That is not to say, however, that well-intended corrections have never been meted out inappropriately: 'the truth is, that always both the bad have persecuted the good, and the good have persecuted the bad'.[148] Nevertheless, the bad and the good are clearly distinguished in motivational terms: 'the former doing harm by their unrighteousness, the latter seeking to do good by the administration of discipline; the former with cruelty, the latter with moderation; the former impelled by lust, the latter under the constraint of love'.[149]

Competent authority

Augustine grounds his views on religious coercion on the authority of Scripture, or more correctly, what he interprets to be a conferral of authority by the Scriptures. Referring, as he repeatedly does, to Jesus' parable recorded in Luke, he states:

> The Gentiles came in from the streets and lanes: let the heretics[150] come from the hedges, here they shall find peace. For those who make hedges, their object is to make divisions. Let them be drawn away from the hedges, let them be plucked up from among the thorns. They have stuck fast in the hedges, and they are unwilling to be compelled. Let us come in, they say, of our own good will. This is not the Lord's order, 'Compel them,' saith he, 'to come in.' Let compulsion be found outside, the will will arise within.[151]

Indeed, Augustine reasons, is not God himself the perfect exemplar of One who applies this compulsory practice? Did He not transform Saul of Tarsus into Paul the Apostle by compelling him into the church?[152] Similarly, the wicked are to be constrained from evil and compelled to do good.[153]

Moreover, God has delegated to his earthly lieutenants, the kings and princes of the earth, such authority as is necessary to compel people into the faith: 'let the kings of the earth serve Christ by making laws for Him and for His cause'.[154] Returning to the theme of free will, Augustine argues that the coercive power of the state cannot force one to act against that which truly is one's will, and yet it is properly applied, with divine approbation, to spiritually wayward people in an effort to persuade them to change their wills:

> For no one lives against his will; and yet a boy, in order to learn this lesson of his own free will, is beaten contrary to his inclination, and that often by the very man that is most dear to him. And this, indeed, is what the kings would desire to say to you if they were to strike you, for to this end their power has been ordained of God.[155]

One detects that Augustine is not entirely comfortable with a Church–state relationship that employs the coercive power of the state to compel people in matters of faith. At times, Augustine seems to have reconciled himself to the use of political force to persuade erring Christians by viewing the public officials who wield the power of the state – not in their role as political figures but – as members of the Church: Christians with a responsibility to use whatever resources they have at their disposal (in their case, the coercive power of the state) in order to help fellow Christians.[156] At other times, Augustine expresses

his reluctance to trust temporal rulers, in Swift's words, 'as a means of promoting orthodoxy and strengthening the Church in its struggles with heresy'.[157] Says Augustine in his reply to Petilian, the Donatist bishop of Cirta, 'nor do we put confidence in princes, but, so far as we can, we warn princes to put confidence in the Lord. And though we may seek aid from princes to promote the advantage of the Church, yet do we not put confidence in them.'[158]

Nevertheless, in addition to being a philosopher and theologian, Augustine is also a pragmatist. He invoked the authority of the state to involve itself in such a manner because the state's involvement yielded the desired results: coercion worked! Hence, 'to the end of his life he admitted with fewer and fewer scruples the legitimacy of recourse to the secular arm against heretics and schismatics'.[159]

Peace as the ultimate objective of war

Although not a 'war' in the traditional sense, in the case of religious coercion as well one finds Augustine urging that attaining peace is, and must be, the happy end towards which all must aim:

> God, to whom the secrets of the heart of man are open, knoweth that it is because of my love for Christian peace that I am so deeply moved by the profane deeds of those who basely and impiously persevere in dissenting from it. He knoweth also that this feeling of mine is one tending towards peace, and that my desire is, not that any one should against his will be coerced into the Catholic communion, but that to all who are in error the truth may be openly declared, and being by God's help clearly exhibited through my ministry, may so commend itself as to make them embrace and follow it.[160]

Thus, although the matter of religious coercion is not – and Augustine does not claim it to be – exactly the same thing as a 'war' in the conventional sense, the parallels between his justification for war and his justification for coercion in matters of religion are significant. Consider, for example, the following passage, which arguably contains language typical of five elements of Augustine's theory of *jus ad bellum*:

> [Just cause] For whenever a man suffers anything that is harsh and unpleasing, he is warned to consider why it is that he is suffering, so that, if he shall discover that he is suffering in the cause of justice, he may choose the good that consists in the very act of suffering as he does in the

> cause of justice; [Comparative justice] but if he sees that it is unrighteousness for which he suffers, he may be induced, from the consideration that he is suffering and being tormented most fruitlessly, to change his purpose for the better, and may at the same time escape both the fruitless annoyance and the unrighteousness itself, which is likely to prove yet more hurtful and pernicious in the mischief it produces. [Competent authority] And so you, when kings make any enactments against you, should consider that you are receiving a warning to consider why this is being done to you. [Right intention] For if it is for righteousness' sake, then are they truly your persecutors; but you are the blessed ones, who, being persecuted for righteousness' sake, shall inherit the kingdom of heaven: but if it is because of the iniquity of your schism, what are they more than your correctors; while you, like all the others who are guilty of various crimes, and pay the penalty appointed by the law, are undoubtedly unhappy both in this world and in that which is to come? No one, therefore, takes away from you your free will. [Peace as the ultimate end of objective of war] But I would urge you diligently to consider which you would rather choose, – whether to live corrected in peace, or, by persevering in malice, to undergo real punishment under the false name of martyrdom.[161]

Cicero, Ambrose and Augustine: just-war theories compared

Having considered in detail both Augustine's theory of just war and the just-war writings of those who bore the most direct influence upon it, we are now in a position to consider their similarities and differences with the aim of understanding the extent to which Augustine's just-war theory relies upon the work of Cicero and Ambrose and also the way in which Augustine's work represents a novel approach for solving an age-old problem. For each *jus ad bellum* and each *jus in bello* principle which Augustine considers, a table is presented to summarize and compare the respective just-war theories of Cicero, Ambrose and Augustine. Manifestly, it is impossible to recreate, in tabular form, all of the nuances which characterize the subtle thought of these authors, especially Augustine. Hence, these tabular summaries are merely adjunct to the detailed discussions which have preceded, and reveal only gross distinctions. Nevertheless, the reader who is cognizant of this inherent limitation still may find them useful vehicles for the purpose of comparison and contrast. Those entries which appear in regular type have explicit textual support from the writings of the associated author. Those entries which appear

in italics are claims which are *strongly implied* by, or can be *reasonably inferred* from, their writings.

Table 1

***Jus ad bellum*: just cause**

Cicero	Ambrose	Augustine
To defend the state from barbarian invasion.	To defend the state from barbarian invasion.	*To defend the state from external invasion.*
To defend the safety or honour of the state.		To defend the safety or honour of the state, with the realization that their simultaneous defence might be impossible.
To gain revenge for wrongs.		To avenge injuries; to punish a nation for failure to take corrective action for wrongs (legal *or moral*) committed by its citizens.
To defend the safety or honour of one's allies.	To protect those who are unable to protect themselves.	*To come to the defence of one's allies.*
To wage war at the behest of the gods as directed by the priests of the collegium fetialium.	To obey a divine command to go to war (*which, in practice, issues from the political head of state acting as God's lieutenant on earth*).	To obey a divine command to go to war (*which, in practice, issues from the political head of state acting as God's lieutenant on earth*).
		To gain the return of something that was wrongfully taken.

The force of two important claims is evident in a comparison of Cicero, Ambrose, and Augustine as pertaining to the 'just cause' principle of just-war theory. The first is that Augustine's criteria for just cause truly constitute a synthesis of the theories embraced by his predecessors. The second is that his set of criteria transcends, in terms both of breadth and of specificity, any previous rendition of just causes for war. Also of important note is the fact that, whereas both Cicero and Augustine are willing to fight in defence of national safety (i.e. security) and of national honour (i.e. glory or reputation), Cicero

does not specify which should receive priority in the event that safety has to be sacrificed at the expense of honour. On the other hand, Augustine acknowledges the problem and at least holds that the maintenance of national honour cannot serve as a pretence for unjust causes, such as wars of national expansion.

Table 2

***Jus ad bellum*: comparative justice**

Cicero	Ambrose	Augustine
Wars fought for glory are less just than those fought for defensive reasons.		*The nation which claims to have just cause to wage war must have a cause which is at least more just than the other nation's cause.*

Augustine and Cicero appear to be in general agreement as to the proposition that some wars are more just than others. However, neither of them directly addresses the modern concern that the *jus ad bellum* principle of comparative justice intends to highlight, to wit, the notion that an offence against a nation must be sufficiently egregious as to outweigh the general presumption against war as a morally acceptable means for conflict resolution. While the overt expression of this particular notion is not traceable to Augustine *per se*, it is nonetheless thoroughly Augustinian in spirit: Augustine would not justify a nation in going to war if that nation's cause were less just than its opponent's. While Cicero admits the existence of gradations of justice, he still believes that true justice is attainable among mortals. When Augustine speaks of justice, he always has in mind a relative, imperfect kind of justice. Hence, for Augustine, all causes for which mortals initiate wars will be in some measure bereft of true justice. Thus, from an Augustinian perspective, a just war is yet another manifestation of the imperfections attendant to the present world. Just as the Roman Republic was ultimately unjust by the strict definition, it was nevertheless something approved by Augustine as a shadowy image of justice – something the world was better off with than without. In the same way, the concept that there exist such things as just wars (as well as the concept that some of those wars are more just than others) is an important one for Augustine, because these concepts enable him to explain

> why basically good but imperfect men could fight each other, since they both acted out of a mixture of motive and since each was often torn against himself. Even warfare evidenced the conflict between relative

goods, and so when a war was won by the juster party, the victor was to be congratulated, and it was worse when the injurious side prevailed over the more righteous side.[162]

Table 3

***Jus ad bellum*: right intention**

Cicero	Ambrose	Augustine
War must not be fought merely for territorial expansion or as the result of a lust for power or bloodshed.		War must not be fought for territorial expansion. Those who wage war must not delight in the wickedness of potential adversaries. Those who wage war must view war as a stern necessity. *Those empowered to wage war must never act in a way that would provoke war.*

While to suggest that 'right intention' plays no role either in Cicero's or Ambrose's theory of just war would almost certainly be inaccurate, it is by no means the important feature for either of them that it is for Augustine. For Cicero, right intention as a *jus ad bellum* notion is 'built into' the process by which wars are declared: a declaration made in the traditionally recognized way is itself an expression of right intention. Ambrose seems to content himself with the idea that Rome's wars are just, and therefore, rightly intended. In contrast, Augustine holds most tenaciously to the position that the fact that a state has a just cause to go to war does not imply that either its sovereign or its subjects will respond to the provocation with right intention (i.e. not to exploit the situation for national advantage, but rather to seek the stability of the international order and the safety of the state within the community of nations, to establish a just and lasting peace, etc.).

Table 4

***Jus ad bellum*: competent authority**

Cicero	**Ambrose**	**Augustine**
The Roman Senate has authority to declare war on behalf of the Roman people after having obtained the assent of the gods via the fetial priests.		The sovereign ruler of the state has authority to wage war. Those subject to the authority of the sovereign are duty-bound to fight in the sovereign's wars (*perhaps even in those which are unjust*).
	In Old Testament times, God directed wars to be fought. *The decision to wage war is an affair of the state, not the Church.*	God can, with perfect justice, direct wars to be fought.

Cicero, Ambrose, and Augustine all recognize the state and its sovereign as the mortal repository for all war-making authority. They all also recognize mechanisms for ascertaining the divine will as pertaining to war. For Cicero, it is through the medium of the *collegium fetialium*; for Ambrose and Augustine, it is through the medium of prophets like Moses. However, Ambrose and Augustine are prepared to honour seership of the kind evidenced by Moses as a relic of the distant past – a phenomenon to be acknowledged as operative in ancient times, but not one operative in theirs. In their day, the sovereign acts as God's lieutenant on earth. That lieutenant may err in his judgement, but God's will concerning the war will be accomplished, either through the sovereign or in spite of the sovereign. Whatever the case, all subjects are expected to obey God's lieutenant in all matters that are not diametrically opposed to God's will; and even in the case that the sovereign's edicts oppose God's will, the subject assumes, at least here on earth, the full burden of responsibility for the consequences of disobedience.

Table 5

***Jus ad bellum*: public declaration**

Cicero	Ambrose	Augustine
War must be preceded by: 1. a public declaration or 2. an ultimatum demanding redress of grievances.		

Augustine, like Ambrose before him, is silent on this procedural issue. Presumably, Augustine's silence is not so much an indication of his granting approbation to the system alluded to by Cicero (dependent as it was upon pagan oracles) as it is to the fact that in Augustine's day, the Empire was thoroughly preoccupied with defensive and not offensive military operations. An invasion from without was understood then, as today, to constitute a declaration of war by the invader and justified an immediate response, thus making the requirement for a formal public declaration practically superfluous.

In principle, however, we can safely suppose that if confronted with the question of whether a just war must be preceded by a public declaration, Augustine would find ample precedent in both traditional Roman and Old Testament practice to opine in the affirmative. Although he never specifically cites it, Augustine was certainly aware of the requirement in the Mosaic Law that, in all except the most extraordinary cases, wars should be preceded by an offer of peace which was understood to constitute an ultimatum that war would follow if the offer went unheeded.[163]

Table 6

***Jus ad bellum*: last resort**

Cicero	Ambrose	Augustine
By definition, a public declaration of war or the issuance of an ultimatum constitutes the last resort for peaceful resolution short of war.	*Disputes should be resolved by means short of war whenever possible.*	*Disputes should be resolved by means short of war whenever possible.*

Augustine states that wars should be undertaken with utmost sorrow and should be regarded as necessary evils, but he does not explicitly state that all other means of conflict-resolution should be exhausted before waging war. All in all, Augustine seems less committed to this point than the tradition which develops after him would suggest him to be. As for Cicero and Ambrose, the concept resides latently in their theories as well, but for different reasons. For Cicero, the rejection of a peace offer by the enemy constitutes, by definition, rejection of the last resort short of war. For Ambrose, to argue for any other position than that which recognizes war as the last resort would run counter to the general ideals of Christian virtue; but again, he gives no specific treatment of the principle.

Table 7

***Jus ad bellum*: reasonable probability of success**

Cicero	Ambrose	Augustine
		A war justly entered into still can be held to have been just even if it is lost.

A consideration of this principle, addressed neither by Cicero nor by Ambrose, will detain us somewhat longer than those which have preceded because, of all of the traditionally recognized *jus ad bellum* principles, it is the only one which advocates a position counter to that found in Augustinian just-war thought.

In reality, Augustine's opposition to this principle is central to the thesis for which he argues in the *City of God*. As Augustine undertakes to refute the pagan charge that the sacking of Rome by Alaric was the direct result of the Empire's disregarding the traditional gods of Rome and its embracing of Christianity, he finds himself confronted with an argument along the following lines:

P1. If Christianity were the true religion, the now-Christian Empire should have been able to assume that the Christian God would come to the Empire's defence.

P2. The fact of the Christian God's coming to the Empire's defence would have been evident in the Empire's enjoying the ability to repel the Gothic invasion.

P3. Granted, the citizens of Rome may have embarked upon a defence of the city with the reasonable expectation that they would be divinely protected.

P4. However, instead of successfully repelling the invaders, they were overcome.

C1. ∴ The Romans never actually had any basis for relying with confidence on protection from the Christian God.

C2. ∴ They never actually had a reasonable possibility of success – contrary to anything they might have thought.

Among other things that Augustine seeks to establish in his initial argument in the *City of God* is his disagreement with premises 1 and 2. As Augustine forcefully argues, the claim that the God of Christianity is the proper object of Rome's worship and the fact that the God of Christianity did not spare Rome from Alaric are two altogether separate issues, the truth of the latter having no bearing whatsoever on the truth of the former. In treating the latter claim, Augustine argues that God did, in fact, protect the citizens of Rome from greater harm and destruction than otherwise would have resulted in the absence of his providence. Augustine says that, rather than criticize the Christians and their God because of the absence of a sufficiently overt display of divine protection, his detractors should rather take careful note of the fact that the 'savage barbarians showed mercy beyond the custom of war'.[164] The surprising degree of forbearance manifested by the invaders may have been due, Augustine says, either to their general regard for the name of Christ or to their wish not to desecrate buildings dedicated to his worship (in which buildings large numbers of non-combatants found safe haven from the barbarians).[165] However, Augustine hastens to point out that although God's deliverance of the Romans was not complete, even if it *had* been, the Romans had no right to assume that it would be. In fact, right judgement would lead them to the conclusion that 'they ought rather to attribute the harsh cruelty they suffered at the hands of their enemies to the providence of God';[166] for both those results which people count for good and those which they count for evil are manifestations of God's invisible hand at work in shaping the history and the unfolding destiny of the human family. For Augustine, no case in point serves as a better illustration of his claim than does war: God uses war not only to 'correct and chasten' mankind, but also to 'train' them.[167] This two-fold purpose of war necessarily means that some people will benefit from the experience of war while others will suffer evil results from the same experience. For reasons inscrutable to Man, God employs the medium of war to reward the righteous by removing them from the earthly to the heavenly city, or else to keep them in this present world for further service in the accomplishment of his unfolding plan.[168] Thus the righteous may be slain, or the righteous may be preserved. Conversely, the wicked may be slain, and thus receive forthwith their just deserts; or else they

may be preserved so as to enjoy a space of time for much-needed repentance and reformation, or to serve as a scourge to the righteous that the faith of the righteous may be tried, or perhaps for a thousand other reasons that defy expression. Likewise, nations rise and fall, not necessarily in proportion to their righteousness or wickedness, but consistent with the will of God.

For Augustine, the point of all of this is that no nation or individual can guarantee victory in war – even in the case of a just war – or claim with reasonable certainty that it or he will be victorious. For, after all is said and done, the outcome will be the result of the divine ordering of human affairs for the accomplishment of God's purposes. This, however, has no bearing on the Augustinian position that such wars as do get fought should be just wars.

Table 8

***Jus ad bellum*: proportionality**

Cicero	Ambrose	Augustine
		War must be fought in light of the object of the restoration of peace; *and the restoration of peace will mark the attainment of a greater good than would have resulted from the continued absence of peace.*

The demands of rationality alone suggest that we should credit Cicero and Ambrose with holding the position that a war should not be fought unless the balance of good which reasonably could be expected to result from fighting the war is greater than the evil which can be foreseen to result from the war. However, neither Cicero nor Ambrose considers this point in either an explicit or implicit way. In this respect, the position taken by Augustine represents a minor theoretical advance. This advance is minor because it is merely implied by Augustine's realization that war is fought to some end, namely, the end of peace; and that end is one which, in the eyes of the beholder, is more desirable than either the *status quo ante bellum* or the violence of war. The fact that war is fought to obtain a *better* peace than whatever peace – or lack of peace – it is intended to replace clearly suggests at least a latent awareness on Augustine's part of the *jus ad bellum* notion of proportionality. Rather than treat the notion separately, however, he considers it under the general rubric that the ultimate aim for which wars are fought is the attainment of peace, and that the ultimate aim for which *just* wars are fought is the attainment of a *better* peace than that which otherwise would obtain.

Table 9

***Jus ad bellum*: peace as the ultimate objective of war**

Cicero	Ambrose	Augustine
Peace without guile is a desirable result of war.	Peace should be re-established at the war's conclusion.	Peace is the proper object of all wars.

Both Cicero and Ambrose recognize the desirability of peace. However, Augustine, far beyond merely recognizing its desirability, considers peace to be the indisputable end to which all wars are fought. Not only does he thereby elevate the discussion of peace to a philosophical plane on a par with war as an object of serious inquiry, but he also becomes the first just-war theorist to state the end to which wars, in particular just wars, are fought. With respect to this theoretical point, Augustine positions himself as the polar opposite of Heraclitus. Heraclitus holds that war has no teleological purpose whatsoever: war is identical with existence itself, because nothing could exist were it not for the metaphysical oppositions which war so vividly characterizes. Hence, to ask Heraclitus the end to which wars are fought would be an altogether ridiculous question: war simply *is*. On the other hand, if the same question were posed to Augustine, he would answer that wars are altogether teleological in nature, and that the ultimate reason why men fight any war is to secure peace. Aside from the fact that both Cicero and Ambrose are willing – the former on traditional grounds and the latter on philosophical grounds – to absolve religious officials of the obligation to fight, one could not reasonably label Cicero or Ambrose as 'pacifists'. On the other hand, some have interpreted Augustine's teleological aim of peace as alleged evidence of his pacifism. However, while Augustine is of the opinion that the circumstances in which there are truly just causes for fighting a war are relatively few, and while he abhors war, he is, nevertheless, not a 'pacifist' in the usual sense of the word.

Table 10

***Jus in bello*: proportionality**

Cicero	Ambrose	Augustine
Limit retribution and punishment to what is necessary to bring the wrongdoer to reformation.	The degree of action taken against the enemy should be predicated on the seriousness of the enemy's offence, or as divinely directed.	All actions taken in war should be limited by military necessity.

Cicero, Ambrose, and Augustine all recognize that, even in the case of a just war, military action cannot proceed in an unrestrained manner. However, it is to Augustine that credit goes for specifying the extent to which military action should be limited, namely, that no violent action should be engaged in beyond that which is necessary for the accomplishment of just aims, which must invariably include the establishment or the restoration of peace.

Table 11

***Jus in bello*: discrimination**

Cicero	Ambrose	Augustine
In accordance with long-established Roman custom, only soldiers under oath may fight, and even then only in the particular battle or war for which they were put under oath.		Only one acting in the official capacity of a soldier is justified in performing the acts of violence associated with the profession of arms.
	The clergy should not take up arms.	The clergy should not take up arms.
Mercy should be shown to those conquered and to those who surrender.		Mercy and forbearance should be shown to captives and non-combatants.

Discrimination is a principle that clearly exemplifies the synthesis which Augustine achieves between traditional Roman and Christian concerns. He echoes the Roman sentiment that soldiers can engage in violence only insofar as their actions accord with the understood functions of their profession.

Whereas Ambrose merely permits participation in war by Christians (except for the clergy) as soldiers, Augustine combines that permission with an acknowledgement of the special moral status of the office of soldier, with the result that, throughout the whole of the just-war tradition to follow, few if any will question the legitimacy of wartime service by lay Christians.

Table 12

***Jus in bello*: good faith**

Cicero	Ambrose	Augustine
Keep promises made to the enemy.	Keep promises made to the enemy. Deal justly with the enemy under all circumstances.	Keep promises made to the enemy.
Avoid dishonest practices in dealing with the enemy, to include the unduly legalistic interpretation of treaties.		The use of ruses and stratagems is morally acceptable in an otherwise just war.

Cicero, Ambrose, and Augustine also address certain *jus in bello* issues, which typically are not distinguished as separate 'principles' within the structure of traditional *jus in bello* theory. Both of the issues listed above as having received attention from Augustine are considered in some detail in the Hague and Geneva Conventions.[169]

* * *

Both Cicero and Ambrose anticipate Augustine in several important respects, but it is Augustine who synthesizes the traditions they represent into a Christianized world-view that still retains strong ties to the pre-Christian philosophic past. The unmistakably Christian tokens of Ambrose's approach to the matter of just war 'all militate against any simple baptizing [by Ambrose] of the Roman tradition of just war or any wholesale endorsement of Roman nationalistic principles'.[170] However, if, as appears to have been the case, 'the realities of political and social development prevented Christians from maintaining the pacifist emphases of earlier centuries, pacifist arguments retained much of their old vigor, and the dilemma of Christian violence and love remained to a considerable extent unresolved',[171] despite the influence of Ambrose. What Augustine accomplishes is to resolve the dilemma posed by competing just-war and pacifist considerations by concluding, in effect, *that there is no dilemma*; that war is simply a part of the human experience, God

Himself having either ordained or permitted it in each instance. It arises from, and stands as a clear manifestation of, the nature of fallen Man. That does not mean, however, that Man's Creator does not require Man to act (and, if it cannot be otherwise, fight) as justly as he can in the context of his fallen condition.

For adherents to nominal Christianity, the explanatory power of Augustine's theory is substantial. Precisely because 'the state and the political and legal order . . . are not natural, but are remedial institutions ordained by God after the Fall in order to deal with the changed condition of sinful man',[172] his theory enables Christians to understand just war as a coping mechanism for just people who are trying to get along as morally (if not as piously) as they can in an imperfect world. Hence, Augustine's just-war theory constitutes 'the first authoritative teaching that a man can serve in the army and also serve God'.[173]

However, because of the nature of the ethical tensions that Augustine seeks to resolve through his theory, its synthetic character is important, not merely for adherents to Christianity, but also for others seeking a strictly rational account of the problem. For example, if one were to take a de-theologized view of Augustine's theory and focus simply upon the general theoretical problem of the morality of war, one could still find in Augustine an attempt, fully deserving of serious philosophical consideration, to understand how a morally upright citizen of a relatively just state could be justified in pursuing the profession of arms, in the prosecution of war, and ultimately, although unhappily, in the taking of human lives. In any case, Augustine's just-war theory arises from his most deeply rooted philosophical assumptions; and it is those assumptions which we shall next explore.

Notes

1 The Donatist controversy was an indirect result of the persecution under Diocletian, and subsequent schism of the Church, in North Africa at the beginning of the fourth century. One of the parties in the schism charged that the newly ordained Bishop of Carthage, Caecilianus, had received his ordination under the hands of another bishop who had demonstrated himself to be a traitor during the aforementioned persecution as evidenced by his surrendering copies of the Scriptures to the Church's persecutors. This act of 'mortal sin' committed by the bishop ordaining Caecilianus had the effect, according to Caecilianus' opponents, of rendering the ordination null and void. In response, therefore, the opposing faction ordained a bishop of its own, named Majorinus, who was succeeded by Donatus the Great, from whom the faction received its name. See Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970): 106.

2 Leonard Hodgson, 'Christian Citizenship: Some Reflections on St. Augustine, Ep. 138.' *The Church Quarterly* 145 (October 1947): 1.

3 Quinton 1994, 276.
4 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan* 22.75, *NPNF* IV, 301.
5 Augustine, *Questions on the Heptateuch* 6.10, quoted in Swift 1983, 135.
6 Russell 1975, 18.
7 Ibid., 18, 19.
8 Ibid., 19.
9 Ibid.
10 Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* I.XX.62, *NPNF* VI, 27.
11 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan* 22.74, *NPNF* IV, 301, *italics added.*
12 Augustine, *City of God* III.10, 98.
13 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan* 22.75, *NPNF* IV, 301.
14 Ibid., 22.74, 300–1.
15 Zampaglione 1973, 308.
16 Russell 1975, 21.
17 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan* 22.71, *NPNF* IV, 299–300.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 Augustine, *Questions on the Heptateuch* 6.10, quoted in Swift 1983, 135.
21 Suarez, *The Three Theological Virtues: Faith, Hope, and Charity – Divided Into Three Treatises to Correspond with the Number of the Virtues Themselves, in Selections from Three Works of Francisco Suarez*, 'On Charity Disputation XIII: On War 2', trans. Gwladys L. Williams, Ammi Brown, and John Waldron, no. 20, vol. II, *Classics of International Law* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1944): 824.
22 Genesis 15.18–21.
23 Augustine, *City of God* III.10, 97.
24 Ibid., 4.6, 141.
25 Ibid., 142.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid., III.10, 98.
28 Ibid., XV.4, 600, *italics added.*
29 Russell 1975, 21.
30 Bainton 1960, 99.
31 Augustine, *City of God*, XIX.7, 862.
32 Bainton 1960, 99.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid., 100.
35 Ibid.
36 Augustine, *City of God* XV.4, 600, *italics added.*
37 Ibid., XIX.7, 862.
38 Paul Ramsey, *War and the Christian Conscience* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1961): 28.
39 See Genesis 15.13–16.
40 Augustine, *Letter* 189.6, *NPNF* I, 554.
41 For additional perspectives, see Miller 1964, 266, and Hartigan 1967, 210–11.
42 Robert L. Holmes, *On War and Morality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989): 165.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid., 165, 166.
45 Augustine, *Letter* 138.14, *NPNF* I, 486.

46 Augustine, *City of God* IV.15, 154.
47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid., III.14, 104.
50 Psalms 10.23.
51 Augustine, *City of God* III.14, 105.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid., XIX.7, 861.
54 Ibid., 861–2.
55 Ibid., XIX.6, 859–61.
56 Psalms 25.17.
57 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.6, 861.
58 Bainton 1960, 99.
59 John 19.11.
60 Romans 13.1.
61 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.75, *NPNF* IV, 301.
62 Augustine, *Letter* 156.6.16, quoted in Swift 1983, 112.
63 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.75, *NPNF* IV, 301.
64 Augustine, *Letter* 138.14, *NPNF* I, 486.
65 Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* LII.2, *NPNF* VIII, 197.
66 Ibid. The passage alluded to here is Matthew 23.1–3: 'Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say and do not.'
67 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.75, *NPNF* IV, 301.
68 Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* CXXV.7, *NPNF* VIII, 602.
69 Ibid., 603.
70 Ibid.
71 Ibid.
72 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.74, *NPNF* IV, 301.
73 Augustine, *On the Gospel According to St. John*, tractate VI.25, *NPNF* VII, 47. Here Augustine is referring specifically to property rights, but his observation applies in principle to the right to wage war as well.
74 Martin L. Cook, 'Why Serve the State? Moral Foundations of Military Leadership', address delivered at the United States Air Force Academy on 17 November 1994, The Joseph A. Reich, Sr., Distinguished Lecture on War, Morality, and the Military Profession, no. 7 (Colorado Springs: United States Air Force Academy, 1994): 9.
75 Augustine, *Letter* 138.14, *NPNF* I, 485.
76 Ibid.
77 Ibid., *italics added.*
78 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.75, *NPNF* IV, 301.
79 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.12, 866.
80 Ibid.
81 Ibid.
82 Ibid., 867.
83 Ibid.
84 Ibid.
85 Ibid., XIX.11, 866.

86 Augustine, *Letter* 189.6, *NPNF* I, 554.
87 Augustine, *Letter* 229.2, *NPNF* I, 582.
88 Leo Tolstoy, *My Religion,* English translation, London, 1889, 101, quoted in James Hastings, ed. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics,* s.v. 'War', by W. P. Paterson.
89 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.7, 862.
90 Augustine, *Letter* 189.6, *NPNF* I, 554.
91 Ibid.
92 Augustine, *Letter* 93.8, *NPNF* I, 385.
93 Augustine, *Letter* 156.6.16, quoted in Swift 1983, 112.
94 Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will* I.V.34, 11.
95 Ibid., I. IV.25, 9.
96 Ibid.
97 Ibid., 37.
98 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan* XXII.75, *NPNF* IV, 301.
99 Ibid., *italics added.*
100 Augustine, *City of God* I.26, 37.
101 Augustine, *Letter* 138.4, *NPNF* I, 482.
102 Augustine, *Letter* 47.5, *NPNF* I, 293.
103 Matthew 5.39.
104 Augustine, *Letter* 47.5, *NPNF* I, 293.
105 Augustine, *Letter* 189.6, *NPNF* I, 554.
106 Augustine, *City of God* I.4, 10.
107 Augustine, *Letter* 228.2, *NPNF* I, 577.
108 Ibid.
109 Ibid.
110 Ibid.
111 See Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars,* 2nd edn (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992), chapter 16.
112 *Mobilization and Strategic Mobility Planning* (Fort Leavenworth: United States Army Command and General Staff College, 1989), 1–5.
113 Augustine, *Questions on the Heptateuch* 6.10, quoted in Swift 1983, 138.
114 For a detailed discussion of the issues involved, see John Mark Mattox, 'The Moral Limits of Military Deception', *Journal of Military Ethics* (2002) 1(1): 4–15.
115 Augustine, *Letter* 189.6, *NPNF* I, 554.
116 See, for example, Hugo Grotius, *On the Law of War and Peace* [*De Jure Belli ac Pacis*] (translator unspecified), ed. Wei Wilson Chen, Book III, Chapter I:VI; available from http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Thebes/8098; accessed 29 June 2001.
117 See, for example, Augustine, *City of God* XXII.6, 1032.
118 For an excellent overview of this topic, see Deane 1963, chapter VI. See also P. R. L. Brown, 'St. Augustine's Attitude to Religious Coercion', *The Journal of Roman Studies* (1964) 107–16.
119 Swift 1983, 110.
120 Ibid.
121 Burns 1988, 103.
122 This opinion is shared by Russell, who notes, 'While he never explicitly discussed the just war in this context, his justification of persecution shared certain common attitudes with it' (Russell 1975, 23).

123 The Donatist controversy included the idea that perfection was attainable on earth. The Donatists felt that if a priest were morally impure, he could not administer the sacramental ordinances of the Church. Implicit in the Donatist claim is the belief that some were morally pure and that moral purity could be ascertained by observing outward reputation and conduct. Hence, it followed for the Donatists that moral purity is a state attainable by mortals and that the institutional Church is a society of the already redeemed (see Frederick H. Russell, '"Only Something Good Can Be Evil": The Genesis of Augustine's Secular Ambivalence', *Theological Studies* 51 (1990): 711). If this state were really attainable by mortals, then the Donatist position poses an important problem for the theory of just war: just as the cleric lives on a higher spiritual plain than does the communicant, pacifism, which characterizes in part the lifestyle of the cleric, represents a higher lifestyle than that partaken of by those who engage in war. Consistent with this argument, the Donatists were pacifists.

124 See Swift 1983, 142.

125 The Circumcellions 'were unemployed laborers and peasants speaking only Punic. They were Donatists, who looked forward to Christianity's return to the purity of its origins and the banishment of those whom they accused of ignoring the message of Christ as spelt out in the Gospels. In the name of their archaic faith, they attacked and laid waste the homes of the landed proprietors, mainly rich Roman citizens. It was this protest mentality, not yet inured to Roman domination, which facilitated the conquest of Africa by the Vandals. The Punic population felt closer to the barbarians than to the Roman occupiers' (Zampaglione 1973, 313).

126 Augustine, *Letter* 23.7, *NPNF* I, 244.

127 Ibid.

128 Ibid.

129 See Russell 1975, 23–4.

130 Ibid., 24.

131 Eugene TeSelle, 'The Civic Vision in Augustine's City of God', *Thought* 62 (September 1987): 277.

132 Daniel 3.29, as rendered in Augustine, *On the Gospel According to St. John*, tractate 11.14, *NPNF* VII, 80.

133 Augustine, *On the Gospel According to St. John*, tractate 11.14, *NPNF* VII, 80.

134 Augustine, *Letter* 93.3.9, *NPNF* I, 385.

135 Ibid., 93.5.16, 17, *NPNF* I, 388.

136 Ibid.

137 Luke 14.16–23: 'Then said he [Jesus] unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. . . . So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. . . . And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.' Of the phrase, 'Compel them to come in', Swift notes, 'This short command (*coge intrare*) became almost a byword for Augustine's approach to heresy' (Swift 1983, 147. Swift notes the appearance of this phrase in a similar connection in *Contra Gaudentium* 1.25.28; *Letter* 173.10; and *Sermon* 112.7.8). However, in addition to appealing to the metaphor suggested by the parable in Luke,

Augustine cites the actual example of one whom Christ himself compelled: Saul of Tarsus who became Paul the Apostle. '[W]hen He came to summon Paul . . . He not only constrained him with His voice, but even dashed him to the earth with His power; and that He might forcibly bring one who was raging amid the darkness of infidelity to desire the light of the heart, He first struck him with physical blindness of the eyes. . . . Towards whom did Christ use violence? Whom did He compel? Here they [i.e. the Donatists, who contended that one should not be compelled to communion with the Catholic Church] have the Apostle Paul. Let them recognize in his case Christ first compelling, and afterwards teaching; first striking, and afterwards consoling.' (Augustine, *A Treatise Concerning the Correction of the Donatists* VI.22, *NPNF* IV, 641).

138 See Augustine, *Letter* 173.10, *NPNF* 1, 547.
139 Augustine, *Letter* 93.3.5, *NPNF* I, 383–4.
140 Augustine, *Letter* 93.2.8, *NPNF* I, 382.
141 Letter 93.1.3, *NPNF* I, 383.
142 Swift 1983, 145.
143 Augustine, *A Treatise Concerning the Correction of the Donatists* 2.7, *NPNF* IV, 635.
144 Augustine, *Letter* 93.5.16, *NPNF* I, 388.
145 Ibid., 93.2, *NPNF* I, 382.
146 Ibid., 173.2, *NPNF* I, 544.
147 Augustine, *In Answer to the Letters of Petilian, the Donatist, Bishop of Cirta* 2.95.217, *NPNF* IV, 585.
148 Augustine, *Letter* 93.3.8, *NPNF* I, 384–5.
149 Ibid.
150 It is important to note that his compulsion truly was directed at heretics and not at non-Christians. In *City of God* XVIII.46, Augustine seems to suggest that the Jews should be allowed to maintain their special identity because of the witness that they have borne to the Gentiles by having carried the Scriptures with them in their dispersion. Writing in 1621, Suarez echoes this sentiment on the authority of Augustine: 'However, the Church has always considered that this tolerance [i.e. allowing non-Christians to practise their own rites within the confines of Christian states] is especially advisable in dealing with the Jews, because the errors of the latter furnish a testimony to the faith in many particulars. In the first place, the Jews admit that the Messiah was promised, and they accept the Scriptures from which we clearly prove that the promise has been fulfilled. Secondly, we see fulfilled in them what the Prophets and Christ foretold regarding their desertion of Him and their hardness of heart. Finally, Augustine has said (*On the City of God,* Bk. XVIII, chap. xlvi) that the Jews should be preserved and allowed to live in their own sects, in order that they in turn may preserve a testimony to the Scriptures such as the Church received, even from her enemies; and in this connexion, Augustine quotes the words of Paul (Romans, Chap. xi [v. 11]), "But by their offence, salvation is come to the Gentiles"; and also a passage from the *Psalms* (lviii [v. 12]), "Slay them not, lest at any time my people forget, scatter them by Thy power, &c." Augustine cites similar examples in his first sermon, on *Psalm* xl, near the end.' (Suarez, *The Three Theological Virtues: On Faith, Disputation XVIII: On Means for the Conversion of Unbelievers* 10, 775).
151 Augustine, *Sermon* LXIII. 8 , *NPNF* VI, 449. See also *Letter* 195.24, *NPNF* I.

152 *Letter* 93.5, *NPNF* I, 383.
153 See Augustine, *Letter* 173. 2, *NPNF* I, 544.
154 Augustine, *Letter* 93.5.19, *NPNF* I, 389.
155 Augustine, *In Answer to the Letters of Petilian, the Donatist, Bishop of Cirta* 2.95.217, *NPNF* IV, 585.
156 See Burns 1988, 114.
157 Swift 1983, 145.
158 Augustine, *In Answer to the Letters of Petilian, the Donatist, Bishop of Cirta* 2.98.224, *NPNF* IV, 586.
159 Gilson 1960, 180.
160 Augustine, *Letter* 34.1, *NPNF* I, 262.
161 Augustine, *In Answer to the Letters of Petilian, the Donatist, Bishop of Cirta*, *NPNF* IV, 574.
162 Frederick H. Russell, '"Only Something Good Can Be Evil": The Genesis of Augustine's Secular Ambivalence', *Theological Studies* 51 (1990): 713.
163 See Deuteronomy 20.10–18.
164 Augustine, *City of God* I.1, 7.
165 Ibid.
166 Ibid., 6.
167 Ibid.
168 Ibid.
169 The relevant sections of the Hague and Geneva Conventions appear in a usefully arranged and annotated form in *The Law of Land Warfare,* Department of the Army Field Manual 27–10 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1956). See especially pp. 22, 23.
170 Louis J. Swift, 'St. Ambrose on Violence and War', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Association 101* (1970): 538.
171 Ibid.
172 Deane 1963, 78.
173 Stanley Windass, *Christianity versus Violence: A Social and Historical Study of War and Christianity* (London: Sheen and Ward, 1964): 23.

4

Neo-Platonism and the Augustinian Just War

Philosophical forces at work

For Augustine, there is a very real sense in which all aspects of the human existence constitute a warlike struggle between the good which is ultimate being and the entropic tendency of fallen Man to turn away from the good and toward the ultimate nothingness of evil. In order to understand Augustine's project as it pertains to the theory of just war, it is imperative to distinguish those concerns which make just war a topic of more than passing interest for Augustine from those which involve merely questions of law or procedure. Indeed, his larger philosophical project comprehends a search for the root causes of human suffering for which war is but a symptom.

Although throughout Augustine's writings the influence of his commitment both to Neo-Platonism and to his interpretation of Christian doctrine is evident, which of these two influences is bearing greatest sway at any particular point is not always clear. Several schools of thought claim derivation from the Platonic world-view and are included under the broad heading of 'Neo-Platonism'. Augustine's Neo-Platonism is to some extent an amalgamation of these – and a thoroughly Christianized one at that – rather than strictly a mirror of any one of them. Nevertheless, inasmuch as Augustine himself characterizes the 'Platonists' (by which, he appears to mean most proximately Neo-Platonists)[1] as those philosophers whose system most closely approximated the perfected view available through the revelations of Christianity, and since he himself quotes Neo-Platonic writers in a generally favourable light, it is clear that Neo-Platonism bore a significant influence upon Augustine's intellectual development.[2] Moreover, as one examines his just-war theory in the light of Neo-Platonic assumptions, the evidence of his having relied upon those assumptions to undergird the positions he takes relative to war is nothing less than striking. In short, Augustine did not merely Christianize the theory of just war; he Platonized it as well. In fact, he 'followed Plato as far as the Christian faith allowed'[3] which, in terms of the application he makes of Neo-Platonism to the theory of just war, is oftentimes a considerable distance.

Augustine the erstwhile Manichaean

Neo-Platonism was one of three important religious-philosophical influences, outside of Christianity, that bore sway in Augustine's life, and it is the only one of the three that remained after the time of his conversion to Christianity. The other two important influences were 'Academic' scepticism and Manichæism. Augustine was early attracted to both of these as alternatives to Christianity.

While the influence of Academic scepticism and Manichaeism upon the early Augustine cannot be denied, they properly can be discounted as having had a significant influence upon the development of his just-war thinking. Indeed, he appeals neither to sceptical nor to Manichaean arguments to establish his just-war claims. All of Augustine's writings on war were produced after the time that Academic scepticism had lost its attraction for him and after the time that he had 'repudiated . . . with all [his] heart'[4] the teachings of the Manichaeans. However, one still can gain a useful perspective on Augustine's just-war thinking by noting, in particular, his reasons for rejecting the Manichaean view on war. Manichaeism embraced 'a doctrinaire pacifism'[5] and considered war to be

> a diabolical phenomenon which revived on earth the customs and the methods of the demons: the beings who from the beginning of creation had fostered persecution and slaughter. The believer was required to refrain from war, since the killing of living beings (including animals) was forbidden. Inasmuch as the soul was nothing other than the continuation of the eternal substance of the Father, whoever struck his neighbor was guilty of aggression against God. Consequently the profession of arms was completely prohibited.[6]

Consequently, the Manichaeans rejected portions of the Old Testament where violent actions are presented as having been divinely directed. They believed it was manifestly impossible that the all-good God would command the inflicting of suffering, which they held, in all circumstances, to be evil. To this claim, Augustine responds that 'such a command can be rightly given by no other than the true and good God, who alone knows the suitable command in every case, and who alone is incapable of inflicting unmerited suffering on any one'.[7] He addresses the specific case of Moses' spoiling the Egyptians prior to the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt:

> [I]f Moses had originated this order [to spoil the Egyptians], or if the people had done it spontaneously, undoubtedly it would have been sinful; and perhaps the people did sin, not in doing what God commanded or permitted, but in some desire of their own for what they took.

> The permission given to this action by divine authority was in accordance with the just and good counsel of Him who uses punishments both to restrain the wicked and to educate His own people; who knows also how to give more advanced precepts to those able to bear them, while He begins on a lower scale in the treatment of the feeble. As for Moses, he can be blamed neither for coveting the property, nor for disputing, in any instance, the divine authority.[8]

Augustine argues that one can receive divine authorization to perform acts which would otherwise be forbidden, and that when such an authorization is given, the acts cannot be regarded as evil. He brings this point into sharper focus by considering the case in which God directs Moses, not only to take the possessions of others but also, to engage in war:

> It is therefore mere groundless calumny to charge Moses with making war, for there would have been less harm in making war of his own accord, than in not doing it when God commanded him. And to dare to find fault with God Himself for giving such a command, or not to believe it possible that a just and good God did so, shows, to say the least, an inability to consider that in the view of divine providence, which pervades all things from the highest to the lowest, time can neither add anything nor take away; but all things go, or come, or remain according to the order of nature or desert in each separate case. . . . This being the case, and as the judgments of God and the movements of man's will contain the hidden reason why the same prosperous circumstances which some make a right use of are the ruin of others, and the same afflictions under which some give way are profitable to others, and since the whole mortal life of man upon earth is a trial,[9] who can tell whether it may be good or bad in any particular case – in time of peace, to reign or to serve, or to be at ease or to die – or in time of war, to command or to fight, or to conquer or to be killed? At the same time, it remains true, that whatever is good is so by the divine blessing, and whatever is bad is so by the divine judgment.[10]

Augustine rejects the idea that acts are evil in and of themselves. Rather, acts which men generally would consider evil are, in the infinite wisdom of God, justifiable and good under some circumstances. Because God directed, in the case of Moses, that a war be fought, it must be that war is not intrinsically evil; otherwise, God would not have directed it. Note that implicit in this later point is the threshold claim of just-war theory: even if not all wars are just, it is still possible to claim that *some* wars are just. One might rightly argue that this passage merely supports the claim that wars fought at divine direction are just, and not necessarily wars which have been adjudicated to be just through the

application of some set of just-war criteria. Even so, Augustine's argument is sufficient to establish his rejection not only of the fundamental Manichaean metaphysic, but also of Manichaean pacifism, which precludes just war as a logical possibility.

Having eliminated Manichaeism as a possible source for Augustine's just war theory, we can now turn our attention to Neo-Platonism.

Augustine the Neo-Platonist

Neo-Platonism not only 'always colored Augustine's teachings', but also actually 'made it possible for him to accept Christianity'.[11] Indeed, its influence upon him was profound:

> If we compare Augustine's writings first with a typical Neoplatonist work and second with the New Testament, the form of his thought appears closer to the Neoplatonist work. And within his own writings it is generally true that philosophical concepts, such as order, give new meaning to biblical texts, while the biblical texts, by and large, simply reinforce meanings, such as order, which are already present.[12]

Moreover, the influence of core Neo-Platonic notions is abundantly evident in his just-war theory. To see how this is so, let us first lay the groundwork for the just-war discussion to follow by establishing the fundamental ideas associated with Augustine's Neo-Platonic thought.

Plotinus appears to be the principal source for Augustine's understanding of Neo-Platonism. Plotinus is to Augustine 'a second Plato'.[13] And, 'If we are to believe Augustine himself, there can be no doubt that he used Plotinus, because he says, and seems always to have thought, that he owed, among other things, his whole theory of knowledge to him.'[14]

The hierarchy of being and value

As with Plotinus, Augustine's world-view is hierarchically structured. Not surprisingly, God uniquely occupies the top position in the hierarchy. God is supremely *good* (in fact, He is the realization of the Platonic 'Good') and He is *uniquely* so (indeed, He is the realization of the Neo-Platonic 'One'). 'God is simple, absolute being, as distinguished from all created things which are manifold and variable. He is the basis and source of all that really exists.'[15] There is also an important sense for Augustine in which God is the only entity that truly and completely *is*. This is so because His existence is the very essence of all being. In this regard, Augustine takes very seriously the words spoken by God Himself to Moses: 'I AM THAT I AM.'[16] Augustine interprets this 'as

implying that God is being *par excellence*, the most real thing of all. Hence the hierarchy of value becomes also a hierarchy of reality, so that it makes sense to speak of "degrees of being"'.[17]

All other entities subordinate to God in the hierarchy of being and value (and all other entities on the hierarchy *are* subordinate) are deficient when compared to Him by any standard of measurement. Hence, it follows for the Neo-Platonist that it is impossible for Man truly to comprehend God, even through the most deliberate contemplation. Nevertheless, Man can know that because God occupies the supreme position in the hierarchy of being and value, He is perfect in all His attributes, and whatever He commands is right. Thus, Augustine argues:

> if God commands a nation to do something contrary to its customs or constitutions, it must be done even if it has never been done in that country before. If it is a practice which has been discontinued, it must be resumed, and if it was not a law before, it must be enacted.[18]

Hodgson observes that in order to understand Augustine's approach to moral reasoning in general, and his approach to the question of war specifically, it is useful to distinguish between 'good' versus 'bad' and 'right' versus 'wrong', 'keeping "good" for what is intrinsically and essentially good, and using "right" for "what ought to be done in the circumstances"'.[19] This is a useful distinction; for while Augustine clearly holds that everything is good to the extent that it exists (i.e. is free of evil, which is itself the mark of the nonexistence of good in a thing), the imperfections of the present fallen world often force people to choose the lesser of two evils. Hence, one might expect Augustine to assent to the proposition that 'War is bad, and should never be thought of as good. But it does not follow from this that it can never be right.'[20]

The closer to God that someone or something is on the hierarchy of being and value, the closer that person or thing is to the realization of goodness, unity, and being (a description which in its complete and ultimate sense is reserved for God alone). Moreover, creatures 'of a higher grade owe more to the divine Cause of their being than do creatures of a lower grade; and the more perfect they become, the greater becomes their debt and their dependence'.[21] Conversely, the farther away from God someone or something is situated on the hierarchy, the more deficient that person or that thing is as pertaining to these qualities. Not surprisingly, therefore, notions such as 'justice' end up being defined in terms of relative proximity to God, and 'injustice' in terms of relative distance from Him. This, of course, opens the door to the possibility of understanding justice as it pertains to war, both in its *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* manifestations, in terms of the place that a particular justification rates on the hierarchy of being and value.

The 'evil' of war

Augustine's entire approach to the long-standing problem of evil is at once fascinating and perplexing. Augustine holds that the One omnibeneficent God, in whom all good and only good dwells, created all things *ex nihilo*. His creative act and the creatures which resulted from it are good by virtue of the fact that they exist; for He who imparted existence to them is altogether good. Hence, the more some created thing partakes of the being, the unity, the perfection of God, the more it can be said to be 'good'. However, in Augustinian terms, it is not the case that the greater the separation of something from God, either in terms of being, or unity, or any of the divine perfections, the more it can be said to be 'evil'. According to Augustine, evil consists not merely in a distinction or separation from God, but in an *unwarranted* distinction or separation from God – a *privation* of good.[22] Hence, good could (and does) exist without evil, but evil could not exist without a good of which it is the privation. According to Augustine, nature itself – even the nature of the devil himself – cannot be called intrinsically evil. Rather, it is the perversion of that nature that makes it evil.[23] Where, then, does evil fit into the hierarchy of reality? It does not. It is not an entity on the hierarchy at all; rather, 'it is an arrangement of things on that hierarchy otherwise than they ought to be arranged'.[24] It is a manifestation of misplaced human priorities. It is 'to love what should not be loved, not to love what should be loved, to love unequally what should be loved equally, to love equally what should be loved unequally'.[25] As this applies to war, Augustine says:

> What is the evil in war? Is it the death of some who will soon die in any case, that others may live in peaceful subjection? This is mere cowardly dislike, not any religious feeling. The real evils in war are love of violence, revengeful cruelty, fierce and implacable enmity, wild resistance, and the lust of power, and such like; and it is generally to punish these things, when force is required to inflict the punishment, that, in obedience to God or some lawful authority, good men undertake wars, when they find themselves in such a position as regards the conduct of human affairs, that right conduct requires them to act, or to make others act in this way.[26]

According to Augustine, moral qualities like justice or injustice, righteousness or wickedness, supervene upon the 'faultless natural state' [27] that gives them expression. Augustine includes in his concept of 'evil' all that is contrary to nature, and it is in this opposition that evil acquires its ability to harm.[28] Indeed it may be said that 'evil choices' such as are reflected in unjust motives or actions 'make a wrong use of good natures'.[29] Invariably, then, wars fought

as the result of evil choices, as evidenced by their injustice, will be, regardless of the relative position in the hierarchy of those engaged in fighting the wars, further removed from God, from his approbation of them, and from goodness than will those wars which are just.

That some wars can appropriately be called just is evident to Augustine on Neo-Platonic grounds. Consider the following:

P1. As documented in the Old Testament, God, on occasion, gave 'being' to war by commanding wars to be fought.

P2. Anything which exists is, to the extent which it exists, a partaker of the being imparted to it by God.

P3. To the extent that something exists, it must be good.[30]

C1. So, we can argue, in Augustinian fashion, that if war exists, war must, in some sense, be good.

P4. All war contains some evil component.

P5. However, if war were entirely evil, it would not exist at all.

C2. Hence, war also must contain some good component.

C3. But if war is even partly good, that part which is good should attract the attention of the just person; and that good part is the just war.

While this argument may provide an Augustinian account, based on Neo-Platonic rationale, for those wars specifically and personally authorized by God as documented in Scripture, there are, of course, wars which God has not, to human awareness, specifically and personally authorized, but which Augustine is nevertheless prepared to call 'just'. The former case clearly involves Man's receiving the 'licence' requisite for justifying war on Neo-Platonic grounds. However, the latter case requires some explanation. If the only wars fought were those which God directed, then there would be no need to call their goodness into question. However, if one expects divine approbation for engagement in a war which lacks direct divine licence, the justice of the war first must be established by some (presumably divinely approved, although not necessarily divinely appointed) means, namely, the principles of just war. For Augustine, it does not necessarily follow that Man will apply unfailingly the proper criteria for determining which wars can be fought justly; but neither does it follow that human nature is intrinsically evil such that Man cannot

apply them. Augustine 'never condemns involvement in the world as intrinsically evil'.[31] Rather, he 'concluded that the experience of individuals and societies consisted in the interplay between their ontological goodness and their willful evil.'[32] Augustine makes no claim that wars justified by the power of human reason alone are altogether good, but he does hold that they cannot be altogether evil; for 'there is no place in Augustine's universe for a force of pure evil, a polar opposite of God on the hierarchy'.[33] Indeed, good and evil 'are so far co-existent, that if good did not exist in what is evil, neither could evil exist'.[34]

To say that war is 'evil' could mean a number of things in Augustinian terms. For example, it could mean that there are evil aspects to war, or that war is somehow bereft of the total reality and total being that is found in God and in Him alone. It also could mean that human foibles make the completely just execution of a war impossible. For example, to fight a war strictly in response to a divine command could be a very good thing (inasmuch as God's commands are always and completely good) but still fall short of being a perfectly good thing – not because God's commands are anything other than good, but because the war is executed by God's human creations who, through the exercise of their God-given free will, depart from the good and thereby manifest a privation of good. What it cannot mean now or ever for Augustine is that war is altogether evil because it *exists*; for if it exists, then it partakes of being; and to that extent at least, the war is good. Because Augustine rules out the absolutist position that all wars are altogether evil, he opens the door to the proposition that at least some wars may exist which are in some sense good – perhaps even, on the balance, good. Thence arises for Augustine the Neo-Platonic basis for the theory of a just war.

Order and justice

'Order' is, by definition, the relationships which obtain among all the eternal essences and the temporal things participating in these essences as they exist in the hierarchy of being and value.[35] Nothing could be more fundamental to the notion of 'hierarchy' than is the notion of 'order'. Indeed, it is implicit in the very idea of 'hierarchy'. Disorder, on the other hand, is the result of preferring something lower on the hierarchy to something else which rightfully occupies a higher place on the hierarchy.[36] The improper ordering, on the part of Man, of objects of his love results in enormous problems that find expression far beyond the bounds of the individual who gives rise to them. Those problems, all symptomatic of misaligned desires, misaligned objects of love, manifest themselves in a lack of harmony that finds its ultimate, horrific expression in war.

Peace can never obtain without order. Order is 'the fundamental condition

without which peace is only provisional and apparent'.[37] The Neo-Platonic concept of 'order' imposes upon Augustine the necessity to view war as a phenomenon which, when unjustly pursued, tends to promote cosmic disorder, and when justly pursued, tends to promote the orderliness of the universe. This is the fundamental Neo-Platonic principle which provides the basic distinction between just and unjust wars in Augustinian thought.

In this regard, the state can be viewed as an ordering mechanism – one which enforces order. If so, then it is the prerogative of the state to use the methods at its disposal – including war – to establish order. It is possible to present the matter in yet stronger terms and still be consistent with Augustinian precepts: the state is the *only* ordering mechanism to which belongs not only the capability but also the right to wage war. Thus, the question becomes not a matter of whether war can be justified, but rather what kind of war counts as a just war.

Man, acting as agent of the divine will – whatever the Neo-Platonist may construe that to be – periodically finds himself obliged to wage war so as to do all that is within his power to promote order. The order that ought to exist is evident in the nature of things and can be expressed in terms of a hierarchy of being and value to which all things belong. Wars that contribute to the ordering of things in accordance with the rational demands of this hierarchy can only be thought of as 'just'. However, to appreciate fully the place of war in the Augustinian world-view, it is not sufficient to understand war as occupying a discernible position within the Neo-Platonic hierarchy of being and value; for, from pre-Socratic times, 'Ancient Greek thought commonly accepted war between the city-states themselves and between Greeks and "barbarians" as part of the order of nature'.[38] Rather, it likewise is necessary to understand that the order of nature imposes certain valuations upon the acts of human beings relative to that order. As Augustine states:

> According to the eternal law, which requires the preservation of natural order, and forbids the transgression of it, some actions have an indifferent character, so that men are blamed for presumption if they do them without being called upon, while they are deservedly praised for doing them when required. The act, the agent, and the authority for the action are all of great importance in the order of nature.[39]

Clearly, the City of God and the earthly city represent altogether different orders of things. While war as we know it is antithetical to the conditions of the City of God (as evidenced by the fact that Satan and his followers who tried to make war in heaven were cast out),[40] it is in some sense a necessary part of the order of things on earth. The ordering function that Augustine has in mind is not one which has as its ultimate aim the permanent preservation of the

present earthly order, but one which recognizes the present order as in some sense a vehicle by which the elect are schooled preparatory to entering the heavenly city.[41] Human society is, by its very nature, disorderly. So, God, who orders everything, including wars, uses war as a means to promote order in the earthly city while those who are to be saved make their perilous journey towards the heavenly city. The conflicting aims of human beings are evident in the fact that one segment of humanity often moves to oppress another as soon as it finds that it is strong enough to do so. The weaker segment submits, generally 'choosing peace and survival at any price',[42] such that it seems surprising when some choose death over bondage and servitude. However, one sees superimposed upon these human conflicts the unfolding plan of God, wherein some nations are 'entrusted with empire', while others are permitted to be 'subdued to alien domination'.[43]

Thus, for better or for worse, war occupies a place in the conceptual scheme of the present world; and Augustine would have us understand that a qualitative assessment of any particular war is possible, based upon the effects, both actual and intended, of that war upon other entities within the hierarchy of being and value. War is a just response to entities or events which promote disorder and which occupy a place on the hierarchy that is lower than war itself; it is an unjust response to entities or events which occupy a place on the hierarchy that is higher than war. In contrast to the rationale applied by the ancient Greeks and Romans, Augustine holds that 'the purpose of war is not victory, but the restoration of an ordered society'.[44] This is universally so. It is true both in heaven and on earth. The fact that war appeared in heaven suggests a parallel with present mortal experiences with war in terms of the attitude Augustine would have us take towards them: '[W]ars might be waged by the good, in order that, by bringing under the yoke the unbridled lusts of men, those vices might be abolished which ought, under a just government, to be either extirpated or suppressed.'[45]

Augustine observes an important link between the ideas of order and of justice:

> Thus, in all the things which appear shocking and terrible to human feebleness, the real evil is the injustice; the rest is only the result of natural properties or of moral demerit. This injustice is seen in every case where a man loves for their own sake things which are desirable only as means to an end, and seeks for the sake of something else things which ought to be loved for themselves. . . . God is not the author, but He is the controller of sin; so that sinful actions, which are sinful because they are against nature, are judged and controlled, and assigned to their proper place and condition, in order that they may not bring discord and disgrace on universal nature.[46]

Augustinian justice consists, among other things, in accepting 'the order of the universe'.[47] Possessed of such lofty conceptual content, the ideas of justice and order are properly situated within the Platonic realm of the intelligible, rather than the mundane realm of the sensible. Therefore, their qualities are not as readily specifiable as the qualities of sensible objects.[48] Nevertheless, it is precisely because of their lofty place in the hierarchy of being and value that justice and order demand our attention.

While justice is the mechanism by which the universe is ordered,[49] it is also the tool employed by well-ordered states to ensure both domestic and international order. Hence, 'a state or earthly city, for Augustine, can be called "just" only in the sense that it is what he refers to as "well-ordered" or "well-constituted"'.[50] Inasmuch as 'each person sees that justice must be respected, the lower subordinated to the higher, equality maintained among things which are equal, and everyone given what belongs to him',[51] a just war is one in which each party has justice meted out according to its respective deserts, whereas an unjust war is one in which each party does not receive its just deserts.

The more orderly a state is, the more just it will be; and the more justice a state practises, the better ordered it will be. Augustine does not advocate for the state to act as if it were a criminal gang (even though in the final analysis the state appears strikingly similar to one);[52] for the thing that makes criminal gangs criminal is the fact that they operate outside the established, natural order. Generally speaking, states can at least lay claim to a divine charter for their existence in the way that criminal gangs cannot. True justice is not necessary for the state's being, as Cicero held, but only for its *well*-being.[53] However, since it is the well-being of the imperfect state that Augustine wishes to preserve, he necessarily insists on the right of the state to maintain, even if by force, both the domestic and the international order. Likewise, one must not be put off by the fact that the state is, and always will be, an imperfect instrument for the imposition of order. Although imperfect, it is the best ordering instrument available to fallen Man, who will not turn to God and thereby obviate the state's felt need to use war or other forms of coercion for the imposition of order. As Augustine urges, 'But for the sake of the necessities of this life we must not neglect the arrangements of men that enable us to carry on intercourse with those around us.'[54] Although it may be that the mortal quest for true justice and true order is doomed to ultimate failure, 'dedication to the impossible task is demanded by the very precariousness of civilised order in the world'.[55] After all, the earthly city is a relative good because it serves to preserve some semblance of order; and good men will 'make use of this world in order to enjoy God',[56] in contrast to evil men who 'want to make use of God in order to enjoy the world'.[57]

Although one may want to criticize Augustine's 'scrupulous deference to

order',[58] one should note that whatever problems arise in this way are not the careless by-products of faulty philosophy. Augustine deliberately appeals to order in an effort to resolve the tensions inherent in just-war discourse – not to exacerbate them. His effort is merely an attempt to make it possible for those predestined for salvation to manage with the threat or use of violence for as long as they are in the present world. By appealing to an eternal verity like the idea of order – an idea which in the hierarchy of things enjoys a close proximity to God Himself, there can be no question that the demands of order should take precedence over even the well-founded scruples of mortal Man.[59]

The disordering influence of pride

At the polar opposite of order, one finds not only disorder but also pride. Nothing in the Augustinian universe is more damaging (even damning) to the cause of justice and order than is the vice of pride:

> Pride is the source of all diseases, because pride is the source of all sins. When a physician removes a disorder from the body, if he merely cures the malady produced by some particular cause, but not the cause itself, he seems to heal the patient for a time, but while the cause remains, the disease will repeat itself. . . . Whence doth iniquity abound? From pride. Cure pride and there will be no more iniquity.[60]

The effects of pride are to be found everywhere:

> All other vices are to be apprehended when we are doing wrong; but pride is to be feared even when we do right actions, lest those things which are done in a praiseworthy manner be spoiled by the desire for praise itself.[61]

Why is pride something to be feared? Because its presence always signals a disordering – a deliberate perversion – of the elements in the hierarchy of being and value. Not only does such a perversion incur God's displeasure, but it also causes untold difficulties for humankind. Any time that which is higher is made subject to that which is lower in the hierarchy, the harmony of the affected portion of the universe is disrupted in direct proportion. Pride is a deliberate turning away from God – a pitting of human will against the divine – in a way that makes impossible the attainment of temporal peace, much less the attainment of eternal salvation in the City of God. 'And what is pride,' asks Augustine, 'except a longing for a perverse kind of exaltation?'[62]

Indeed, every perversion of the right order is a manifestation of pride. It follows, therefore, that unjust wars are rooted in pride: these are the wars

which usurp established authority, manifest a lust for domination and enslavement, or are fought to obtain for a people that which is not their proper good. Unjust wars are themselves a perversion of the right order. Conversely, just wars are fought in an attempt to right a perverse order.

The pride which is so distinctive a characteristic of natural, fallen Man makes wars ultimately unavoidable in the present state. One of the reasons why this is so is because of the confusion of languages at Babel, a punishment visited upon Man because of his pride.[63] The confusion of tongues led to the separation of men into what were, for all practical purposes, mutually unintelligible groups. Ironically, while this punishment was imposed as the result of human pride, the separation of men into groups engendered another kind of pride that is realized in terms of the enmity of men in one group toward men in another group such that, by Augustine's account, 'a man would be more cheerful with his dog for company than with a foreigner'.[64]

Evidence of Neo-Platonic influences in Augustine's just-war theory: *jus ad bellum*

Just cause

Just as beings can be ordered hierarchically based on their relative goodness, so can human acts, including war. Not surprisingly, those wars which appear at the top of the hierarchy of legitimacy are those wars ordered by God.[65] When God enjoins men to fight a war, that war 'is undoubtedly just, for there is no evil in Him'.[66]

Next would appear to be those wars 'undertaken by the good against the wicked in defence of moral values'.[67] However, without a consensus as to how one is to determine what counts as a moral value, it becomes necessary to draw some further distinctions on this point. To that extent, it is helpful to consider what Augustine takes to be the antithesis of moral value, namely, sin. 'Sin', says Augustine, 'is any transgression in deed, or word, or desire, of the eternal law. And the eternal law is the divine order or will of God, which requires the preservation of natural order and forbids the breach of it.'[68] Fortunately, Augustine elsewhere provides illustrative examples of what he calls 'the main categories of sin'.[69] The worst offences are those which disrupt the divinely established order of the universe, namely, '[s]ins against nature'.[70] These sins, 'like the sin of Sodom, are abominable and deserve punishment wherever and whenever they are committed'.[71] Next come sins that entail 'offences against human codes of conduct'.[72] These sins likewise are blameworthy because, although they involve humanly established conventions, they, too, introduce a tendency to disorder. The fact that, for example, Augustine justifies the

children of Israel in going to war against the Amorites when they denied the children of Israel the customary right of harmless passage[73] suggests that he considers breaches of this kind not only blameworthy, but also punishable (sometimes even to the extent of going to war). The final category Augustine names includes 'sins of violence'.[74] He specifies these sins as all involving 'the impulse . . . to injure others, either by word or by deed'.[75] One can imagine circumstances in which Augustine would likely justify going to war to avenge egregious instances of sins of violence.

The correlation between the central Neo-Platonic notion of order and the Augustinian just causes to go to war is clear: when a state is deprived of its natural rights (whether it be the right of innocent passage, as in the case of the Amorites, or the right to security and non-interference from barbarian influences, as in the case of the Vandal invasion of North Africa), order is lost; and its loss is so significant that its restoration is, for Augustine, justifiable by the most extreme measures, including war.

Likewise, when Augustine justifies war for the cause of gaining the return of that which has been stolen by one nation from another, he does so because theft, by its very nature, is altogether contrary to the natural moral order. To tolerate it would be to tolerate a damning imbalance in human society which would work to the detriment of everyone, including the perpetrators. Hence, the resulting restoration of order that comes through the waging of a just war to recover losses works to the benefit of everyone. As McKeon astutely observes, although tangible possessions may be considered intrinsic goods, since (Neo-Platonically speaking) everything which *is*, is good in so far as it exists, it still is the case that if these possessions are not well ordered, they are not in reality good for the possessor; 'and they are well ordered only if ordered to spiritual things'.[76] The possession of stolen goods defrauds those from whom the goods are taken and works nothing but spiritual harm – the only kind of harm that really matters in the context of the whole Socratic–Platonic–Neo-Platonic tradition – to those who steal them. Order demands the restoration of stolen property. If war is necessary to effect that restoration, then war presents itself as a just and moral imperative.

Although revenge might seem the most plausible motivation for the 'just causes' of avenging injuries[77] or of punishing a nation for wrongs committed by its citizens,[78] nothing could be further from the truth; revenge as commonly understood (itself a mechanism of disorder) is completely foreign to the Augustinian spirit of warfare. Thus, vengeance of the kind contemplated by Augustine involves the intent to restore the divinely appointed natural order.

On the other hand, the Neo-Platonic doctrine of order would clearly seem to rule out the use of violence in certain specific ways of which Augustine takes note. For example, order figures heavily in Augustine's position that going to war for the sole purpose of enslaving another nation is not by any means

justifiable. To enslave another people is not a good reason to go to war precisely because it is a violation of the natural order. Of this order in the hierarchy of being and value, Augustine urges that commands given to fellow human beings must issue out of a 'dutiful concern' for their interests, and not out of a 'lust for domination'.[79] For, at the dawn of creation, God established this order when He gave Man dominion over all other creatures under heaven, but not over his fellow human being.[80]

The centrality of order becomes evident again in Augustine's disdain for civil wars. Hierarchically considered, civil wars are for Augustine far worse than international wars because of their capacity to upset the earthly city's ordering mechanism: the state.[81] Augustine's disdain for civil wars is interesting, if not paradoxical, in the light of his overall world-view. Indeed, for him, the earthly city, divided as it is into many nations, is perpetually in a *de facto* state of civil war. From a God's-eye-view, civil war is the characteristic state of Man. (Here we find a clear anticipation of Hobbes' world in which the state delivers Man from the threat of the war of all against all, but still allows for the reality that each nation is in contention with every other nation.) However, if, while viewing humankind collectively from a God's-eye-view, all war can be seen to be civil war, how does Augustine justify any war at all? He justifies it, in a way not unlike that which Hobbes will later do, by vesting authority for the maintenance of order in the person of God's lieutenant on earth, the sovereign of the state. Not only does Augustine disallow citizens the right, as they might suppose, to alter their government (a clear violation of the hierarchy of being and value), but he also acknowledges the right of the sovereign to quell disruptions of the domestic order. Consider Augustine's assessment of Moses' response to the Israelites' worshipping the golden calf:[82]

> There was, therefore, no cruelty in the command, or in the action of Moses, when, in his holy jealousy for his people, whom he wished to be subject to the one true God, on learning that they had fallen away to the worship of an idol made by their own hands, he impressed their minds at the time with a wholesome fear, and gave them a warning for the future, by using the sword in the punishment of a few, whose just punishment God, against whom they had sinned, appointed in the depth of His secret judgment to be immediately inflicted. [83]

In the case in point, Augustine is quick to note that Moses, the earthly sovereign, was properly motivated in his choice to inflict severe punishment upon the idolaters among the Israelites:

> That Moses acted as he did, not in cruelty, but in great love, may be seen from the words in which he prayed for the sins of the people: 'If Thou

> wilt forgive their sin, forgive it; and if not, blot me out of Thy book.'[84] The pious inquirer who compares the slaughter with the prayer will find in this the clearest evidence of the awful nature of the injury done to the soul by the prostitution to the images of devils, since such love is roused to such anger.[85]

However, even if the motivation of the sovereign is blameworthy (for example, in harbouring the desire for vengeance against his subjects rather than a desire for their spiritual welfare), the sovereign, by virtue of his position, is fully authorized to take those steps necessary to maintain the domestic order.

It is true that states may contend against each other. However, since the individual states are themselves the police officers, as it were, of the international order, to permit civil war, properly speaking, would be to undermine the power and authority of the human agency charged to maintain order. Hence, even if the earthly city is in disarray, whatever temporal order there is to be had can be secured only by the states and their sovereigns. If these sovereigns can achieve an acceptable equilibrium, so much the better. If they cannot, it is still better that the individual states be without internal strife so that they can work to secure the international order.

It is instructive to consider why Augustine justifies the most extreme of actions in defence of the state but does not justify the individual in the matter of self-defence. Augustine is adamant on this point. In *On Free Choice of the Will*, Augustine quotes Evodius as arguing that if, when one dies, life can be taken away from the soul as well as the body, then life itself is to be despised as a thing of no worth. If, on the other hand, the life of the soul continues after the demise of the body, then death is not anything to be feared. Accordingly, even if an assailant threatens another's life, it is not possible for the assailant to 'take' that life in the relevant sense. Clearly, the assailant is an evildoer in this situation because, in threatening the life of another, he disturbs the order of nature in which God has ordained that an individual should live until He appoints otherwise. However, if the person being attacked were to kill the assailant in an effort to defend him/herself from the assault, he or she would be just as culpable as the assailant for having disrupted the order of nature. Hence, precisely because it is impossible for one who threatens the life of another to take from the would-be victim anything of true value,[86] and because the only thing that one can lose in death is that which was not his or her proper good,[87] it is difficult if not impossible to imagine that Augustine would grant that men could be considered 'free from sin when they are stained by human blood for the sake of things they ought to despise'.[88] As a result, while the law which restrains people from killing and punishes those who do so is essential to the preservation of the temporal order, it is not the case that one is justified risking the death of those who threaten them by defending against

them. In Evodius' words, 'I do not blame the law which permits such aggressors to be slain; yet I do not know how I would defend the man who kills [them].'[89]

If the state cannot defend itself, then, from the standpoint of that state, all potential for the maintenance either of domestic or international order is destroyed. Hence, the loss of the state is a great calamity. Augustine does not go as far as does Cicero and classify the demise of the state as the worst possible outcome (for to do so would be odd in the light of Augustine's recognition that all states and all else that is not synonymous with the City of God will come to an end at the Last Judgment); but he is ready to join with Cicero in decrying any significant disruption of the present natural order.

In contrast, even if an individual loses his life by reason of not being permitted the right of self-defence, the overall natural order remains intact. The state can, and should, take action to bring the murderer to justice; for the natural order confers the right and responsibility so to do upon the state. It also confers upon the state the right to appoint soldiers for its defence. Hence, Augustine makes the following distinction:

> As to killing others in order to defend one's own life, I do not approve of this, unless one happens to be a soldier or public functionary acting, not for himself, but in defence of others or of the city in which he resides, if he acts according to the commission lawfully given him, and in the manner becoming his office.[90]

The individual, however, cannot assume the prerogatives of the state; for to do so would be to invert the natural order – a clear violation of the hierarchy of being and value.

Comparative justice

Augustinian epistemology requires a mindset which 'judges everything from God's point of view'.[91] This is not to suggest that Man can actually judge as God would; but rather that Man must apply the data of revelation and the light of reason to get him as close to that perspective as possible; and the closer one approaches that ideal, the better, the truer, the more accurate the judgement will be. One must attempt to look down the hierarchy, as it were, in an effort to see things from the divine perspective. When one does this, one encounters just war prior to unjust war and must conclude that the former is to be preferred over the latter. Indeed, some of the most compelling evidence in support of the claim that by 'just war' Augustine means 'comparatively just war' comes from the hierarchy of being and value. The hierarchical nature of Augustine's world-view clearly suggests that everything in the universe – from

God to the most depraved demon – exists on a graded continuum. God is the very personification – the realization – of justice; the most evil being is as deprived of true justice as it is of true being – an almost total deprivation; and everything else falls somewhere in between. Similarly, wars are graded depending on their degree of justice, on the degree of rightness of intent with which they are prosecuted, and so forth.

Comparative justice cannot, in and of itself, confer moral permission to wage a just war; for both sides could be woefully unjust. (For example, one should hardly expect Augustine to select between Hitler and Stalin which of the two was more just.) Nevertheless, Augustine's hierarchical arrangement of the universe clearly implies that, among all of the factors which require consideration in determining whether a war can be justly fought, it must be that one of the parties is discernibly more just than the other.

Moreover, it always must be borne in mind that there is one and only one way to order correctly the elements of the hierarchy, and that is from God's perspective. The fact that one nation's cause appears to be more just than another's in no way guarantees divine approval of that nation's wars; nor does it indicate that any divine assistance in the conflict will be forthcoming. Similarly, a sinful nation that finds itself on the 'just' side of a just war has no guarantee of victory; for in the divine economy which comprehends the entire order of the universe, the collective correction that war can effect might prove more efficacious to the vanquished nation which, from the mortal perspective, is more just than the victor, than would result if the vanquished were victorious.[92] Although Augustine seeks to establish his claim by appealing to a dubious argument based on the etymology of the Latin word *servus*, his point is clear: from God's omniscient perspective, more is involved in the assessment of comparative justice than merely ascertaining which side has the better reason for fighting. Augustine cites the case of Israel's captivity in Babylon at the time of Daniel as a case in point.[93]

Even without omniscience, however, Man is well advised to fight for those causes which, by their nature, will secure for him a greater measure of heavenly goods than would less noble causes. The victory of the side with the comparatively just cause is a matter for rejoicing, but not if even comparatively just victory is obtained at the expense of those 'higher goods' found in the heavenly city.[94] The 'inevitable consequence' of such an inversion can be only 'fresh misery, and an increase of the wretchedness'.[95]

If every created thing is to some extent good inasmuch as it exists, does that mean that even unjust wars are themselves good, but less so than just wars? The Augustinian answer appears to be 'yes': God can, in his omnipotence and omniscience, order states of affairs so that even unjust actions ultimately work to a good advantage; what appears to be unjust from the human perspective is not necessarily unjust. Moreover, there is no particular reason to assume that

Augustine ever considered a just war to be an undertaking which is altogether just or an unjust war to be one which is altogether unjust. He will admit the existence of gradations. He would, of course, prefer that circumstances permit the avoidance of war altogether; but he is realist enough to concede that while that may be possible from time to time, it is not always possible, owing to the imperfections of the present human condition.

Right intention

In the light of the hierarchy of being and value, one must conclude that the only intention with which a nation might be justified in going to war is that which has the effect of re-establishing order. This effect may be only one among many others, but it will be a feature of any just war. This is true, Augustine likely would opine, both of divinely directed wars and of wars fought at the direction of an earthly sovereign.

Augustine's Neo-Platonic rationale for determining right intention becomes clear when one examines Augustine's just causes for war. For example, war fought to avenge injuries[96] is rightly intended because of what it means for a nation to have had an injury inflicted upon it in the first place. An injury is an *iniuria* – an injustice, a wrong – which by its very nature signals a deviation from the divinely appointed order. If a nation goes to war to secure the return of that which was wrongfully taken,[97] it is because the nation thus wronged is entitled, if not morally obligated, to act so as to re-establish order. To do otherwise would be to encourage chaos, and nothing could possibly be more foreign to the harmony and structure that the hierarchy of being and value is intended to impose. This becomes clear in the case of Israel's asserting its right of harmless passage through Amorite lands. To assert that right was to intend to enforce the recognized order among states. Failure to assert that right would have been, from Augustine's perspective, tantamount to inviting entropy into the community of nations.

'Ordered harmony', says Augustine, requires not only that one do no harm to others, but also that one assist others whenever possible.[98] A war waged to re-establish order is certainly one which will not do genuine harm to anyone; for genuine harm is that which affects the soul, and not just the body.[99] Hence, a war fought to re-establish order in accordance with the divinely appointed hierarchy of being and value is one which will promote the long-term benefit of those corrected thereby.

There is some temptation to conclude that the Neo-Platonic ideal would be to withdraw from the world of strife and to tend strictly to matters of the soul.[100] However, one could pursue such a course only by disregarding the disorder evident in everything outside the soul. The temporal world, for all of its shortcomings, is still the transient home of the pilgrim citizens of the City

of God; and Augustine gives them licence to engage in just wars precisely so that they can make the best situation possible out of their current chaotic circumstances. One might be justified in pressing the point more forcefully by arguing that, given Augustine's often-repeated example of the father who acts with the right intention when he disciplines his son in hopes of encouraging his orderly behaviour,[101] it is conceivable that Augustine would assent to the proposition that those circumstances in which a nation *can* act to promote justice and order and those in which it *must* act to that end are one and the same. At very least it can be said that when one nation undertakes to punish another for wrongs committed either by the sovereign acting on behalf of the citizens or by the citizens themselves, if the punishment is undertaken with the right intention, it will always be meted out with the object of correcting a deviation from the order inherent in the hierarchy of being and value.

Inasmuch as just wars are fought to restore a right order to the perversion of that order introduced by pride, the attitude with which a just war is approached and with which it is fought must be devoid of pride. Although pride (and even arrogance) traditionally have been considered desirable attributes of the soldier, Augustine points out that no restoration of proper order can be accomplished by pride. Rather, he notes – and by his own admission, paradoxically so – that it is *humility* and not pride that indicates one's intent to be both honourable and just.[102] The sovereign must be humble, even mournful, concerning the necessity of ordering his enemies to be slain, and the soldier must be both humble and mournful in the execution of his duties. To act in any way contrary to this imperative would be to fall victim to pride and to serve as an instrument not of order, but of disorder. Any war which truly deserves to be called just must be devoid of those attitudes which unchecked would make it unjust. Pagan Rome stands as a paradigmatic case in point. Because of its inability to extricate itself from the effects of pride, it waged wars of expansion which, by their very nature, embodied the wrong kind of intention. Although Providence ordered human affairs so that the resulting *pax Romana* facilitated the spread of the Christian Gospel, Rome still could claim no virtue in its motives. As von Campenhausen notes:

> The deliberate and conscious cultivation of ambition for glory on the part of the Romans could, indeed, inhibit avarice, as well as countless other vices, and impel them to fantastic achievements; but still it was radically an evil force, making for disorder at a profounder level and ever new forms of corruption.[103]

Those rulers possessed of rightly ordered intentions inevitably will 'prefer to have command over their lower desires than over any number of subject peoples'.[104]

Just as wrong intention invalidates any claim of justice on the part of the state, no individual can be justified in killing in self-defence: To do so would be to place inordinate value on one's mortal life – a perilously proud and defiant act.

Competent authority

Subjection to higher authority, whether it be the authority of God, the authority of the sovereign, or the authority of the Church – all of which for Augustine are superior to the authority of anyone acting in his or her own private capacity, is absolutely essential to a well-ordered society; and no righteous man would think otherwise. 'How', Augustine asks, 'can that man be called righteous who is such an enemy to righteousness that, if he had the power, he would abolish its authority, that he might not be subject to its threatenings or its penalties?'[105]

Men acting as private citizens have not the authority to wage war. That authority is fixed clearly and irrevocably in terms of its location on the hierarchy. Only God or His earthly delegate, the sovereign head of state, can declare war. Earthly sovereigns, it is true, are prone to error because of the foibles of human nature. Not all of the wars they direct to be fought are just. However, no claim is made that earthly sovereignties will always seek to establish an order which accords with that found in the City of God. As Burns states, 'the institutions of government are concerned, not to help men to achieve the right order, but to minimize disorder'.[106] In any event, those wars which are just will not be privately initiated wars; they will always be directed by an authority higher than that of the private individual. Therefore, those who find themselves the objects of war do so because their lot has been appointed either directly by the divine ordering of human affairs or indirectly (but no less divinely) through the instrumentality of the sovereign.

'No one can have any power against them but what is given him from above. For there is no power but of God,[107] who either orders or permits.'[108] Therefore, 'a righteous man, serving it [i.e. the state] may be under an ungodly king, may do the duty belonging to his position in the state in fighting by the order of his sovereign'.[109] Hence, if we are to accept the hierarchy of being and value, that man is 'blameless who carries on war on the authority of God, of whom every one who serves Him knows that He can never require what is wrong'.[110] Moreover, it is precisely because Augustine views government as a necessary evil that he will permit no revolt against it – even in the case of an unjust tyrant. Augustine points to Nero Caesar as an example of one whose lust for domination was pre-eminent among his numerous vices. 'Yet even to men like this,' says Augustine, 'the power of domination is not given except by the providence of God, when he decides that man's condition deserves such

masters.'[111] At no point is Augustine willing to disrupt the natural order in an effort to justify civil disobedience:

> Nor will the wrongfulness of a tyrannical rebellion deserve praise, if the tyrant treat his subjects with royal clemency: nor will the order of royal power deserve blame, if a king rage with tyrannical cruelty. For it is one thing to wish to use well unjust power, and it is another thing to use unjustly just power.[112]

Although Augustine arguably views civil war as disorderly and, hence, not a just cause for war, still his writings reflect at least a minor ambivalence on the question of civil disobedience. For example, Augustine suggests that an unjust law is not a law and hence need not be obeyed.[113] In the present context, the problem arises that the sovereign conceivably could order his subjects to war for reasons that are clearly at odds with the revealed will of God. In that case, the subjects are faced with a dilemma: either obey the law of God and disobey the sovereign, or obey the sovereign who is, after all, God's lieutenant who acts with God's authority, and disregard the fact that the call to arms appears, under the circumstances, to be unjust. All things considered, the preponderance of evidence suggests that Augustine is inclined towards the second horn of the dilemma. As always, selecting one or the other horn of a dilemma does nothing to resolve the underlying tension. However, it does stand as evidence of Augustinian pragmatism manifested in a willingness to work within the framework of the existing order.

One important implication (among others) of Augustine's view of the state is that, although the state cannot be perfectly just, it also is not altogether evil, inasmuch as states are part of the natural order ordained by God. Where Cicero goes wrong in his assessment of the state, as far as Augustine is concerned, is with his assumption that because the state is a part of the natural order, it must therefore endure for ever. Augustine takes the position that because the state is a part of the extant natural order, it will not, in fact, remain eternally. Nevertheless, its lack of permanence does not mean that the state has no entitlement to act so as to secure its continued existence, if necessary through violent means. The state cannot 'turn the other cheek' to offences against it in the way that private citizens of the earthly city can, and in the way that Christian pilgrim citizens of the City of God are enjoined to do. If it is to fulfil the measure of its creation, the earthly state must act so as to secure its survival.[114]

The state exists in a realm where the influence of the earthly city is dominant. That realm, Man's present estate, is entropic by nature, and it is the business of earthly government to maintain the earthly order. Earthly governments, like the earthly order in which Man resides, are punishments visited

upon Man because of sin. The question arises, therefore, as to why Man ought to obey the sovereign and go to war at the sovereign's behest if such a course of action will serve only to maintain the earthly order with all of its attendant imperfections. The reason is because the only alternative is disorder; the state has not the power to order the affairs of human beings after the pattern found in the City of God. That power and that prerogative belong to God, and to God alone. Providentially, however, God has ordained the institutions of the state not only as a penalty, but also, as is the case with virtually everything else that God has ordained for Man on earth, as a remedy for sin.[115] At no point, however, is Augustine willing to hail the state as a perfect remedy.

For the ancients, political felicity depended on elevating the right persons into high political office. Augustine showed on both metaphysical and anthropological grounds why such a view was both naive and impossible. All would not be right even if the proper persons ruled and subjects obeyed the rules.[116]

Peace as the ultimate objective of war

Augustine defines peace as the 'tranquility of order'.[117] Peace within a home, as within a country, 'is the ordered agreement among those who live together about giving and obeying orders'.[118] Of course, this description fails to typify the generality of life in the earthly city, with all of its disorders. Nevertheless, Augustine hastens to point out that such peace as the earthly city can lay hold of is to be desired. 'Even the peace of Babylon was for him a relative good.'[119] At least the earthly city searches for an earthly peace and aims, 'through the imposition of a hierarchy, at the establishment of order within the state'.[120] However, as Augustine points out, even an earthly peace is better than no peace at all, and it is to attain to that peace that wars are fought.[121]

Properly understood, peace is more than the mere absence of violent action. A Stalinist tyrant can preserve that kind of peace in a totalitarian state. Nevertheless, the order which obtains in such a state is more perceived than real because it is, in fact, a gross perversion of the order of the universe: the tyrant who tries to establish that kind of peace 'by making all the members of the city subject to himself really usurps the office of God'.[122]

There is a sense in which peace is synonymous with happiness. Peace as the mere absence of war is better than war, but it is not the ultimate peace. The soul obtains its rest only when it obtains this ultimate peace, which is not attainable in this transitory world. Nevertheless, the attitude which typifies true peacemakers is the one which enables carnal, fallen Man to enjoy – even while sojourning in this fallen world – spiritual fellowship with the citizens of the City of God:

> Now, they are peacemakers in themselves who, by bringing in order all the motions of their soul, and subjecting them to reason – i.e. to the mind and spirit – and by having their carnal lusts thoroughly subdued, become a kingdom of God: in which all things are so arranged, that that which is chief and pre-eminent in Man, i.e. mind and reason, is brought under subjection to something better still, which is the truth itself, the only-begotten Son of God. For a man is not able to rule over things which are inferior, unless he subjects himself to what is superior. And this is the peace which is given on earth to men of goodwill; this is the life of the fully developed and perfect wise man. From a kingdom of this sort brought to a condition of thorough peace and order, the prince of this world is cast out, who rules where there is perversity and disorder.[123]

As Augustine elsewhere points out, war is oftentimes the vehicle by which, regretfully but necessarily, the 'carnal lusts' referred to above are 'thoroughly subdued' so that unruly and unjust men can be brought into subjection, first to reason, and ultimately to God himself.

'It is the perfection of peace,' says Augustine, 'where nothing offers opposition'[124] – in other words, the exact opposite of that natural state of warfare as defined by Heraclitus or Hobbes. This oppositionless peace is descriptive of Augustine's view of heaven. In contrast, Augustine describes hell as 'war' of the worst possible kind.[125] All of this leads to the conclusion that while Augustine urges the maintenance of earthly peace, he is unwilling to endorse the pursuit of earthly peace at any price. To do so would be to give priority to the temporal peace over justice and order, both of which typify heavenly peace. Properly understood, the peace that is worth fighting for is that which most closely resembles the peace found in heaven.

Evidence of Neo-Platonic influences in Augustine's just-war theory: *jus in bello*

Although Augustine's *jus ad bellum* pronouncements are more numerous, and to that extent more thoroughly developed, than are his *jus in bello* statements, one can nevertheless find traces of Neo-Platonic influences in this latter area as well. In a letter to Boniface, a Roman general in Africa, Augustine addresses the question of which of two vocations – the religious life or the military life – is the 'higher' calling. Not surprisingly, Augustine argues that the religious life is higher. However, at the same time he wants to make clear that the military profession occupies a just and proper place in the earthly city. When Africa is on the verge of invasion by the pagan Vandals and the Roman legions are

North Africa's sole defence, Boniface, a widower, desires to retire from military service and become a monk. 'Not now', pleads Augustine.

> The monks indeed occupy a higher place before God, but you should not aspire to their blessedness before the proper time. You must first be exercised in patience in your calling. The monks will pray for you against your invisible enemies. You must fight for them against the barbarians, their visible foes.[126]

Augustine's argument is in complete harmony with his larger Neo-Platonic view of the world. As in Plato, so in Augustine, while the warrior class is not seen as occupying the pinnacle of the social order, the propriety of the existence of the military class is *never* questioned.

* * *

While Neo-Platonism exerts an enormous influence upon Augustine's theory, it is not the sole important influence upon it. Indeed, there is an important sense in which Augustine does *not* draw upon Neo-Platonic thought: Augustine is not optimistic that even the contemplative person could attain to true justice, true righteousness or true peace through the medium of philosophy alone. That attainment requires the supernatural efficacy of grace made available to Man by God through Jesus Christ. For Augustine, 'Christianity makes it possible for the Platonism of the mind to become a thing of the heart, for the Platonism of theory to become practice.'[127] War is philosophically problematic, but it is also an eminently practical concern; and nowhere does this transition from the theoretical to the practical present itself in the Augustinian corpus more clearly than it does in the philosophical–theological synthesis that lies at the core of his just-war theory. It is thus to a consideration of the Christian philosophical aspects of Augustine's just-war theory that we now turn.

Notes

1 The safety of this assertion lies in the fact that Augustine appears to have had direct access to the writings of Plotinus and Porphyry, but not direct access to the writings of Plato. As Spade notes, 'except for the first half of the *Timaeus*, the Middle Ages did not possess the texts of Plato' (see Paul Vincent Spade, *A Survey of Mediaeval Philosophy,* vol. 1, version 2.0, ch. 4, p. 2). As concerning Augustine's indirect knowledge of Plato (via intermediate writers), a survey of Augustine's *City of God* is suggestive of the kind of things that Augustine knew of them. For example, in the *City of God,* Augustine refers to Plato's views on the status of poets in the ideal commonwealth, the divisions of philosophy, the

Platonic 'forms', the creation, heavenly bodies, and immortal bodies. He also rehearses the historical development of Platonism and its connection with the philosophies which preceded it, assesses the relationship of Platonism, as he has received it, to Christian doctrine and to the pagan theology of Rome, and considers the possibility of Plato's having had knowledge of Judeo-Christian Scripture. Aristotle receives far less attention, although Augustine does refer to him as 'a disciple of Plato and a man of commanding genius, no match for Plato in literary style, but still far above the general run' (see Augustine, *City of God*, 315–16).

2 The debate over whether Christianity or Neo-Platonism is the dominant force in Augustinian thought is considered at length in Mary Patricia Garvey's landmark study, *Saint Augustine: Christian or Neo-Platonist?* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1939). Garvey argues that Augustine is truly Christian in his philosophical orientation, and not merely Neo-Platonic. In any case, it seems clear that both Christian and Neo-Platonic influences contributed significantly to his philosophical thought.

3 Gilson 1960, vii.

4 Augustine, *Confessions* VII.3, 136.

5 Russell 1990, 700.

6 Zampaglione 1973, 297.

7 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.72, 300.

8 Ibid.

9 Job 7.4.

10 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.78, 303.

11 Walker 1970, 161.

12 F. E. Cranz, 'The Development of Augustine's Ideas on Society before the Donatist Controversy', in *Augustine: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. R. A. Markus (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1972[b], 336–403): 352.

13 Leslie J. Walker, 'The Philosophy of St. Augustine', *The Dublin Review* 187 (July 1930[b]): 105.

14 Gilson 1960, 105.

15 Walker 1970, 163.

16 Exodus 3.14.

17 Paul Vincent Spade, 'Medieval Philosophy', in *The Oxford History of Western Philosophy,* ed. Anthony Kenny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, 55–105): 59.

18 Augustine, *Confessions* III.8, 65.

19 Hodgson 1947, 2.

20 Ibid.

21 Leslie J. Walker, S. J., 'Augustinianism in the Thirteenth Century', *The Dublin Review* 187 (July 1930[a]): 106.

22 See Spade 1994, 60.

23 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.13, 871.

24 Spade 1994, 62.

25 Gilson 1960, 166.

26 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.74, *NPNF* IV, 301.

27 Augustine, *City of God* XI.16, 448.

28 Ibid., XI.17, 448.

29 Ibid., 448–9.

30 See Augustine, *Confessions* VII.12, 148.
31 Russell 1990, 710.
32 Ibid.
33 Spade 1994, 60.
34 Augustine, *Enchiridion* 14, *NPNF* III, 241.
35 See Gilson 1960, 132.
36 See Augustine, *City of God* XV.22, 636.
37 Gilson, 1960, 173.
38 Paul Edwards, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company and The Free Press, 1972), s.v. 'Peace, War, and Philosophy', by F. S. Northedge.
39 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.73, *NPNF* IV, 300.
40 Revelation 12.7. For a related discussion, see Augustine, *City of God* XI.13–15, 444–7.
41 Augustine, *Letter* 138.17, *NPNF* I, 487.
42 Augustine, *City of God* XVIII.2, 762.
43 Ibid.
44 Miller 1964, 255.
45 Augustine, *Letter* 138.14, *NPNF* I, 486.
46 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.78, *NPNF* IV, 303.
47 Cranz 1972b, 346.
48 As Gilson explains, 'We say, "This object is not as white or as round as it should be"; but we do not say, "Seven and three should make ten," or "The eternal should be above the temporal." We judge sensible things; we do not judge intelligible truths; we find them, and by them we judge everything else' (Gilson 1960, 17).
49 See Gilson 1960, 130.
50 Deane 1963, 125. (For further exploration of this theme, see pp. 96–104.)
51 Gilson 1960, 128.
52 Augustine, *City of God* IV.4, 139.
53 For further discussion, see Bainton 1960, 93–4.
54 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* II.39. 58, *NPNF* II, 553.
55 R. A. Markus, 'St. Augustine's Views on the Just War', *The Church and War: Papers Read at the Twenty-First Summer and the Twenty-Second Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. W. J. Sheils (London: Basil Blackwell, 1983): 10.
56 Augustine, *City of God* XV.7, 604.
57 Ibid.
58 Lenihan 1995, 29.
59 Over the course of Augustine's long and illustrious career, his conception of order did undergo change (see Burns 1988, 108–11). In his early writings, specifically *De Ordine,* Augustine held that understanding the divine order – an order which stood in stark contrast to the universal chaos advocated by the Manichaeans – the soul could thus be led, or perhaps find its way, back to God. Augustine later rejects this view of an order which enables the soul to return to God because he holds that Man is unable to save himself on his own power; and so no amount of knowledge alone is sufficient to secure his salvation. Nevertheless, he never rejects the order itself. Rather, he always acknowledges its essential character (see Russell 1990, 703, note 16). Hence, this evolution of thought need not trouble us as pertaining to the place it occupies in his theory of just war.

60 Augustine, *On the Gospel According to St. John*, tractate XXV.16, *NPNF* VII, 166.
61 Augustine, *Letter* 118, III. 22, *NPNF* I, 446.
62 Augustine, *City of God* XIV.13, 571.
63 See Augustine, *City of God* XVI.4.
64 Ibid., XIX.7, 861.
65 In this section, the assignment of positions of relative justifiability to the various causes of war essentially follows Zampaglione. See Zampaglione 1973, 308.
66 Augustine, *Questions on the Heptateuch* 6.10, quoted in Swift 1983, 120.
67 Zampaglione 1973, 308.
68 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.27, *NPNF* IV, 283.
69 Augustine, *Confessions* III.8, 66.
70 Ibid., 65
71 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
73 Augustine, *Questions on the Heptateuch* 4.44, quoted in Swift 1983, 135.
74 Augustine, *Confessions* III.8, 65.
75 Ibid.
76 Richard McKeon, 'The Development of the Concept of Property in Political Philosophy: A Study of the Background of the Constitution', *International Journal of Ethics* 48 (April 1938): 297.
77 Augustine, *Questions on the Heptateuch,* quoted in Swift 1983, 135.
78 Ibid.
79 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.14, 15, 874.
80 Ibid.
81 Ibid., XIX.7, 861.
82 Exodus 32, especially verses 25–9.
83 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.79*, NPNF* IV, 303–4.
84 Exodus 32.32.
85 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.79*, NPNF* IV, 303–4.
86 Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will* I.5, trans. Anna S. Benjamin and L. H. Hackstaff (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1964): 12.
87 See Augustine, *Of the Morals of the Catholic Church* III.4, *NPNF* IV, 42.
88 Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will* I.5, 12.
89 Ibid.
90 Augustine, *Letter* 47.5, *NPNF* I, 293.
91 Gilson 1960, 127.
92 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.15, 874–5.
93 Ibid., 874–5. See also Daniel 9.3–15.
94 Augustine, *City of God* XV.4, 600, *italics added.*
95 Ibid.
96 Augustine, *Questions on the Heptateuch* 6.10, quoted in Swift 1983, 135.
97 Ibid.
98 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.14, 873.
99 See Augustine, *Sermon* CVI.7–8 and *City of God* I.10–19. The author is indebted to Bainton (see Bainton 1960, 95) for these references.
100 See Bainton 1960, 95.
101 See, for example, Augustine, *In Answer to the Letters of Petilian, the Donatist, Bishop of Cirta* 2.95.216, *NPNF* IV, 583.

102 Augustine, *City of God* XIV.13, 572.
103 Hans von Campenhausen, 'Augustine and the Fall of Rome', in *Tradition and Life in the Church: Essays and Lectures in Church History,* trans. A. V. Littledale (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968): 210.
104 Augustine, *City of God* V.24, 220.
105 Augustine, *Letter* 145.4, *NPNF* I, 496.
106 Burns 1988, 110.
107 Romans 13.1.
108 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XX.75, *NPNF* IV, 301.
109 Ibid.
110 Ibid.
111 Augustine, *City of God* V.19, 213.
112 Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage* 16, *NPNF* III, 406.
113 Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will* I.5, 11.
114 The author is indebted to Professor Louis P. Pojman for this observation. For a similar expression of this point, see Dougherty 1984, 34.
115 See Carlyle and Carlyle 1953, 1:165.
116 Russell 1990, 715.
117 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.13, 870.
118 Ibid.
119 Bainton 1960, 96.
120 Zampaglione 1973, 302.
121 Augustine, *City of God* XV.4, 599–600.
122 Gilson 1960, 174.
123 Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* 1.2.9, *NPNF* VI, 5.
124 Ibid.
125 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.28, 894.
126 Augustine *Letter* 189.5, as translated in Bainton 1960, 93.
127 Gilson 1960, 233.

5

Christianity and the Augustinian Just War

From Neo-Platonism to Christianity

Although the influence of Neo-Platonism upon his just-war theory is pervasive, it must at the same time be admitted that Augustine would not be Augustine except for the influence of Christianity upon his philosophical teachings. Neo-Platonism, more than any other philosophical influence, moves Augustine to look both inwardly and upwardly in search of eternal verities. Nevertheless, as philosophically appealing as Augustine finds Neo-Platonism to be, it is, for him, dependent upon Christianity for its vitality. For example, Christianity provides Augustine with the 'Who' that Neo-Platonism is unable to specify as the Unmoved Mover that underwrites and makes sense of all of his just-war discourse. The 'I am' of Christianity is, for Augustine, synonymous with the Neo-Platonic One in whom all being and order centers.[1] The end state to which just war tends is not merely the restoration of 'order' but of *God's* order. Thus, as important as order is, it is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end; and that end is the salvation of Man.

War is a legitimate philosophical topic for the Christian Neo-Platonist because the God of Christianity is Himself described, among other things, as a God of war[2] who will Himself fight the battles of the righteous.[3] On the one hand, He commends some wars, and even commands that they be fought.[4] On the other hand, He urges the renunciation of war and the proclamation of peace.[5] Augustine could attempt to provide some thoroughly and exclusively rational account of why this is so – why it is that God approves some wars and forbids others and, hence, why some wars can be called 'just' and others 'unjust'. However, such an account alone would not suffice; for Augustine's Christian philosophical commitments demand that he understand war in the context of God's unfolding plan of salvation for lost and fallen Man living in the transitory state of mortality. Augustine's Christian philosophical commitments include the key Christian doctrines of the Creation, the Fall, the Atonement, and the Resurrection. From an Augustinian perspective, each of these

key doctrines can be understood to have parallels with Neo-Platonic thought, although with different emphases. The Neo-Platonic-Christian parallels between these doctrines is useful to bear in mind in the light of Augustine's just-war theory.

The Neo-Platonic world is eternal. It is constantly in the process of emanating from the One and returning to the One. In such a setting, war appears as a phenomenon which occurs in both just and unjust varieties, and which will continue to occur throughout the eternities of the world's existence. The Christian world, on the other hand, is the temporal creation of a loving but just God. It was created in a state of perfection, which means, among other things, a state devoid of wars. During the period of its fallen existence, its inhabitants experience both just and unjust wars, both of which ultimately become vehicles in the hands of the Almighty to move His creatures along the path that leads to their fixed eternal destinies. Thus, Augustine's view of war is teleological: It always moves human beings toward an end, and it always moves just humans toward a positive end.

Although the 'emanation' of Neo-Platonism and the 'Fall' of Christianity are not the same thing, both can be seen to represent for Augustine a departure from the source of Man's being. However, the Fall additionally stands as the paradigmatic act of human disobedience, the impact of which upon the human experience – just as it is upon Augustinian thought – is impossible to ignore. This is so because if Man did not undergo a fall from grace, then there would be no need for the redemption made available to Man through the Atonement; and without the Atonement, there would be no Resurrection. Thus, the fabric of Augustine's Christianity is tied, in an essential way, to the assumption of a fall from grace. The carnal, sensual, devilish nature which Man inherits as the result of the Fall entices him to lust for dominion over his fellows and to obtain that dominion, if necessary, by war. Both the elect and the damned among fallen Man experience the suffering that war entails, and Man has no entitlement to bemoan the fact that he is called upon, through the invisible workings of Providence, to suffer in even an unjust war. The Atonement extends grace to God's elect with such efficacy as to dissuade them from the path of lust for dominion and to enable them to obtain a place in the heavenly City of God. The suffering in the course of the Atonement by One Man, namely, Jesus Christ, God incarnate, provides for Augustine irrefutable evidence that suffering cannot be inherently evil, even when the righteous encounter it in war. They may be called upon to suffer at the hands of the wicked, or they may be called upon to mete out justice through the medium of a just war. In either case, the Atonement which promises to the faithful an ultimate deliverance from suffering also serves notice to all that all may justly be called upon to suffer. Concerning life after death, Augustine argues, on Neo-Platonic grounds, for his belief in a physical resurrection.[6] Augustine

does not hesitate to point out that, in the Resurrection, every person will receive a just recompense for his or her conduct in this life. He teaches that when God reveals the 'wide gulf between rewards and punishments, the rift that sunders the righteous from the unrighteous . . . then beyond doubt there will be a judgment such as there has never been'.[7] In view of that coming judgement, the need to determine what constitutes a just course of action in any human endeavour, including war, becomes ever more acute.

Taking a Christianized view of the central themes of Neo-Platonism, one can ascertain how these hierarchical structures merge to shape the theory of just war. As Dougherty observes, 'Christ taught no specific theology of politics except to assert that political power comes from God, that His kingdom is distinct from all early states, and that man owes obedience to two distinct jurisdictions, but must obey the higher in case of conflict.'[8] However, while this is certainly so for more or less strictly theological issues, it seems less certainly so when it comes to the matter of situating, within an orderly Neo-Platonic Christian universe, the highly practical issues pertaining to just wars. How to reconcile insofar as possible the order of the heavenly city – the ideal and, by Augustine's account, presently unrealizable paradigm for the order of the Church – and the order of the earthly city is the philosophical task which Augustine ultimately undertakes as he seeks to understand the limits of war.

Reason and revelation

Christianity is a religion, but it is also a revelation, and Augustine recognizes Christianity as both. To sacrifice one at the expense of the other is to do away with Augustinism altogether. 'Augustine cannot be numbered indiscriminately among the advocates of a *philosophia ancilla theologiae* for the simple reason that he never imagined a philosophy apart from a theology.'[9] Nor can he be thought of as the religionist who whimsically dismisses reason whenever its presence is felt, however uncomfortably. It is nevertheless true that Augustine takes faith as his point of departure for all understanding, whether the object of understanding be obviously theological or whether it be more ostensibly secular. For Augustine, faith underlies the acquisition of all true understanding such that faith always precedes it, but in a way that does not supplant it by merely reducing a given point of rational understanding to an article of faith.[10] Faith does, however, serve to elevate the idea that war could be justly waged to a level of philosophical – even trans-philosophical – contemplation such that one might feel completely at ease with the thought of perusing the Christian Scriptures in an effort to discover the place of war in the divine scheme.

It is first and foremost, therefore, the Christian Scriptures to which Augustine turns to find the raw data from which to formulate his just-war positions.

His use of the Scriptures affords him a broader epistemological basis than that enjoyed by the strict empiricist; for the Scriptures do not claim to be the product of unaided reason. Rather, they present themselves as revelations from God Himself.[11] The Scriptures provide a kind of glimpse into His infinite mind in a way that commands Augustine's respect and admiration.

> Augustine hears two voices throughout the scriptures: the voice of correction and the voice of mercy. They operate in tandem with now one and now the other calling man to action. For Augustine, there are evils connected with war which are worse than death, and it is to correct these that men are allowed and sometimes required to take up arms.[12]

The evidence of faith which the Scriptures codify requires Man, in Augustine's view, to acknowledge the reality that specifiable circumstances exist for the just prosecution of war. This evidence altogether rules out strict pacifism. To be an absolute pacifist would be at *reasoned* odds with the data of revelation. It would require, in some cases, for the human creature arrogantly to insist on abstinence from all war in the glaring light of a divine command to fight. At very least, it would mean for the human creature stubbornly to deny the conferral of divine permission to fight when divine justice permitted it.

In order to appreciate Augustine's position, it is profitable to consider not only those Scriptural references which pertain specifically to war in a literal way, but also those in which the usage of the term is more or less metaphorical. However, it is likewise important to discern when the reference is intended literally and when it is intended metaphorically. Accordingly, Augustine provides the following interpretive rule:

> [C]arefully turn over in our minds and meditate upon what we read till an interpretation be found that tends to establish the reign of love. Now, if when taken literally it at once gives a meaning of this kind, the expression is not to be considered figurative.[13]

He likewise provides a rule for interpreting divine commands and prohibitions:

> If the sentence is one of command, either forbidding a crime or vice, or enjoining an act of prudence or benevolence, it is not figurative. If, however, it seems to enjoin a crime or vice, or to forbid an act of prudence or benevolence, it is figurative.[14]

For Augustine, there are, by definition, no contradictions in the canonized Scriptures. The very idea that the 'divine Scripture should seem to contradict

itself'[15] is, for Augustine, 'a thing which cannot happen'.[16] Scripture 'invites all not only to be fed with the truth which is plain, but also to be exercised by the truth which is concealed, having both in its simple and in its obscure portions the same truth'.[17] Unfortunately, even if one grants the veracity of Scripture, recognizes the Scriptures as the repository of divine understanding committed to Man, and accepts Augustine's interpretational rules, yet all of this does not do enough to solve the problems which confront Augustine; for the Scriptures themselves contain almost nothing in the way of an *explicit* specification of what counts as a just war. Therefore, Augustine seeks to apply the principles embodied in the Scriptures to concrete sets of circumstances.

The law of love

As important as the ideas of justice and order are to Augustine, there would be no such thing as Augustinism without the virtue of love. It is the chief Christian virtue, inasmuch as it is manifest in the Creation, the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the Resurrection, thereby permeating the whole of the Old and New Testaments. Love is also the motivating force behind all action in Augustine's philosophical system. 'Exactly as a body is impelled by its gravity to move in a particular direction, so the psyche or soul is moved by love.'[18] Justice may serve to specify the place of every entity in the hierarchy of being and value; but it is love which inclines Man to respond positively to the hierarchy:

> Now he is a man of just and holy life who . . . neither loves what he ought not to love, nor fails to love what he ought to love, nor loves that more which ought to be loved less, nor loves that equally which ought to be loved either less or more, nor loves that less or more which ought to be loved equally.[19]

Properly directed love is the essence of virtue itself. Says Augustine, 'I hold virtue to be nothing else than the perfect love of God.'[20] Even virtue pursued for its own sake is vicious; true virtue has, and only can have, the love of God as its object.[21] Hence, there can be no virtue in the pursuit of the traditional warrior virtues (like honour, valour, patriotism, self-sacrifice, devotion to duty, devotion to the common good, etc.) for their own sakes, because to do so focuses on the wrong object. Augustine goes so far as to redefine the four cardinal virtues of antiquity in terms of love:

> temperance is love giving itself entirely to that which is loved; fortitude is love readily bearing all things for the sake of the loved object; justice is love serving only the loved object, and therefore ruling rightly; prudence

> is love distinguishing with sagacity between what hinders it and what helps it.[22]

Indeed, love marks the point of intersection between Augustine's Neo-Platonism and his Christianity. True justice, correct order, and properly directed love are all essentially the same thing because they all yield the same result. One cannot have true justice or a correct ordering of values without properly directed love; and a properly directed love implies both justice and order; for 'unless men are willing to give all, out of love, they will hardly render each his due'.[23] Indeed, the attainment of human excellence consists in 'achieving a balanced perspective over the whole range of these "loves" placed in a rightly graded hierarchy of values'.[24]

Human beings act as they do, both as individuals and as citizens of one or the other of Augustine's cities, because of the nature of the love which motivates them. It is the object of one's love which serves to designate the city to which one belongs. A distinguishing characteristic of the earthly city is that many of its inhabitants choose to worship false gods – or perhaps even the true God – in order to invoke divine aid in obtaining dominion over their fellow human beings.[25] Exactly the opposite is true of the City of God. The love of its citizens motivates them to seek the interest of their fellow beings – if necessary, by violent action so as to save them from the consequences of their own lusts.

Thus, though paradoxical it may seem, love is central to Augustine's just-war thought. Failure to love is far more harmful to oneself than any harm that could be inflicted upon one by the hand of an enemy. As Augustine states, 'In no way can thine enemy so hurt thee by his violence, as thou dost hurt thyself if thou love him not.'[26] Conversely, it is true love which, by its very nature, draws men to wage just wars. Just sovereigns are drawn to engage in just wars because they are motivated by a well-ordered love. Just subjects obey the command to fight in such wars because they are similarly motivated. What is required by all involved is the realization that love can properly assume many different forms, including the possibility of violent action. However, that love manifests itself differently in different circumstances does not, and cannot, mean for Augustine that a declaration of war suspends the law of love. On the contrary, Augustine always insists that the quality of one's actions is determined by the character of one's underlying motivations.

The Old Testament in Augustine's just-war discourse

War in the Old Testament

There seems to be an important sense in which the ancient Israelites considered war to be 'a judicial business'.[27] That is to say, the Old Testament tends to

present war as a legal judgement made by God 'for the purpose of resolving a dispute between Israel and neighboring states'.[28] As a result, the Old Testament contains numerous examples of what Augustine would account to be just wars, some fought at divine command and others with divine approbation but without expressed command. Indeed, the tradition of warfare observed by the ancient Israelites shares much in common with Augustine's general approach to just war.

Just cause and comparative justice

Although ancient Israel fought wars which, from a modern perspective, would be either offensive or defensive in nature, they were, from the point of view of the ancient Israelites, all defensive: they were wars fought in defence of justice and for the suppression of evil. Hence, they considered their wars to be comparatively, if not altogether, just.

Right intention

Warmongering or exhibiting lust for territorial expansion was always regarded as an indicator of the wrong kind of intention. 'The Jews did not . . . form a militaristic nation according to the Spartan model. No undue prominence was given to military training or to military glory.'[29] (Indeed, King David is later counted as having sinned for conducting a census in an effort to assess his war-making capacity.)[30]

Competent authority

God was seen as declaring a just war, either through the medium of his prophets or through the instrumentality of the king, whose duty it was to ascertain (at times through prophetic consultation) the divine will on the matter. That soldiers should fight in these wars was regarded as an expression of faith.

Public declaration

The Old Testament wars were never initiated by surprise. The prophet's or king's declaration of war was always a public one.

Peace as the ultimate objective of war

Unless annihilation had been divinely directed, the declaration of war came in the form of a provisional offer of peace. If the enemy accepted the offer, all were spared and made subject to the will of Israel. If the enemy did not accept,

the city was besieged and, although all the males were killed, the women, children and spoil were captured and spared.[31] Although to modern ears this might sound like anything but an offer of peace, it is, nonetheless, not so far removed from Augustine's 'tranquility of order';[32] for whether or not the enemy accepted the proffered peace, the result would be at least a 'peace of Babylon', which, as Augustine informs us, is better than no peace at all.[33]

The law of war set forth in the Old Testament contains surprisingly detailed instructions pertaining to *jus in bello*. These instructions enjoin cleanliness and decency on the part of soldiers,[34] specify prohibitions against wanton destruction of the environment,[35] and set forth generous rules for exemption from military service – certainly the most generous of any in the ancient world.[36]

It is somewhat curious that none of Augustine's extant writings seem to quote directly from Deuteronomy 20, the principal source document for the law of war in the Old Testament. One might speculate why this is so. If Augustine had appealed to the Mosaic Law to justify his position on the propriety of Christian participation in war, his detractors conveniently could have charged him with founding his argument on what they would have argued to be a now-superseded law. He does argue, however, that if this ancient law of war was not applicable to his own day, it was, at least, appropriate for the day in which it was given. For:

> What may be done at one time of day is not allowed at the next, and what may be done, or must be done, in one room is forbidden and punished in another. This does not mean that justice is erratic or variable, but that the times over which it presides are not always the same, for it is the nature of time to change. Man's life on earth is short and he cannot, by his own perception, see the connexion between the conditions of earlier times and of other nations, which he has not experienced himself, and those of his own times, which are familiar to him.[37]

Indeed, Augustine elsewhere insists that God can just as easily enjoin warfare in the new dispensation as He could in the old.[38]

The Old Testament and the new dispensation

Although Augustine views the Old Testament as the logical and historical precursor to New Testament Christianity – a progressive continuity – the Old Testament still posed for him a significant theoretical problem, namely, how to regard the divinely directed wars documented therein. In addition to the approach which Augustine selects, at least three alternative courses of action seem to be available: (1) Consider them as historical fictions to be accounted for in terms of allegory; (2) Count them as relics of a now superseded dispen-

sation; or (3) Repudiate them entirely.[39] However, none of these alternatives would have simplified matters for Augustine. For example, if he were to have considered the wars of the Old Testament as mere historical fictions, he then would have encountered enormous difficulties in reconciling that position with the tenor of the biblical text, which gives the reader no particular reason to assume that the accounts of the wars are intended to be anything other than recitations of historical events. Moreover, if he were to have considered them as allegories intended to teach a moral lesson, he would have been hard pressed to explain what kind of moral lesson they are intended to impart. (In contrast, consider the story of the Good Samaritan recorded in the New Testament. Although it is not presented as the account of a specific historical event, its moral is accessible even to children.) Likewise, if Augustine were to have chosen to account for the wars of the Old Testament by relegating them to a superseded dispensation, he would have encountered difficulties in reconciling that position with certain claims in the New Testament, namely, that God as manifested in Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever;[40] that Jesus came not as the destroyer of the old dispensation, but as in fulfillment of its prophecies;[41] and that in the apocalyptic scenes at the end of the world, the risen Christ would come to reign on earth, utterly destroying the wicked,[42] perhaps in a way reminiscent of the utter destructions decreed in the Old Testament. Finally, to repudiate the wars of the Old Testament as immoral would have been to charge God with immorality.

This issue of how to regard the wars in the Old Testament arises most prominently in Augustine's polemic exchanges against Faustus the Manichaean. Faustus argues that many of the paradigmatic figures of the Old Testament were persons who, in the commission of violence, acted wickedly and without either divine command or divine approbation. However, Augustine makes no concessions to Faustus on this point. For example, concerning Abraham, Augustine argues that if Abraham had sacrificed his son 'of his own accord',[43] the act would indeed have been nothing less than 'shocking madness';[44] but that since Abraham acted at God's command, Abraham thereby proved himself to be 'faithful and submissive'.[45] As further proof, Augustine notes that the God worshipped by Christians is pleased to identify Himself as the 'God of Abraham'.[46] Augustine also appeals to the example of Abraham's obedience to God's command to sacrifice Isaac[47] to illustrate the difference between the taking of lives by soldiers in wartime and ordinary homicide, concluding that the soldier who 'kills a man in obedience to the legitimate authority under which he served' is not guilty of murder, but rather of 'insubordination and mutiny if he refuses'.[48] In a similar vein, Augustine argues that the wars later led by Moses

> will not excite surprise or abhorrence, for in wars carried on by divine command, he [Moses] showed not ferocity but obedience; and God, in giving the command, acted not in cruelty, but in righteous retribution, giving to all what they deserved, and warning those who needed warning.[49]

Augustine tells Faustus that 'It is . . . mere groundless calumny to charge Moses with making war, for there would have been less harm in making war of his own accord, than in not doing it when God commanded him.'[50] Then, turning to the language of Neo-Platonism, Augustine argues that

> to dare to find fault with God Himself for giving such a command, or not to believe it possible that a just and good God did so, shows, to say the least, an inability to consider that in the view of divine providence, which pervades all things from the highest to the lowest, time can neither add anything nor take away; but all things go, or come, or remain according to the order of nature or desert in each separate case, while in men a right will is in union with the divine law, and ungoverned passion is restrained by the order of divine law; so that a good man wills only what is commanded, and a bad man can do only what he is permitted, at the same time that he is punished for what he wills to do unjustly.[51]

In short, it is inconceivable to Augustine that Moses, who 'spake with God face to face',[52] or Abraham, who was called a friend of God,[53] could be held blameworthy either for obedience to a divine command or for having acted in a way contrary to the will of God.[54]

As to the charge, raised by the Manichaeans, that the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament represent not only different beings but also different orders, Augustine argues that changes in mode of operation do not by any means necessarily signal a reordering of things. Noting, by way of example, the changes that occur as one moves from boyhood to manhood to old age and to death, Augustine says, 'All these things are changed, but the plan of Divine Providence which appoints these successive changes is not changed.'[55] Rather, change in the human experience is itself a part of the divine order which governs and regulates all things. 'The schoolmaster gives to the adult different tasks from those which he was accustomed to prescribe to the scholar in his boyhood; his teaching, consistent throughout, changes the instruction when the lesson is changed, without itself being changed.'[56] Augustine's position is perhaps best illustrated by his recitation of an anecdote about a contemporary physician:

> The eminent physician of our own times, Vindicianus, being consulted by an invalid, prescribed for his disease what seemed to him a suitable remedy at that time; health was restored by its use. Some years afterwards, finding himself troubled again with the same disorder, the patient supposed that the same remedy should be applied; but its application made his illness worse. In astonishment, he again returns to the physician, and tells him what had happened; whereupon he, being a man of very quick penetration, answered: 'The reason of your having been harmed by this application is, that I did not order it.[57]

Thus, the approach Augustine takes, and by which he seeks to avoid apparent contradiction, is to argue that there is no inconsistency between the Old and the New Testaments; that, taken in historical context, the same God[58] orders human affairs differently but appropriately in both settings for the purpose of saving His elect.[59]

The New Testament in Augustine's just-war discourse

Just war and the New Testament

Whereas the Old Testament presents a highly developed code of war and numerous historical accounts of battles which serve as useful case studies as to how the code of war was actually applied, the New Testament contains neither a code of war nor a single historical account of a battle. Even adopting the Augustinian perspective and viewing the New Testament as the expected fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies – a complementary follow-on – it is nevertheless the case that a new state of affairs, different from that which obtains in the Old Testament, obtains in the New. The theocracy of Moses' day is now a vassal state of the Roman Empire. The pious Israelite of Moses' day enjoyed the luxury of being able to assume that the words of God and the words of Moses were one and the same. For those living in the days of Jesus and the apostles, the matter is not so simple: No Christian is ready to give Caesar a *carte blanche* to speak for the God of Israel. Nevertheless, the New Testament rule of thumb seems to be to honour the demands of the state in anything it requires, so long as the demand does not run directly counter to some indispensable Christian principle (such as the injunction not to eat meat sacrificed to idols).[60]

In the New Testament, one observes two significant shifts in emphasis, which figure prominently in Augustine's *jus ad bellum* thought. The first involves the question of what constitutes an appropriate response for the individual Christian to the demands of competent authority. On this matter, the keynote Scriptural passage which receives repeated attention from Augustine[61] comes from Paul's Epistle to the Romans:

> Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for his is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must need be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.[62]

This passage becomes crucial for Augustine because 'a divinely-inspired just war could be linked to the Pauline derivation of ruling authority from God with the result that wars to defend righteousness could be waged by rulers even without an express divine command'.[63]

The second important shift in emphasis focuses on the interiority of the doctrines of the new dispensation. Whereas the Law of Moses required the continual performance of multitudinous outward ordinances, the law of the new dispensation, set forth in the teachings of Jesus, requires of the individual Christian not mere compliance with the demands of the letter of the law, but also a careful examination of motives and intentions interior to the heart. Jesus repeatedly urges this point in most emphatic terms.[64]

The significance of this paradigm shift for Augustine can be understated only at the risk of entirely misunderstanding a fundamental aspect of Augustine's world-view; for it is on this point that Augustine, totally committed to the Christian position that an act is good only if it is born of right intentions, and not merely of a knowledge of what constitutes right actions, breaks from the general Socratic-Platonic-Neo-Platonic tradition. However, the fact that it is a 'break' by no means signals a lack of Neo-Platonic influence as pertaining to the nature of intention in just-war theory. Quite the contrary, the role of intention in the entire Augustinian moral scheme, not to mention its role in just-war theory, stands as clear evidence that Augustine's commitment to the Neo-Platonic idea of order, perhaps more than any other idea, forced him to reconsider, in the light of more recent commitments to Christian doctrine, his position on the relationship between virtue and knowledge. The seriousness with which Augustine takes the matter of right intention comes clearly into focus as one considers Augustine's position on the well-known Socratic thesis that 'no person desires to do that which he himself or she herself believes to

be bad or wrong'. This thesis, which undergirds Socrates' teachings, follows from the assumption that virtue is founded in knowledge. Based on this assumption, it is not difficult to conclude, as Socrates seems at times to suggest, that failure to act virtuously must mean either that (1) one lacks the requisite knowledge for virtuous action, or that (2) one possesses the requisite knowledge, but that knowledge has been temporarily overshadowed by a flare of passion of the kind to which human beings are characteristically subject. In either case, it follows that wittingly to fail to seek virtue is irrational. However, Augustine's position with regard to this axiom of ethical behavior is that one can, in fact, know what is right and wittingly choose to act contrary to that knowledge. The important implication which flows from this position is that knowledge is neither the sole essential ingredient for the attainment of virtue, nor the foundation upon which virtue rests. What, then, *is* the thing with which one cannot do wrong if it is not knowledge? For Augustine, it is the precept of *love* as he finds it taught in the New Testament. Hence, he states,

> Therefore hold fast to love, and set your minds to rest. Why fearest thou lest thou do evil to some man? Love thou: it is impossible to do this without doing good. But it may be, thou rebukest? Kindness does it, not fierceness. But it may be thou beatest? For discipline thou dost this; because thy kindness of love will not let thee leave him undisciplined.[65]

The rightness of one's intention is determined, then, not by the adequacy of his knowledge but by the object of his love. Thus, contrary to Socrates, Augustine holds that it cannot be assumed that one who possesses knowledge of what is virtuous will necessarily follow the path of virtue. Likewise, it becomes no longer unthinkable that one might desire that which he or she believes to be bad or wrong. This is true even if we allow 'bad' or 'wrong' to be interpreted as meaning 'that which one understands to be in all cases harmful to oneself'. It may be irrational, but it is not impossible. However, to say that it is 'not impossible' does not merely mean that there exists in some remote theoretical sense the logical possibility that one could knowingly desire that which is bad or wrong. Rather, it is to provide a realistic account of a large range of observable human behaviours.

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount

With these two paradigm shifts in mind, we can turn with profit to a consideration of the Sermon on the Mount. No single source document wielded greater influence on the development of Augustine's just-war theory than did this sermon. Augustine regards the Sermon on the Mount as 'a perfect code of morals'.[66] Indeed, he says that the pious and serious reader of the sermon

'will find in it, so far as regards the highest morals, a perfect standard of Christian life'.[67] The sermon's mark upon Augustine's just-war theory is apparent, in terms of its emphasis on both individual submissiveness and right intentions. Consider, for example, the well-known 'eye for an eye' passage:

> Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.[68]

Augustine does not interpret Jesus as revoking the old law of retribution. Rather, he understands Jesus to be reasserting the law of *maximum allowable* retribution, the point of which is to ensure 'that the vengeance should not exceed the injury'.[69] To observe this limit 'is the beginning of peace: but', Augustine continues, 'perfect peace is to have no wish at all for such vengeance'.[70] The words 'resist not evil' also figure prominently in Augustine's application of the sermon to his just-war theory. (They are particularly important in light of their use by some, since early in the Patristic period, to support a position of absolute Christian pacifism.) Concerning the debate over their meaning, a debate that was alive and well in Augustine's day, he states:

> If it is supposed that God could not enjoin warfare, because in after times it was said by the Lord Jesus Christ, 'I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but if any one strike thee on the right cheek, turn to him the left also,'[71] the answer is, that what is here required is not a bodily action, but an inward disposition.[72]

That is to say, avoidance of that evil which can do violence to the soul is so infinitely more important than whether one physically resists violence against his person that, for Augustine, there is no necessary connection between the two whatsoever. Given this interpretation, the unavoidable conclusion is that one justly could engage in warfare without risking disobedience to Jesus' command to 'resist not evil'.[73] As pertaining to the allied command to 'turn the other cheek', Augustine flatly denies that this passage demands forbearance when one is being attacked; 'for who would submit to have anything taken from him by an enemy, or forbear from retaliating the evils of war upon an invader who ravaged a Roman province?'[74] Although he counsels that 'we must be on our guard, lest, through desire for revenge, we lose patience itself – a virtue which is of more value than all which an enemy can, in spite of our resistance, take away from us',[75] he urges that the excellence of patience is really desirable only to the extent that it enables its practitioner, or those who may be affected by it, or both, to continue unabated in the pursuit of the Good. Augustine steadfastly maintains that

> these precepts pertain rather to the inward disposition of the heart than to the actions which are done in the sight of men, requiring us, in the inmost heart, to cherish patience along with benevolence, but in the outward action to do that which seems most likely to benefit those whose good we ought to seek.[76]

He argues that the patience which the Gospel requires could not possibly mean that one is literally required to offer the other cheek when smitten, 'for it is possible that even an angry man may visibly hold out his other cheek'[77] and yet fall far short of fulfilling the Gospel's requirement concerning inward dispositions. However, Augustine's most compelling evidence comes from the example of Jesus himself – the very embodiment of patience and long-suffering – who, when smitten on the cheek not only did not offer the other cheek, but demanded that his persecutor provide adequate justification for having smitten him.[78] As far as Augustine is concerned, this spontaneous response from Jesus proves conclusively that at issue 'is not a bodily action, but an inward disposition'.[79] Accordingly, 'the preparation of the other cheek is to be done in the heart'.[80]

Indeed, Augustine finds in Jesus the perfect just warrior, exhibiting the optimum blend of forbearance and determination to correct when necessary. If, in an Augustinian spirit, one were to categorize the relevant recorded acts of Jesus on a continuum containing the following characterizations: passive non-resistance, non-violent resistance, violence (within limits), and unlimited violence (such as attacks on non-combatants in war),[81] one could find examples for every characterization except the last. Jesus is passively non-resistant at his crucifixion; non-violently resistant at his trial (when he demands an explanation for why he was smitten on the face); and violent within arguably appropriate limits when cleansing the temple. (This latter case is particularly interesting because here he is acting in what might be reasonably construed as a public capacity – not unlike the way in which a soldier is called upon to act in a just war.) In every case, however, Jesus seems to be regarded by Augustine as exhibiting the perfect balance of pacifism and violent action. It is no wonder, then, that Augustine makes this balance the centerpiece of his argument that seeks to justify violent acts by Christians. Augustine states that while 'these precepts concerning patience ought to be always retained in the habitual discipline of the heart, and the benevolence which prevents the recompensing of evil for evil must be always fully cherished in the disposition',[82] he urges that 'at the same time, many things must be done in correcting with a certain benevolent severity, even against their own wishes, men whose welfare rather than their wishes it is our duty to consult'.[83] Just as forbearance has an interpersonal and an international application, benevolent severity likewise has its proper interpersonal and international manifestations. On the interpersonal level, the father who corrects his son provides a fitting example:

> For in the correction of a son, even with some sternness, there is assuredly no diminution of a father's love; yet, in the correction, that is done which is received with reluctance and pain by one whom it seems necessary to heal by pain.[84]

Augustine realizes, of course, that not all fathers correct their children in a spirit of benevolent severity thus described. Some fathers act merely out of anger and do, in fact, both feel and exhibit a 'diminution' of love, desiring merely to inflict pain rather than to 'heal by pain'. However, Augustine is also aware, inasmuch as his example is expressive of an ideal, that the perfect father would act in no way other than the way calculated to best ensure the healing of the child – even if the infliction of pain is required to yield the most blessed result. And it is precisely Augustine's point that the perfect Father of the human family deals after this manner with his human creatures. Indeed, the wars that He might be regarded as inflicting upon humanity in order to correct their course and point them, if possible, toward the heavenly city, serve as specific instances of his benevolent severity.[85] In support of this position, Augustine invokes the authority of the Christian Scriptures which, he says, 'have most unambiguously commended this virtue [of benevolent severity] in a magistrate'[86] (although, rather curiously, he makes this claim without referring to a specific passage). His reference to a magistrate is significant, because it clearly suggests that benevolent severity is desirable as a public virtue, and not merely a private one.

In the 'go and do thou likewise'[87] spirit of the teachings of Jesus, Augustine recommends this course for those who are called upon to fight just wars. Both the political authorities who declare the war and the individual soldiers who fight in it should do so in a spirit of benevolence, no matter how severe the action might be required to be:

> And on this principle, if the commonwealth observe the precepts of the Christian religion, even its wars themselves will not be carried on without the benevolent design that, after the resisting nations have been conquered, provision may be more easily made for enjoying in peace the mutual bond of piety and justice.[88]

Also important for Augustine is the famous 'love your enemies' passage:

> Ye have heard it said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.[89]

This passage which on the face of it appears to revoke all licence for resort to war, Augustine interprets in a manner that he considers completely compatible with his theory. It is the case, argues Augustine, that some people hate even those by whom they are dearly loved (for example, the child who has been conditioned to a life of luxury by doting parents but who begins to hate the parents when they attempt to restrain excesses). In other cases, some aspire to a plateau of virtue at which they find that, while they can bring themselves to love their neighbours, yet they hate their enemies. The pinnacle of virtue, however, is characterized by those who have learned to love without distinction. Nevertheless, it is clear that there are many whose virtue fails to exceed the demands of the old law, much less aspires to the heights of virtue enjoined by the new. It is for these that the old law was given. Hence, the old law which states, '"Thou shalt hate thine enemy," it is not to be understood as the voice of command addressed to a righteous man, but rather as the voice of permission to a weak man.'[90] If one is of so saintly a disposition that he or she can endure the evil inflicted upon him or her by his enemies, then so much the better. He or she need not worry that either he or she or the enemy will escape the ultimate judgement of God; for

> God will . . . certainly recompense both evil for evil, because He is just; good for evil, because He is good; and good for good, because He is good and just; only, evil for good He will never recompense, because He is not unjust.[91]

However, Augustine does not grant permission for one to delight in the prospect that divine justice will be the dreadful lot of one's persecutors.[92] Referring to the words of Paul, that one who does good to his enemy will thereby effectually 'heap coals of fire on his head',[93] Augustine urges a figurative interpretation:

> let charity . . . call you back to benevolence, and interpret the coals of fire as the burning groans of penitence by which a man's pride is cured who bewails that he has been the enemy of one who came to his assistance in distress.[94]

Whatever joy one experiences in such a case is appropriately directed toward the goodness of the perfect Judge, and not toward the evil which his enemy is bound to suffer.[95] Augustine reminds Faustus, that, since all men are fallen and sinful, all will in one way or another find themselves standing in the shadow of divine justice. God will 'spare neither the righteous nor the wicked; correcting the one as a son, and punishing the other as a transgressor'.[96]

By the same token, Augustine is equally concerned that the other extreme

be avoided, namely, the idea that the Christian obligation charitably to regard and to act toward one's enemies means, in practical terms, that violent action against another is never warranted. True, one should not reward evil with evil; but there is no evil in the administration of a just punishment which will tend to the correction of another. Says Augustine, referring to Paul's words to the Thessalonians:[97]

> he showed with sufficient clearness that there is no rendering of evil for evil when one chastises those who are unruly, even though for the fault of unruliness be administered the punishment of chastising. The punishment of chastising therefore is not an evil, though the fault be an evil. For indeed it is the steel, not of an enemy inflicting a wound, but of a surgeon performing an operation.[98]

He goes on to urge, however, that wisdom and moderation are warranted in the application of corrective punishments.

Of course, there are many passages in the New Testament, apart from the Sermon on the Mount, to which Augustine appeals in order to establish his claims concerning war and violence. Nevertheless, they can be summarized, as so much of Christianity can, by the ideals expressed in this sermon.

The influence of the patristic writers upon Augustine's just-war thought

Three views of ecclesiastical history

Three schools of thought should be considered concerning general Christian attitudes on war that might be said to have affected the philosophical climate in which Augustine was writing. The first of these is the 'standard' view that Christians, from New Testament times until Augustine's day, were committed pacifists who rejected war because of the evil associated with bloodshed and who viewed any accommodation of the idea of just wars as evidence of the Church's loss of moral purity.[99] The second view is that Christians of the early centuries of this era gradually came to see the fulfilment of the eschatological promise of the glorious return of Christ to the earth to be an event in the indefinitely distant future; but they also realized that, in the meantime, they had to grapple with the challenge of living in an imperfect world in which war was an accepted medium for international relations. [100] The third view is that the apostolic Church of the first century believed that it was soon to undergo a transformation – not as the result of a glorious Second Coming (that would happen later[101]), but – as the result of a general apostasy from the pure teach-

ings of Jesus and his apostles, which would leave a mundane 'form' of Christianity bereft of its supernatural power.[102] This latter position is of interest because of the stark contrast that can be observed between the general tenor of the New Testament itself and the works of the Patristic writers, including Augustine. Whereas the New Testament writers, particularly Paul, advance reasoned arguments in support of Christian doctrines, their appeal to reason is, by any measure, secondary. The real thrust of their argumentation stems from the claim of divine revelation personally obtained. When new exigencies confronted the Church, the apostles of the New Testament sought and claimed to obtain divine revelations which served as the basis for directing the Church.[103] On the other hand, no claim of guidance in the form of divine revelation given to deal with new issues, such as concerning the propriety of a Christian's participating in military service, appears in any context regarded with general seriousness after the time of John's writings at the end of the first century AD. Indeed, the 'spontaneity of utterance'[104] that characterized prophecy born of divine revelation

> died almost entirely away. It may almost be said to have died a violent death. The dominant parties of the Church set their faces against it. The survivals of it in Asia Minor were formally condemned. The Montanists, . . . who tried to fan the lingering sparks of it into a flame, are ranked among heretics. And Tertullian is not even now admitted into the calendar of the Saints, because he believed the Montanists to be in the right.[105]

In the light of this contrast, two observations seem to impose themselves. The first is that, even if one chooses not to view this contrast as marking the demise of the supernatural quality of the Church, it is nevertheless true that, clearly, and in concert with the rest of the Patristic writers, Augustine does not regard the lack of continuing revelation to be an impediment to his ability to address newly emerging doctrinal issues. He merely has to find an analogous precedent in the Scriptures and then reason to a conclusion on how to apply the precedent to current needs. Besides this, it is equally clear that Augustine does not regard the institutional Church of which he is a part as anything other than the lineal successor to the Church that existed in apostolic times – a position which, from his perspective, confers upon him whatever divine authorization may be necessary in order to take policy-type positions with regard to new doctrine. The second observation is implied by the first, namely, that absence of new revelation specifically addressing the attitude that Christians should take towards war and military service is not a factor in the development of Augustine's response to just-war issues.

Early Christian soldiers and the Roman army

A consideration of implications arising from the first two views of ecclesiastical history will detain us longer. Taken in its totality, the historical record evident in the writings of the Ante-Nicene Fathers does not lead unavoidably to the conclusion that most Christians in the centuries preceding Augustine were pacifists – at least not in the absolute sense of rejecting altogether the use of violence. Moreover, it is not clear that such early Christian pacifism for which evidence exists translates into an institutional position on the part of the Church that its members should have no part of military service. Likewise, it appears that the generality of Christians contemporary to Augustine also were not pacifists per se, but people in search of guidance in the matter of how members of the post-Constantinian state Church should respond to the state's call to arms.

While none of the Patristic writers ever denies the use of the sword to the Emperor,[106] their position with regard to the use of the sword by Christians is less clear. That soldiers were among the earliest converts to Christianity is evident in the New Testament. Cornelius, 'a centurion of the . . . Italian band',[107] holds the distinction of being the first Gentile convert to Christianity; and there is no evidence to suggest that his conversion required him to renounce his station as a soldier. Indeed, 'no one', according to Ryan, 'denies that there were Christian soldiers in the army during the period'.[108] This is in spite of the fact that for much of the time from Nero (AD 54–68) until Constantine, during which Christians were subject to intense persecution, and the practice of Christianity – in the army or otherwise – was a capital offence, it seems clear that there were long periods during which the prohibition against Christians serving in the army was not strictly enforced.[109] Indeed, by AD 174, one finds the pagan Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius reporting to the Roman Senate that his *legio fulminata* while deep in enemy territory had been saved from perishing by thirst through the prayers of the 'great multitude' of Christians belonging to his unit:

> I called out of the ranks those whom we call Christians, and, having questioned them, I perceived what a great multitude of them there were and raged against them: which indeed I should not have done, because I afterward perceived their power. For they did not begin by the contemplation of spears or arms or trumpets (which is hateful to them because of the God which they keep in their conscience; for it seems as if these men, whom we suspect of being atheists, have a God residing of his own will in their conscience), but prostrating themselves upon the ground they prayed not for me only but also for the whole army, that they might slake our present hunger and thirst. For we had no water for five days, because it was utterly lacking; and we were in the midst of Germany and in the enemy's country.

> But no sooner had they knelt upon the ground and invoked the God whom I know not, than a most cooling rain fell straight from heaven upon us, but upon the enemies of the Romans lightning and hail.[110]

Regardless of how one reacts to the claim of divine intervention which Marcus Aurelius asserts, what is clear is that: (1) while these Christians may have maintained a strong presumption against the use of violence, they were nevertheless to be found in the military, and that (2) their presence in the military service was not as unusual as pacifist Christians of subsequent times might wish to think that it was.

Walker assesses that during the period AD 260–303, the Church made significant progress in terms of its integration into Roman society, in that it gained among its converts many governmental functionaries and imperial servants. Moreover, the Church 'began now to penetrate the army on a considerable scale'.[111] That is not to suggest that droves of Christians had been attempting to join the army up to that point.[112] It is merely to point out that 'the whole question of Christians serving in the Roman Army became relevant only in the late second century'.[113]

The third quarter of the second century AD seems to have been a watershed period in terms of the kind of questions that received attention relative to Christian participation in the military. On the one hand, the scanty evidence available suggests that the ecclesiastical authorities of the day gave little encouragement – if not positive discouragement – to Christians inclined toward military service.[114] Harnack[115] identifies eight reasons why early Christians felt, or may have felt, the military profession to be at odds with their profession of faith:

> (1) It was a warrior's profession, and Christianity on principle rejected war and the shedding of blood. (2) The officers, under given circumstances, had to pass the sentence of death, and the soldiers in the ranks had to carry out everything they were ordered to do. (3) The unconditional oath required of the soldier was in conflict with the unconditional obligation to God. (4) The cult of the emperor was at its strongest in the army and was hardly avoidable for each individual soldier. (5) The officers had to offer sacrifices, and the regular soldiers had to take part. (6) The military standards appeared to be heathen *sacra*; to reverence them was hence idolatry (in the same way, military decorations—wreaths and so forth—seemed idolatrous). (7) The conduct of soldiers in peacetime (their extortions, loose morals, and so forth) conflicted with the Christian ethic. (8) The traditional rough games and jokes in the army, for example, the *mimus*, were offensive in themselves and were connected in part with the service of idols and the festivals of the gods.[116]

While Christians who found themselves moved by considerations like these 'recognized an *obligation to the government*', that recognition did not necessarily translate into a feeling of '*obligation to perform military service*'.[117] In any event, these considerations combine to highlight the reality that other issues, beside the avoidance of bloodshed, were among the concerns that weighed on the minds of Christians who, for whatever reason, found themselves confronted with the decision of whether or not to serve in the army.

On the other hand, there were at the same time societal changes which served to bring Christians into more direct and more continual contact with the possibility of military service. The population of the Empire began an increasingly rapid decline at the same time that barbarian forces – Gauls, Vandals, and Goths, all characteristically warring peoples – were putting unprecedented pressure on the Empire's frontiers.[118] Rome found itself fighting defensive wars rather than offensive wars of territorial expansion, and few if any Christians 'could disapprove of the military effort required to keep the enemies of Rome from making incursions into the Empire'.[119] By the first decade of the fourth century, the number of Christians in the army had become such that Galerius sought to purge the officer corps of Christians by 'allowing them to choose either to obey orders [to repudiate their religion] and retain their present rank, or alternatively to be stripped of it if they disobeyed the enactment'.[120] Nevertheless, little more than a century later, in AD 416, the army was so thoroughly Christianized that Emperor Theodosius II ordered the exclusion of pagans from the army![121] Even the word 'pagan' underwent an astounding metamorphosis. The term *paganus*, which originally and up to AD 300 had meant civilian as opposed to soldier, came over the course of the next century to mean non-Christian as opposed to believer. Indeed, the Christian had come to be 'the soldier *par excellence*'.[122]

In sum, however persistent or pervasive early Christian pacifism may actually have been,[123] it hardly seems that Christians were desperately trying to maintain the stance of absolute pacifism.[124] Of course, one may expect that some Christians were, indeed, pacifists, and that there were other Christians who had no particular scruples about participation in the military. In any case, it seems clear that enough Christians in Augustine's sphere of influence were concerned about the propriety of military service and the justifiability of war in general to prompt his repeated, if fragmentary, treatments of the issue. Zampaglione is even willing to venture that 'it was precisely the theory that pacifist Christianity had weakened the empire which led Augustine to develop his doctrine concerning the just war'.[125]

If it may be said that Constantine's accession and subsequent conversion to Christianity effectively 'terminated the pacifist period in church history',[126] that termination 'prompts a doubt whether the earlier pacifism had actually been as widespread and profound'[127] as it sometimes is claimed to have been.

In any case, the sweeping social changes resulting from the new relationship between Church and state under Constantine called, in Augustine's day, for a reappraisal of the old solutions. For example, now that the emperor was a Christian, the 'idealistic' approach, i.e. that all of the Christians would pray for divine protection and that the Empire would thus, in fact, be protected,

> was seen to be obviously untenable. It was no longer possible to shift the responsibility for wars to the heathen population exclusively. Christians had themselves to become members of the army—no longer just in isolated cases and by way of concession, but in general and on principle.[128]

With the marriage of Church and state, 'the enemies of the Church became the enemies of the State'[129] and vice versa; and it is in this new milieu that Augustine takes up his task.

Augustine and the Patristic writers

As for Augustine's attitude generally towards the writings of the earlier Patristic writers, his statement made on the subject to Jerome is instructive:

> For I confess to your Charity that I have learned to yield this respect and honor only to the canonical books of Scripture: of these alone do I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error. And if in these writings I am perplexed by anything which appears to me opposed to truth, I do not hesitate to suppose that either the manuscript is faulty, or the translator has not caught the meaning of what was said, or I myself have failed to understand it. As to all other writings, in reading them, however great the superiority of the authors to myself in sanctity and learning, I do not accept their teaching as true on the mere ground of the opinion being held by them; but only because they have succeeded in convincing my judgment of its truth either by means of these canonical writings themselves, or by arguments addressed to my reason.[130]

Against this backdrop, Augustine encounters the Patristic writings which, even if sufficiently definitive on just-war issues of the day for which the various writers flourished, served as inadequate guides for fifth-century Christians. This inadequacy stemmed from the fact that during the first three centuries since Christ, the Church had been transformed from what was, from the general Roman perspective, an all-but-unnoticeable Jewish sect, to a persecuted minority, to a tolerated minority, to an increasingly influential social segment, to an official organ of the state and the repository of supernatural

truth. At each of these plateaus, the admonitions of the Patristic writers were, of course, adapted to the requirements of current exigencies. How representative each of the early Christian writers is of the 'official' position of the Church at the time (whatever that might mean), or perhaps more relevantly, how representative they are of the views of the generality of Christians of their day, is difficult to tell. For 'the opinions and attitudes of religious writers and leaders are often inadequate guides to social practice, as they may not be reflective of commonly held attitudes'.[131]

> Not a single one of the [early Church] Fathers doubted that, in the world as it is, war is inevitable, and, consequently, they saw no reason to condemn the military profession in particular. It is of the very essence of the world to be obliged to shed blood—whether in war, or by legal process (the two are nearly always taken together in this connection). It is only by force that external peace is preserved, for which Christians also are grateful. For this reason, they pray not only for rulers, but also for the army and its success in war.[132]

Therefore, the perennial question which the Patristic writers confront is not whether there should be an army, but whether there should be *Christians* in the army. However, it seems, as Hornus opines, 'beyond dispute' [133] that from the beginning of the third century until well into the fifth century, a fairly general consensus obtained on three points: (1) anyone who is either a Christian or a catechumen was absolutely forbidden to join the army; (2) anyone who had been a soldier at the time of his conversion and who was an ordinary ranker could, if necessary, remain one, but only on condition that he neither became involved in warfare nor was guilty of homicide; (3) anyone who occupied a position of responsibility in the military would need to give up his position in order to become a Christian.[134]

It is not entirely clear how Augustine was influenced by earlier Patristic writings on Christians in the military or on war in general. However, since both Augustine and the earlier Patristic writers in general were well versed in the writings of the Old and New Testaments, it seems clear that, unless they were to jettison the Old Testament, both would have had great difficulty maintaining a position in favour of absolute pacifism. Even jettisoning the Old Testament, with its wars of annihilation, would have proved an uncomfortable alternative, since it was from the Old Testament – and *not* from the New Testament – that Jesus himself quotes in his teachings! (The New Testament, of course, was not written during Jesus' mortal lifetime.) Moreover, both Augustine and the earlier Patristic writers knew that, while the New Testament urges the renunciation of violence and the enthusiastic embracing of peace, it nowhere denigrates the military profession. Indeed, in every case in which the military profession or its

representatives are referred to, the reference is positive. Even in referring to the soldiers who crucified Jesus and guarded his tomb, there is no negative light cast on the soldiers involved by reason of their profession.

The military metaphor

The earliest Patristic writers, like Clement of Rome (*c.* AD 95), seem implicitly to interpret the Pauline position[135] to mean that the place of the individual Christian in the recognized order of things is subordinate not only to the authority of Christ and his appointed mortal ministers in the Church, but also, by secular parallel, to the political authorities of the Roman state. Although Clement is silent on the subject of whether Christians ought to seek or avoid military service, he uses military metaphors to make the point that, like soldiers in an army, the members of the Church should be subject to the ecclesiastical leaders appointed to preside over them:

> Let us then, men and brethren, with all energy act the part of soldiers, in accordance with His [Christ's] holy commandments. Let us consider those who serve under our generals, with what order, obedience, and submissiveness they perform the things which are commanded them. All are not prefects, nor commanders of a thousand, nor of a hundred, nor of fifty, nor the like, but each one in his own rank performs the things commanded by the king and the generals.[136]

It is certainly not the case that ecclesiastical titles were unavailable such that Clement had no choice but to appeal to military metaphors to make his point.[137] Moreover, it seems far-fetched, to say the least, that Clement would have drawn upon these metaphors if they suggested parallels with something that was utterly repugnant to accepted Christian morals.

Not only do the Patristic writers employ the metaphor, but so does the Apostle Paul. Writing to Timothy, he states, 'This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare';[138] 'Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.'[139] Augustine comments upon this passage, condemning idleness and other such vices against which the Christian should wage spiritual 'warfare', but he, like Clement, employs the metaphor of warfare itself in only the most laudable terms.[140] Indeed, Augustine employs military terms in a way which can be understood both literally and metaphorically. In Letter XCIX, written during or just after the sacking of Rome by Alaric circa AD 408, Augustine states, concerning the present calamities in Rome:

> Moreover, the Lord provides consolation for us all, inasmuch as He hath both forewarned us of these temporal afflictions, and promised to us after them eternal blessings; and the soldier who desires to receive a crown when the conflict is over, ought not to lose courage while the conflict lasts, since He who is preparing rewards ineffable for those who overcome, does Himself minister strength to them while they are on the field of battle.[141]

Since Augustine is referring to an actual conflict, it is difficult to tell from the context whether his reference to 'soldier' is metaphorical, literal, or both. Beyond dispute, however, is the fact that he is comfortable with the term. Augustine seems to embrace the view that the numerous military metaphors of the Scriptures are not merely symbolic images. Rather, he seems also to find them useful because they imply how soldiers might be approved to act.

Augustine in contrast to earlier Church Fathers on just war

Although it is not clear whether the majority of grassroots Christians living in the first three centuries AD were themselves pacifists, a pacifist strain clearly manifests itself in the writings of many of the Patristic writers. However, whether or not the Patristic writings are reflective of the attitude of Christians generally (and, given the hierarchical structure of the Roman Church, the degree to which the Church Fathers reflect popular opinion may not be an issue of great concern), Augustine's statements on just war must be seen, at least to some extent, as responses to those Church fathers like Tertullian, Origen, and Lactantius, who champion some variation of the pacifist position. For Augustine, reconciling war and Christian doctrine is far more than a matter of having his cake and eating it too in a militaristic Roman Empire turned Christian. Rather, it is a matter of reconciling Christian charity with the edicts of a just God who, under certain circumstances, has commanded men to go to war. As a philosophical issue, this concern continues to this day to perplex Christian philosophers, of whom Augustine is the first. The issues with which he grapples become the defining issues of just-war discourse, and the positions that he takes become philosophical precedents.

On the matter of turning the other cheek, loving one's enemies, and kindred ideals which receive attention in the Sermon on the Mount, there is no dissimilarity between what Augustine advocates and what the Church Fathers before him advocated as pertaining to personal conduct – to include the matter of self-defence. So, the counsel that one should not defend oneself does not in any way represent a departure from the established tradition. Augustine's point seems to be that one need not – indeed should not – infer that the Christian prescription for private conduct applies to public or collective actions.

In response to those who, like Tertullian, insist that in unbelting Peter, the Lord unbelted every Christian,[142] Augustine argues that Jesus' words were not intended to forbid Christian participation in just wars. Rather, they were to serve notice that whenever one intends to do an injustice or bring harm to another, although one may not actually succeed in harming others, he or she always does harm of the worst sort to himself or herself:

> So also a rash judgment frequently does no harm to him who is the object of the rash judgment; but to him who judges rashly, the rashness itself must necessarily do harm. According to such a rule, I judge of that saying also: 'Every one who strikes with the sword shall perish with the sword.'[143] For how many take the sword, and yet do not perish with the sword, Peter himself being an instance![144]

Augustine then interprets the statement 'For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword' to mean that the soul dies by that very sin, whatever it may be, which it has committed.[145]

In concert with the Patristic writers, Augustine points out to his pagan detractors that, far from being a detriment to the Empire, Christianity, if practised generally, would result in its temporal salvation:

> Wherefore, let those who say that the doctrine of Christ is incompatible with the State's well-being, give us an army composed of soldiers such as the doctrine of Christ requires them to be; let them give us such subjects, such husbands and wives, such parents and children, such masters and servants, such kings, such judges – in fine, even such tax-payers and tax-gatherers, as the Christian religion has taught that men should be, and then let them dare to say that is adverse to the State's well-being; yea, rather let them no longer hesitate to confess that this doctrine, if it were obeyed, would be the salvation of the commonwealth.[146]

If 'the commonwealth' referred to the commonwealth of the human family, a paradox would emerge: if all nations, led by Christian sovereigns, were to field armies full of faithful Christians, there probably would be no need for armies, for nations would be disposed to resolve their differences in ways other than resort to war. However, Augustine does not allow that Christians, as evidence of their desire to realize in the present state of affairs the blessed conditions of the City of God, should therefore renounce participation in war. On the contrary, precisely because the City of God is, by definition, not fully realizable on earth, war presents itself as one of the regular features of human existence. Hence, Augustine's reference to 'the commonwealth' clearly refers to the commonwealth of the Christianized Roman Empire, in contrast to the

neighbouring pagan states, which were Rome's enemies. On this reading, Augustine takes the position that a Roman Army composed of faithful Christians would be a positive thing (a position which differs sharply from the Patristic writers). Rather than conclude that Christian participation in the military should be limited to prayers on behalf of the army's success, Augustine claims, on the strength of his interpretation of John the Baptist, that the presence of Christians within the profession of arms is not contrary to the demands of Christian doctrine:

> For if the Christian religion condemned wars of every kind, the command given in the gospel to soldiers asking counsel as to salvation would rather be to cast away their arms, and withdraw themselves wholly from military service; whereas the word spoken to such was, 'Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages,'[147] – the command to be content with their wages manifestly implying no prohibition to continue in the service.[148]

In the ultimate (but presently unrealizable) sense, the eradication of all wars because of the righteousness of all men would indicate the presence of a truly wonderful state of human affairs. In the absence of such a state, an army full of Christians willing to do their military duty is, for Augustine, the next best thing.

Jus ad bellum

Just cause

From Augustine's Neo-Platonism, his emphasis on order is abundantly clear. From his Christianity, his emphasis is not on order alone, but on a proper ordering of one's objects of love. At the intersection of these two concepts, Augustine finds the touchstone for determining what ultimately counts as a just war. According to Augustine's appraisal, Rome suffered from a disorder of its objects of love. By extolling many virtues, Rome won divine favour but never succeeded in identifying the proper object of its worship. It worshipped glory, perhaps even God's glory, but it did not worship God.[149] The fundamental question that Augustine would have rulers of nations ask, as they consider the question of whether to go to war, is whether going to war would be reflective of a proper ordering of the nation's and the nation's ruler's loves.[150] A ruler whose happiness reflects a proper ordering of his loves will not engage in an unjust war. His cause will be just in both the ultimate and comparative senses of justice.

Right intention

The prominent attention that Augustine gives to right intention is almost entirely rooted in his Christianity. Attitude or intention is always more important for Augustine than the act itself. Citing Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount, that 'whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain',[151] Augustine argues that one should understand this instruction not so much as something which one ought literally do on foot, but rather as something which one ought to 'be prepared in mind to do'. For, says Augustine:

> in the Christian history itself, which is authoritative, you will find no such thing done by the saints, or by the Lord Himself when in His human nature, which He condescended to assume, He was showing us an example of how to live; while at the same time, in almost all places, you will find them prepared to bear with equanimity whatever may have been wickedly forced upon them.[152]

It involves no stretch of Augustinian philosophy whatsoever to include in the set of all things which might be 'wickedly forced' upon a righteous person the possibility of having to engage in a just war. Mournful though that prospect might be, it is nevertheless the lot of Man justly to engage in warfare when so appointed in accordance with the divine will. Moreover, the righteous man who finds himself compelled to fight need not suppose that he is thereby doomed to condemnation. For, as Augustine explains in a clever turn of phrase, 'It is not military duty (*militia*) but malice of heart (*malitia*) that forestalls the doing of good.'[153] Hence, he elsewhere counsels, 'Let necessity, therefore, and not your will, slay the enemy who fights against you.'[154]

It may be argued that the inwardness of Augustine's ethics enables him to justify unrestrained violence with the claim that right and wrong 'reside not in acts but in attitudes',[155] and, of course, once such a justification is allowed, a consequentialist approach to warfare, wherein the end is considered to justify the means, conveniently follows. However, Augustine evidences an awareness of this risk and appears to be unwilling to grant any licence for severing the tie between inward disposition and outward action in this way. Quoting the words of Jesus, he comments:

> For when it is written, 'By their fruits ye shall know them',[156] the statement has reference to things which manifestly cannot be done with a good intention; such as debaucheries, or blasphemies, or thefts, or drunkenness, all such things, of which we are permitted to judge, according to the apostle's statement: 'For what have I to do to judge them that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?'[157]

Of all the items in this sample list of things that never can be done with a good intention, only one item, namely, blasphemy, is a particularly theological concept. All of the others could be included in a list of inherently blameworthy acts found in a thoroughly secularized ethics.[158] Hence, although unstated, it is easy to imagine Augustine including in a comprehensive list of intrinsically evil acts the waging of an unjust war. Although one might claim that what appears to be an unjust war is really just because it is well intended, Augustine stands firm on the position that the mere claim of good intentions is insufficient to transform an otherwise evil or unjust act into a good or just act.

The claim expressed here that certain things are intrinsically evil seems to fly in the face of Augustinian arguments justifying what appear to be intrinsically evil acts chronicled in the Old Testament. It may be possible to resolve the apparent contradiction (albeit at the risk of sacrificing certain Neo-Platonic principles) by assuming Augustine to mean that, without special divine dispensation to the contrary, certain acts are, in fact intrinsically evil. However, that does not negate the possibility that God, in His infinite wisdom, might direct humans to perform some act which, although apparently evil from the human perspective, is good from the vantage point afforded by divine omniscience.

Competent authority

Augustine undeniably recognizes kings and rulers as occupying an important position in the divinely appointed hierarchy into which Man is ordered in various gradations of responsibility. Of those gradations, Augustine says:

> when we take into consideration the social condition of the human race, we find that kings, in the very fact that they are kings, have a service which they can render to the Lord in a manner which is impossible for any who have not the power of kings.[159]

Among those things which none other than kings can do is wage war. Indeed, Augustine holds the royal power to include the prerogative, ordained of God, to administer correction by severe means if necessary, even as a loving parent corrects a child.[160] Augustine's application of Christian doctrine to the question of the propriety of civil disobedience is equally unambiguous: kings must be obeyed in every case that is not in direct contravention to the will of God. And even then, the subject must be willing to suffer the wrath of the king in response to disobedience; for it is God who has made the king ruler over the subject, and it is to God – not the subject – that the king must answer:

> Consider these several grades of human powers. If the magistrate enjoin anything, must it not be done? Yet if his order be in opposition to the

> Proconsul, thou dost not surely despise the power, but choosest to obey a greater power . . . Again, if the Proconsul himself enjoin anything, and the Emperor another thing, is there any doubt that, disregarding the former, we ought to obey the latter? So then, if the Emperor enjoin one thing and God another, what judge ye? Pay me tribute, submit thyself to my allegiance. Right, but not in an idol's temple. In an idol's temple He forbids it. Who forbids it? A greater Power. Pardon me then: thou threatenest a prison, He threateneth hell.[161]

In the face of the Emperor's threat of prison, what solace does Augustine have to offer the subject? Nothing, except the 'shield of faith',[162] along with the assurance that 'the power even of those that are hurtful is from God alone'[163] who, in His own good time, will justify the righteous and obedient.

Augustine admits the traditional concern over state-enforced idolatry, but at no time does he give the least indication that to obey the command of a sovereign to go to war is contrary to the hierarchy of nature – i.e. contrary to the will of God – even if the war is unjust. At this point, one might indulge in a moment of speculation that Augustine might have voiced concerns over military service similar to those raised by earlier Patristic writers if the state had not become, by Augustine's day, ostensibly Christian and if idolatrous oaths were still being exacted from officers and soldiers in the army. However, to insist upon a definitive answer as to what Augustine might have done in that case is to ask too much; for if the clock were thus turned back, the entire complexion of his just-war theory might have been different. This much, however, is certain: Augustine holds, as a matter of principle, that God Himself has made certain exceptions to His own general prohibition against killing. A soldier or other person acting under proper authority, who takes human life in accordance either with laws God has given or suffered to be made, or else by His 'express command to a particular person at a particular time', acts merely as 'an instrument, a sword in its user's hand'.[164] Therefore, those who wage war 'on the authority of God' cannot be held liable for having broken the general commandment not to kill.[165]

Peace as the ultimate objective of war

In *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount*,[166] Augustine provides a detailed commentary on each of the nine beatitudes. He takes pains – even though doing so requires a creative numerological explanation – to show how the seventh beatitude, 'Blessed are the peacemakers',[167] is really the last beatitude, and the one to which all of the others lead. One might question his numerology, but none can fail to notice the priority which he places on the ideal of peace. Referring to the same beatitude, he elsewhere applies it directly to his just-war theory:

'even in waging war, cherish the spirit of a peacemaker, that, by conquering those whom you attack, you may lead them back to the advantages of peace'.[168]

In terms of the influence of Christian philosophy upon Augustine's just-war theory, one must take great care to distinguish between what it means to prize peace in both its temporal and eternal dimensions and what it means to be a 'pacifist' in the normal sense of the word. Augustine does not embrace pacifism of the kind embraced by some of his Patristic forebears. Augustine permits Christian rulers to declare just wars. Earlier Patristic writers had no Christian rulers, at least not in the politically relevant sense. Augustine permits Christians to serve as officers and as soldiers without restricting their military involvement to those duties which do not involve the taking of life. In contrast, some earlier Patristic writers did not permit killing under any circumstances, and some held strong reservations concerning the participation in the army by Christians, even if their service was restricted to duties not requiring killing.

Jus in bello

Proportionality

Augustine certainly was not a pacifist, but neither was he a holy warrior who, identifying the now Christian empire with the kingdom of God on earth, was ready to legitimize any act of violence that would serve the interests of the Church or the state or both, or that the state may deign to perpetrate (as is precisely what happened later in the Middle Ages). What Augustine did was challenge the 'fundamental mood of Christian self-identification with a whole social structure, a system of institutions and functions, including that of war'.[169] If anything, any pacifist-sounding language in Augustine gives credence to the claim, not that he is a pacifist, but that he embraces, without greatly developing it, the *jus in bello* idea that violence in war ought to be limited.

Referring to the words of John the Baptist, 'Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages',[170] Augustine notes that 'Certainly he [John the Baptist] did not prohibit them to serve as soldiers when he commanded them to be content with their pay for the service.'[171] Implicit here is the more general point that soldiers must observe certain limitations as pertaining to their conduct – that their soldierly status in no way absolves them of moral responsibility for their actions. Therefore, just as they should be content with their wages, they should also do no violence nor be guilty of false accusation. 'Do no violence' cannot possibly hold the meaning for Augustine that a soldier cannot engage in any violent action whatsoever. The only thing it plausibly can mean for Augustine is that a soldier should not engage in any *unnecessary* violence, i.e. violence which is not absolutely neces-

sary for the accomplishment of the just military objective. Augustine specifically identifies the evils of war to include the '*love* of violence, revengeful cruelty, fierce and implacable enmity, wild resistance, and the lust of power'.[172] Clearly, then, looting, plundering, pillaging, etc. are beyond the scope of what Augustine would be prepared to allow in terms of *jus in bello* proportionality. Certainly such a view would be in harmony with the Old Testament texts which place specific limits upon what a soldier could take as booty.[173] In Sermon 302, Augustine tells the soldiers in his audience, 'If you are in the military, I don't want you to leave the military, nor do I want you to be a soldier who would oppress the poor. I want you to listen to the Gospel. It doesn't bar you from military service, but it does prohibit wickedness.'[174]

Elsewhere, Augustine cites the Pauline exhortations to 'Let all your things be done with love',[175] and to 'See that none render evil for evil unto any man.'[176] He then adds the commentary, 'Therefore, even when the unruly are corrected, it is not rendering evil for evil, but contrariwise, good. However, what but love worketh all these things?'[177] And indeed, this same love which 'worketh all these things', or which, at least, *should* work in all things, enjoins moderation in punishment – not with the intent of destroying, but with the intent of urging reformation. Augustine exhorts that we should love our enemies more than we love our friends because our friends flatter us, bringing us nearer to damnation; whereas our enemies make us suffer, thus bringing us nearer to the kingdom of God. This exhortation illuminates yet another aspect of Augustine's claim that not only are wars a punishment for the wicked but also a disciplinary measure for the righteous (in the original sense of the word 'discipline': to make a disciple out of) – thus bringing the righteous closer to God.

In Augustine's view, valiant service as a soldier does not absolve one from the normal duties of a Christian lifestyle. 'Think, then,' he exhorts Count Boniface, 'of this first of all, when you are arming for battle, that even your bodily strength is a gift of God; for, considering this, you will not employ the gift of God against God.'[178] He continues, 'Let the manner of your life be adorned by chastity, sobriety, and moderation; for it is exceedingly disgraceful that lust should subdue him whom man finds invincible, and that wine should overpower him whom the sword assails in vain.'[179] Thus, the soldier's conduct on the battlefield and in life in general should reflect moderation and a sense of proportion.

Discrimination

Among Augustine's tractates *On the Gospel of John*, we find an interesting commentary on the conversation between Jesus and Pilate at the time of Jesus' trial.[180] Although not specifically in reference to warfare, Augustine makes the

general claim that 'he is a greater sinner who maliciously delivereth up to the power the innocent to be slain, than the power itself, if it slay him through fear of another power that is greater still'. The reference is to Pilate's decision to condemn Jesus, though innocent, to death because of Pilate's fear of Caesar. Augustine also claims that 'not even through the impulse of fear ought one man to slay another, especially the innocent; nevertheless to do so by an officious zeal is a much greater evil than under the constraint of fear'. The application in principle to Augustinian just-war theory is clear: one can readily imagine the case of a soldier under orders to kill who, for fear of the consequences of disobedience, kills an innocent person. Although the innocent should not be killed, killing out of fear of those in authority is at least more understandable, if not in some sense more justifiable, than the killing of the innocent by one who commits the act without fear or mourning. If so, one finds in this interpretation the basis for an Augustinian exhortation to the effect that killing in war ought to be limited to what is essential to the prosecution of war itself, and that the taking of innocent lives ought to be avoided entirely.

Augustine implies advocacy of what has come to be regarded as the doctrine of non-combatant immunity as he recounts the recent invasion of Rome by Alaric. Augustine notes with approval the fact that the barbarians granted refuge to those who hid themselves in churches.[181] This would suggest that, in Augustine's assessment, (1) the churches were not appropriate military targets, and (2) that those who physically located inside the church had taken themselves out of combat and were, by definition, to be regarded as non-combatants. Augustine's clear implication is that a special status should be accorded to those so classified.

* * *

Augustine is the first Christian writer of the post-apostolic era to attempt to glean from the Christian Scriptures a comprehensive theory of just war. Those who preceded him appealed to the Scriptures to address the question of pacifism specifically, but Augustine was the first to apply them to a broad scope of issues. The effect of that broadening was to lay the foundation for all Christian just-war theorists who have emerged since. However novel in approach those who follow may have attempted to be, none could ignore Augustine without disregarding the enormously influential tradition for which his pronouncements constitute the groundwork.

Notes

1 Augustine, *City of God* VIII.11, 315.
2 See Exodus 15.3.
3 See, for example, Deuteronomy 1.30; Joshua 10.13, 14; Joshua 23.10.
4 See, for example, Deuteronomy 7.1, 2.
5 See, for example, Psalms 46.9; Psalms 68.30; Isaiah 2.4; Habakkuk 2.12.
6 Augustine, *City of God* XXII.29, 1081.
7 Ibid., XX.27, 955.
8 Dougherty 1984, 19.
9 Gilson 1960, 241.
10 In this respect, Augustine's interpretation of Isaiah 7:9, which is based on its rendering in the Septuagint ('*Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis*'), plays an enormously important role in his overall attempt to reconcile the imperatives of reason and revelation. See, for example, *On Christian Doctrine* II.12.17, *NPNF* II, 540; *On the Trinity* VII.6.12, *NPNF* III, 114; XV.2.2, *NPNF* III, 200; *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan* IV, *NPNF* IV, 162; VII.46, *NPNF* IV, 198; XXII.53, *NPNF* IV, 292; *Sermon* XXXIX.4, *NPNF* VI, 390; *Sermon* XLI.9, *NPNF* VI, 400; *Sermon* LXVIII.1–2, *NPNF* VI, 465-466; *Sermon* LXXVI.2, *NPNF* VI, 481; *Sermon* LXXXIX.1, *NPNF* VI, 527; *Sermon* XC.6, *NPNF* VI, 530; *On the Gospel According to St. John* tractate XV.23, *NPNF* VII, 105; tractate XXVII.7, *NPNF* VII, 176; tractate XXIX.6, *NPNF* VII, 184; tractate XLV.7, *NPNF* VII, 251; tractate LXIX.2, *NPNF* VI, 325.
11 Walker 1930[b], 111.
12 Swift 1983, 121.
13 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* III.15.23, *NPNF* II, 563.
14 Ibid., III.16.23, *NPNF* II, 563.
15 Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* I.22.76, *NPNF* VI, 31.
16 Ibid.
17 Augustine, *Letter* CXXXVII. 18, *NPNF* I, 480.
18 Deane 1963, 40.
19 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* I.27.28, *NPNF* II, 530.
20 Augustine, *Of the Morals of the Catholic Church* XV.25, *NPNF* IV, 48.
21 See Augustine, *City of God* V.20, 214.
22 Augustine, *Of the Morals of the Catholic Church*, XV.25, *NPNF* IV, 48.
23 Thomas M. Garrett, 'St. Augustine and the Nature of Society', *The New Scholasticism* 30 (January, 1956): 22.
24 Burns 1988, 107.
25 Augustine, *City of God* XV. 7, 604.
26 Augustine, *Sermon* VI.14, *NPNF* VI, 278.
27 Robert M. Good, 'The Just War in Ancient Israel', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104 (Summer 1985): 399.
28 Ibid., 387.
29 Edward A. Ryan, 'The Rejection of Military Service by the Early Christians', *Theological Studies* 13 (1952): 3.
30 2 Samuel 24.1–10.
31 Deuteronomy 20.10–18.
32 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.13, 870.

33 Ibid., XIX.26, 892. It is of interest to note that one Patristic writer, Clement of Alexandria (c. AD 153–217), goes so far as to commend the humanity of the peace proposal referred to here. He views it, not merely as a formal obligation required by justice, but also as an overt expression of the kind of love that Christians should show toward their enemies. See Clement of Alexandria. *Stromata, or Miscellanies* II.18, *ANF* II, 367.
34 Deuteronomy 23.9–14.
35 Deuteronomy 20.19, 20.
36 For further discussion, see *The Interpreter's Bible* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1953): 2:455–8, 469, 470.
37 Augustine, *Confessions* III.7, 64.
38 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.76, *NPNF* IV, 301.
39 Roland H. Bainton, 'The Early Church and War', *Harvard Theological Review* 39 (1946): 189.
40 Hebrews 13.8.
41 Matthew 5.17.
42 See, for example, Matthew 24.3–31.
43 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.73, *NPNF* IV, 300.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
46 Ibid., XXII.59, 60, *NPNF* IV, 295.
47 See Genesis 22.
48 Augustine, *City of God* I, 26, 36–8.
49 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan* XXII.74, *NPNF* IV, 300.
50 Ibid., XXII.78, *NPNF* IV, 303.
51 Ibid.
52 Deuteronomy 34:10.
53 Isaiah 41.8; James 2.23.
54 This latter claim raises, of course, questions concerning Augustine's view on free will. His attempt at solving the problem of free will is a complex issue which demands treatment outside the scope of the present study.
55 Augustine, *Letter* 138.2, *NPNF* I, 481–2.
56 Ibid., 482.
57 Ibid., *italics added.*
58 Augustine is always concerned about 'maintaining an essential unity between the Creator God [of the Old Testament] and the God of the New Testament'. See Swift 1983, 111.
59 See, for example, Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* XX. 64, *NPNF* VI, 27–8.
60 Acts 15.28, 29.
61 Romans 13.1–7. The seriousness with which Augustine takes this passage cannot be overemphasized, as evidenced by the number of times he cites portions of it. For example, see *Letter* LXXXVII.7, *NPNF* I, 367; *Letter* XCIII.6.20, *NPNF* I, 389; *Letter* C.1, *NPNF* I, 411; *Letter* CCXX.4, *NPNF* I, 573; *On the Catechizing of the Uninstructed* XXI.37, *NPNF* III, 306; *On Continence* 11, *NPNF* III, 383; *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan* XXII.75, *NPNF* IV, 301; *Concerning the Nature of Good, Against the Manichæans* XXXII, *NPNF* IV, 358; *In Answer to the Letters of Petilian, the Donatist, Bishop of Cirta* II.20.45, *NPNF* IV, 540; II.84.184, *NPNF* IV, 572; *On the Spirit and the Letter* 54, *NPNF* V, 107; *Sermon*

XII.13, *NPNF* VI, 302; *On the Gospel According to St. John* tractate V.12, *NPNF* VII, 35; tractate CV.2, *NPNF* VII, 396, tractate CXVI.5, *NPNF* VII, 426; *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* CIV.37, *NPNF* VIII, 518. See particularly *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* CXIX.159, *NPNF* VIII, 586.

62 Romans 13.1–7.
63 Russell 1975, 20.
64 See, for example, Matthew 15.17–20; Mark 7.18–23.
65 Augustine, *Ten Homilies on The First Epistle of John to the Parthians, NPNF* VII, 524.
66 See Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, NPNF* VI, 3, note 4.
67 Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* 1.1.1, *NPNF* VI, 3.
68 Matthew 5.38, 39.
69 Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* I.19.56, *NPNF* VI, 24. See also Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XIX.25, *NPNF* IV, 249.
70 Ibid.
71 Matthew 5.39.
72 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.76, *NPNF* IV, 301.
73 Matthew 5.39. See also Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XIX.19, *NPNF* IV, 246, where Augustine makes a similar argument for the 'thou shalt not kill' passage in Matthew 5.21.
74 Augustine, *Letter* 138.9, *NPNF* I, 483. The context for this statement is particularly relevant to the present study. Augustine's highly esteemed associate Marcellinus has informed Augustine that Volusianus has cited Matthew 5.31–41 as evidence that 'the Christian doctrine and preaching were in no way consistent with the duties and rights of citizens' (Augustine, *Letter* 136.2, *NPNF* I, 473). The words of Augustine cited above are part of his response to Volusianus via Marcellinus.
75 Ibid., 138.12, *NPNF* I, 485.
76 Ibid., 138.13, *NPNF* I, 485.
77 Augustine, *On the Gospel According to St. John*, tractate CXIII.4, *NPNF* VII, 420.
78 Augustine, *On Lying* 27, *NPNF* III, 470. See also Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* 1.19.58, *NPNF* VI, 26; Luke 23.34.
79 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.76, *NPNF* IV, 301.
80 Augustine, *On Lying* 27, *NPNF* III, 470. See also Augustine, *Letter* 138.12, *NPNF* I, 484 for his commentary on the metaphorical nature of this passage.
81 See James F. Childress, 'Moral Discourse about War in the Early Church', *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 12 (Spring 1984): 6.
82 Augustine, *Letter* 138.14, *NPNF* I, 485.
83 Ibid., *italics added.*
84 Ibid.
85 Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* I.20.63, *NPNF* VI, 27.
86 Augustine, *Letter* 138.14, *NPNF* I, 485.
87 Luke 10.37.
88 Augustine, *Letter* 138.14, *NPNF* I, 485.
89 Matthew 5.43, 44.
90 Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* I.21.70, *NPNF* VI, 29–30.
91 Augustine, *On Grace and Free Will* 45, *NPNF* V, 464.
92 Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* LXXIX.14, *NPNF* VIII, 385.
93 Romans 12.20.
94 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* III.16.24, *NPNF* II, 563.

95 Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* LXXIX.14, *NPNF* VIII, 384.
96 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan* XXII.20, *NPNF* IV, 279.
97 1 Thessalonians 5.15.
98 Augustine, *In Answer to the Letters of Petilian, the Donatist, Bishop of Cirta* III.4.5, *NPNF* IV, 598–9. In the current context, in the course of the Donatist controversy, the reference is to 'ecclesiastical discipline', but the idea clearly applies to the broader case of just war.
99 Johnson 1987, chapter 1.
100 Ibid.
101 See, for example, 2 Thessalonians 2.2–3.
102 Hugh Nibley, 'The Passing of the Church: Forty Variations on an Unpopular Theme', *Church History* XXX (June 1961): 131–54.
103 See, for example, Acts 10 and 15 for examples of divine revelation operative in the apostolic Church.
104 Edwin Hatch, *The Influence of Greek Ideas on Christianity* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1957): 106, 107.
105 Ibid., 107.
106 Ryan 1952, 10.
107 Acts 10.1, 2.
108 Ryan 1952, 9.
109 Ibid., 11.
110 The letter from which this quote is taken traditionally is appended to Justin's *Apologia*. See Eppstein 1935, 34.
111 Walker 1970, 96.
112 Indeed, during the earlier decades of the Church's first century, Christians, the majority of whom were converts from Judaism, were looked upon by many merely as members of a radical Jewish sect. Since the Jews had been granted official exemption from Roman military service, there existed no real expectation for Christians to serve in the military. See Ryan 1952, 7.
113 Stephen Gero, '*Miles Gloriosus*: The Christian and Military Service according to Tertullian', *Church History* 39 (1970): 285.
114 Ryan 1952, 23.
115 Harnack's classic publication, *Militia Christi,* is, as Swift notes, a 'standard work' which constitutes 'the starting point for almost all modern studies of the problem' of Christians in the military during the first three centuries. See Swift 1983, 162.
116 Adolf Harnack, *Militia Christi: The Christian Religion and the Military in the First Three Centuries,* trans. David McInnes Gracie (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981): 65.
117 Childress 1984, 10.
118 Ryan 1952, 13.
119 Ibid., 14.
120 Eusebius, *The History of the Church* VIII.4, trans. G. A. Williamson (New York: Penguin Books, 1981): 332.
121 Ryan 1952, 27.
122 Cecil John Cadoux, *The Early Christian Attitude to War* (London: Headley Bros. Publishers, Ltd, 1919): 167.
123 Windass 1964, 23.
124 See John Hegeland, 'Christians and the Roman Army A.D. 173–337,' *Church History* 43, no. 2 (June 1974): 200.

125 Zampaglione 1973, 306.
126 Bainton 1960, 85.
127 Ibid.
128 Hans von Campenhausen, 'Christians and Military Service in the Early Church', in *Tradition and Life in the Church: Essays and Lectures in Church History*, trans. A. V. Littledale (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968): 167.
129 Windass 1964, 22.
130 Augustine, *Letter* 82, *NPNF* I, 350.
131 Lenihan 1995, 141.
132 von Campenhausen 1968, 161.
133 Jean-Michel Hornus, *It is Not Lawful for Me to Fight: Early Christian Attitudes Toward War, Violence, and the State*, revised edn, trans. Alan Kreider and Oliver Coburn (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1980): 167–8.
134 Ibid., 167–8.
135 Romans 13.1–7.
136 Clement of Rome, *The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, ANF*, 15.
137 As Clement is certainly aware, Paul specifically describes the hierarchical character of the Church and specifies that the hierarchy includes apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (see Ephesians 4.11–15). Clement just as easily could have referred to these titles in preference to the secular, military ones.
138 1 Timothy 1.18.
139 2 Timothy 2.3, 4.
140 See Augustine, *Of the Work of Monks* 16, 26, *NPNF* III, 512, 516.
141 Augustine, *Letter* 99.2, *NPNF* I, 411.
142 Tertullian, *On Idolatry,* XIX, *ANF* III, 73.
143 Matthew 26.52.
144 Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* 1.18.62, *NPNF* VI, 55.
145 Ibid.
146 Augustine, *Letter* 138.15, *NPNF* I, 486.
147 Luke 3.14.
148 Augustine, *Letter* 138.III.15, *NPNF* I, 486. See also Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.74, *NPNF* IV, 300–1. Note in the same passage Augustine's application of Matthew 8:9, 10 in the present context: 'Again, in the case of the centurion who said, "I am a man under authority, and have soldiers under me: and I say to one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this and he doeth," Christ gave due praise to his faith; He did not tell him to leave the service.'
149 Augustine, *City of God* V.15, 204, 205.
150 See ibid. V.24, 220.
151 Matthew 5.41.
152 Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* 1.19.61, *NPNF* VI, 26.
153 Augustine, *Sermon* 302.15, quoted in Swift 1983, 123.
154 Augustine, *Letter* 189.6, *NPNF* I, 554.
155 Bainton 1960, 92.
156 Matthew 12.33; Luke 6.44.
157 Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* II.18.59, *NPNF* VI, 54.
158 Of course, whether specific acts which Augustine mentions are, in fact, intrinsically evil is a debatable, but nonetheless irrelevant, point. It is irrelevant

because Augustine's aim in listing them is merely to illustrate his central point that there exist *some* acts which can never be performed with a good intention.

159 Augustine. *In Answer to the Letters of Petilian, the Donatist, Bishop of Cirta* 2.92.210, *NPNF* IV, 583.

160 Ibid., 2.95.216, *NPNF* IV, 583. We might take occasion at this juncture to observe with Swift that 'However persuasive or unpersuasive the analogy of paternal correction may be, this statement indicates how far Christian thinking – at least in the mind of its greatest Western theologian of the early centuries – had come from the pacifist mood of the Ante-Nicene writers' (Swift 1983, 122–3).

161 Augustine, *Sermon* XII.13, *NPNF* VI, 302.

162 Ibid. See Ephesians 6.16.

163 Augustine, *Concerning the Nature of Good, Against the Manichæans* 32, *NPNF* IV, 358.

164 Augustine, *City of God* I.21, 32.

165 Ibid.

166 Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* I.3.10 *NPNF* VI, 5.

167 Matthew 5.9.

168 Augustine, *Letter* 189.6, *NPNF* I, 554.

169 Markus 1983, 12.

170 Luke 3.14.

171 See Augustine, *Letter* 189.4, *NPNF* I, 553.

172 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan* XX.74, *NPNF* IV, 301, *italics added.*

173 Consider, for example, Joshua 7.

174 Augustine, *Sermon* 302.16, translated in Lenihan 1995, 220.

175 1 Corinthians 16.14, cited in Augustine, *On Grace and Free Will* XXXIV, *NPNF* V, 458.

176 1 Thessalonians 5.15, cited in Augustine, *On Grace and Free Will* XXXIV, *NPNF* V, 458.

177 Augustine, *On Grace and Free Will* XXXIV, *NPNF* V, 458.

178 See Augustine, *Letter* 189.6, *NPNF* I, 554.

179 Ibid., *Letter* 189.7, *NPNF* I, 554.

180 Augustine, *On the Gospel According to St. John,* Tractate CXVI.5, *NPNF* VII, 426.

181 Augustine, *City of God* I.6–7, 11–13.

6

Augustine's Theory and Beyond

A critical appraisal

One of the most fascinating aspects of the Augustinian complex of doctrines is the fact that it is just that: a complex. 'Grant just a few of his [Augustine's] premises, and all the rest follows, enveloped in a theological-metaphysical-eschatological wrapping that renders it impervious to countervailing evidence and argument.'[1] Indeed, considering that Augustine himself does not present his views on just war as a unified theory, the systematic presentation attempted in this study reveals an amazing degree of consistency among the various aspects of his just-war discourse – even among those passages written decades apart. Nevertheless, this reconstruction of his theory still suggests several points of internal inconsistency, which have legitimate claim on our attention. These inconsistencies appear in the form of two kinds of problems: those which are characteristic of Augustinism in general but which additionally bear upon his just-war theory, and those which pertain more or less exclusively to his theory of just war. An examination of the former is valuable in that it identifies problems which occur at the axiomatic level of Augustinian discourse and, hence, serve to illuminate the nature of the most fundamental challenges that Augustine confronts in his role as the first Christian philosopher. An examination of the latter is valuable in that it highlights a certain fluidity which Augustine allows himself in the treatment of what the just-war tradition subsequently labelled as *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* issues. At times, Augustine seems to distinguish carefully between the two, and at other times he seems to conflate them. This would not be so critical a problem were it not for the fact that much of Augustine's just-war argumentation rests on the assumption that the respective roles of the state and of the individual are separate and distinct as pertaining to what constitutes a morally acceptable application of violence.

In the critique which follows, it should be borne in mind that the goal is not to argue with Augustine's fundamental assumptions as such, for one could endlessly quarrel with any aspect of Augustinism by rejecting outright some or

all of its basic Neo-Platonic or Christian-theological assumptions. Such an approach, however, would yield nothing more than an un-Augustinian critique of Augustine. On the other hand, it seems reasonable to highlight potential incompatibilities between those principles which undergird Augustine's just-war theory and the larger project of Augustinism.

Free will and predestination

The problem of free will is one whose implications affect the whole of Augustinism. As such, it likewise has implications for his just-war theory. Whether Augustine succeeds at solving the problem is a matter for debate. Augustine states:

> God willeth not that thou shouldest sin; for He forbiddeth it: yet if thou hast sinned, imagine not that the man hath done that which He willed not. For as He would that man would not sin, so would He spare the sinner, that he may return and live; He so willeth finally to punish him who persisteth in his sin, that the rebellious cannot escape the power of justice. Thus whatever choice thou hast made, the Almighty will not be at a loss to fulfill His will concerning thee.[2]

This perplexing passage reveals the challenging Augustinian position that, while God never wills for one to sin, nothing happens that is contrary to God's will; so if one does sin, it cannot be that the act or omission involved occurred contrary to God's will. On the face of it, this appears to embody an outright contradiction, which leaves open the question of freedom of the will. Of course, the problem is not lost on Augustine, who devotes considerable energy to its resolution.[3] Nevertheless, passages such as the foregoing precipitate some significant problems for the theory of just war: (1) if God orders all things and everything that God orders is just, how could an unjust war ever occur?; (2) if God ordains an unjust war, what makes an unjust war morally less worthy than a just war?; (3) if God merely permits an unjust war to occur without explicitly ordaining it, what does its occurrence imply about the Augustinian premise that nothing happens without God's having ordained it?; (4) if unjust wars do not occur at all, what philosophical sense does it make to distinguish between just and unjust wars?

Augustine's solution seems to be to hold that injustice merely implies disorder but not necessarily evil. Hence, to say that God permits disorder is not the same thing as to say that God ordains evil. Such a solution may be fine for the case of God's *ordaining* disorder; but in the case of His *permitting* disorder, unless Man is capable of acting contrary to God's will, one is left to wonder, on the basis of Augustinian premises, what power or influence other than God's

would be the cause of the disorder. If God permits disorder but never ordains it, then, in the Augustinian scheme, action in the universe apart from that willed by God is possible, as evidenced by the fact that disorder exists.

The problem of free will is exacerbated by Augustine's insistence on the doctrine of predestination: only the elect will be saved; but since one never can know whether one is saved, it behoves all to act as saved persons would act. This is so because, as the Calvinists will later argue, just and holy actions are the most certain (albeit imperfect) manifestation of one's being elected for salvation. Hence, saved persons, or those destined for salvation, will fight just wars. On the other hand, one might expect unjust wars to be waged by those elected for damnation. However, since these claims merely reflect tendencies and not absolutes, they provide no guarantee of anything to anyone. It is rather akin to Pascal's wager: the only thing that one can be sure of is that, all things considered, one is better off fighting a just war rather than an unjust war – if, in fact, his predestination allows him that option.

Augustine's likely response to all of this is that God's ways are ultimately inscrutable to Man. While that response is probably adequate in theological terms, it also signals, for better or for worse, the possibility that a strictly rational account (i.e. devoid of theological considerations) of either free will or just war is difficult if not impossible for Augustinism to produce.

Epistemological problems

The inscrutable nature of God's will also naturally raises some epistemological issues for Augustine's just-war theory. In the *City of God*, Augustine is quite clear on the point that one cannot know whether he, himself, or anyone else is elected for salvation or for damnation: God, for his own reasons, deigned not to reveal the membership of each 'city', as evidenced by the fact that, in the present world, 'it is uncertain whether he who seems to be standing firm is destined to fall and whether he who seems to lie fallen is destined to rise again'.[4]

In his *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan,* Augustine asks Faustus:

> as the judgements of God and the movements of man's will contain the hidden reason why the same prosperous circumstances which some make a right use of are the ruin of others, and the same afflictions under which some give way are profitable to others, and since the whole mortal life of man upon earth is a trial, who can tell whether it may be good or bad in any particular case – in time of peace, to reign or to serve, or to be at ease or to die – or in time of war, to command or to fight, or to conquer or to be killed?[5]

Based on Augustine's statement in the *City of God,* the answer to his query would seem to be that one cannot know whether, in any particular case, it is good or bad to do *anything*, to include declaring or fighting in a just war.

There are other problems as well. Since Augustine accepts as fundamental the idea that obedience to God's commands is always justifiable and that, by definition, any war which God ordains is just, then one can rest assured that he is justified in fighting a war that God has ordained. However, Augustine provides no revelatory mechanism for ascertaining the will of God. He points to Moses and Joshua as examples of seers who knew the will of God and could act upon it with confidence, but he does not name a single war fought after Old Testament times that could serve as a fit example of a war which God personally directed to be fought. Even in the capacity of his own bishopric, Augustine never invokes divine authorization for violent actions by announcing, as the ancient prophets did, 'Thus saith the Lord'. His justifications for violent action are always based on a reasoned application of the Old Testament paradigm – his only paradigm for divinely directed wars – but never on direct revelation. Based on Augustine's interpretation of the Old Testament paradigm, the following argument can be made:

P1. Everything which God does is just.

P2. God sometimes directs or authorizes wars to be fought.

C1. ∴ Any war which God directs or authorizes is just.

C2. ∴ At least some wars are necessarily just.

However, it does *not* follow that

∴ At least some wars which mortals fight without divine authorization are necessarily just.

Augustine finds authorization for all other just wars in an appeal to the authority of the sovereign as God's lieutenant on earth. Nevertheless, he identifies no mechanism whereby even a well-meaning, just man can know whether the sovereign's command to fight is in any way reflective of the divine will. Later just-war theorists operating within the general confines of the Augustinian tradition, like Victoria in the sixteenth century, will ascribe 'invincible ignorance' to soldiers, thus shielding them from the burden of moral responsibility for war because they cannot know whether or not the sovereign's command to fight was just.[6] Had Augustine availed himself of this or some similar mechanism, he at least could have acknowledged the epistemological

problem and absolved the common soldier of moral responsibility. Nevertheless, the problem of knowing whether the sovereign had issued a just command would, of course, remain.

However, even this solution begs the question of what the individual soldier is supposed to do when, by any estimation possible for him, the sovereign's command to fight is unlawful. Augustine says that an unjust law is not a law.[7] While this statement provides insight as to how seriously Augustine takes the matter of justice, he also holds that disobedience is not warranted merely because one considers a law to be unjust. A law is unjust only if it is something that God considers to be unjust,[8] and the only way to know that – short of a special revelation on the issue – is to consult what God has already revealed and see if the law is contrary to the divine will as contained in the pages of the Scriptures. If it is, then the law is unjust and need not be obeyed. However, the Scriptures do not address every demand that a sovereign might make of a subject, and their silence on matters relative to a particular law or edict by a particular sovereign does not imply that the law or edict is just.

Jus ad bellum issues

Just cause and comparative justice

In an unmistakably Augustinian spirit, von Campenhausen argues that the Christians' 'compliance with the political or military authorities never means that they take war to be an ultimate truth and a reality of life that suffers no impairment'.[9] However, while granting this point, it is likewise important to note that the position it embodies leaves substantial interpretive room as to what exactly counts as a just war; and it is questionable whether the conditions of justice specified by Augustine are adequate. Of course, Augustine does not claim to have produced an exhaustive list of just causes, or even of categories of just causes. Nevertheless, even the just causes which he does specify lend themselves to overly broad interpretation. To his credit, Augustine never claims that just wars will be perfectly just, for human execution of wars renders perfect justice an impossibility.

> If Augustine acknowledges a real difference between just and unjust wars, the ultimate truth of the matter is that in an imperfect world the just man, no less than the scoundrel, is faced with imperfect choices and with the harsh realities that flow from them.[10]

However, great care still must be taken, for it is not clear that the 'lesser of two evils' always translates into a moral good.

This is not to argue that Augustine's theory is not a morally sound approach

to the exceedingly difficult problem of just war, but rather to argue that the theory is susceptible to abuse. While Augustine certainly is correct in observing that 'Not every one who is indulgent is a friend; nor is every one an enemy who smites',[11] Augustine likewise must concede that many who indulge *are* friends, and many who smite *are* enemies. In light of the potential that exists for abuse of the theory with unwarranted claims of a just cause, Augustine is subject to the same critique as that which he implicitly levies against Socrates: the kind of person who fully observes the Socratic thesis that one never knowingly commits evil has a Socrates-like character; the kind of wise man who wages a just war has an Augustine-like character. The difference between Socrates and Augustine lies in their view of human nature. Socrates' view is quite positive, whereas Augustine's is so entirely negative that the only hope he holds out for Man's redemption is that which comes as the result of the bestowal of unmerited divine grace. By Augustine's account, it seems that most people will not receive this grace. As a result, one might conclude that some – perhaps many – wars will be unjust altogether, with neither side being able to claim comparative justice in any meaningful way.

Right intention

Three objections to Augustine's requirement for right intention repeatedly assert themselves. The first objection is that it is impossible to engage in violence with the proper intent because violence and Christian love are simply incommensurable. 'Whosoever can reconcile this, "Resist not evil,"' says Barclay,

> with Resist evil by force; again, Give also thy other cheek, with strike again; also, Love thine enemies, with spoil them, make a prey of them, pursue them with fire and sword; or, Pray for those that persecute you, with persecute them by fines, imprisonment and death itself; whoever can find a means to reconcile these things, may be supposed also to have found a way to reconcile God with the Devil, Christ with Antichrist, Light with Darkness, and good with evil.[12]

Similarly, it seems that for Augustine 'it is acceptable to get one's hands morally dirty in certain kinds of human relationships, as long as one keeps one's heart pure'.[13] The question arises, however, whether this is really possible in light of Augustine's theology, which requires both 'clean hands and a pure heart'.[14] Augustine takes the position that it is possible. In fact, in the course of commenting upon this conjunction in his exposition on Psalm 24, Augustine equates 'clean hands' with the state of being 'guiltless in deed' and 'a pure heart' with being 'pure in thought'.[15]

The second objection is that if it is, in fact, logically possible to reconcile Christian love with violent action, then it is at least extremely difficult to do so in practice. Indeed, as Augustine is fond of noting, a loving father may be able to discipline his child with love in his heart. However, the real question is whether the same loving father can *kill* his son with love in his heart but without expressed divine warrant of the kind Abraham was given to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Augustine responds that it is possible to reconcile the imperatives of love with the demands of justice. For him, the best evidence for his position comes from the Atonement wrought by Jesus Christ, who is Himself the Reconciler and the reconciliation of the two. At the same time, Augustine can admit with complete consistency that just because God Himself can and does achieve this reconciliation does not mean that all or even most people will.

Augustine seeks to account for the apparent fact that some of the paradigmatic figures of Judeo-Christian Scripture engaged in either life-threatening or life-taking displays of violence early in their careers, including Moses,[16] Saul of Tarsus who becomes the Apostle Paul,[17] and the Apostle Peter.[18] His justifications are based not on the claim that what they did was morally right, but on the paradigmatic roles that they were divinely destined to play. This is, of course, potentially problematic. If Augustine were to hold these figures as having committed acts which warranted repentance and of which they repented, then their later status as paradigms makes perfect sense in terms of Augustine's Christian philosophical commitments. However, his apparent concern for the need to justify these acts themselves as completely right-intended may suggest that Augustine's concept of right intention can be used to justify more than he would wish it to.

The third objection to Augustine's requirement for right intention stems from the fact that, while one can see intention reflected in conduct, intention itself is, by its very nature, empirically unverifiable. 'Intentions alone are always open to suspicion, unless they are also controlled by some more objective determination of right *action*.'[19] As a result, the 'final determinant of an enemy's guilt' can only be one's 'subjective intent, not just his overt act'.[20] Augustine acknowledges the difficulty created by the impossibility of verification, [21] and, in all fairness to Augustine, this acknowledgement really does not do anything to undermine his theory; he appeals to God to judge the hearts of men and merely requires of men that they act as justly as they truthfully can. What can be said, however, is that, to whatever extent an empirical verification mechanism for right intention is important, Augustine's theory leaves mortal Man to function without it.

Competent authority

One of the overarching objectives of Augustinism seems to be to produce a rationally satisfying account of a human existence which features both a 'this-worldly' and an 'other-worldly' component, such that one cannot be understood without the other. The doctrines of both Neo-Platonism and Christianity provide vehicles to facilitate his account of that existence. However, by Augustine's own admission, Neo-Platonism is not Christianity and Christianity is not Neo-Platonism. Hence, when a problem anywhere in Augustine's philosophy becomes evident, one can sometimes profitably begin a diagnosis of that problem by noting those junctures at which Augustine's Christianity and his Neo-Platonism enjoy a less-than-perfect fit. One such problem arises as pertaining to the place where Augustine assigns the political state in the hierarchy of being and value.

Augustine makes abundantly clear that no state is or can be synonymous with the City of God. Moreover, those elected for salvation, but who sojourn for the present as 'strangers and pilgrims on the earth'[22] 'know that their salvation is not linked to the victory or survival of any nation-state'.[23] Therefore, the question arises as to why the elect – the audience to which Augustine appears to address his just-war theory – should be concerned at all about the survival of any political state. This problem seems particularly acute in light of the fact that Augustine enjoins defence of the state by violent action when so directed by competent authority, and completely proscribes all violent action – even by the elect – for the purpose of self-defence. As Windass argues, 'It is very difficult to see, therefore, how he can justify killing for this brittle kingdom, when he will not on any account allow the individual to kill in order to preserve his own ephemeral life and liberty.'[24] One might seek a resolution of the problem by arguing, as Dougherty does, that 'The individual Christian may voluntarily choose martyrdom, but no one has the right to impose martyrdom on the whole community.'[25] However, martyrdom need not come as the result of non-resistance. One just as easily can die a martyr for a cause while in the act of mounting a violent defence of that cause as one can by allowing oneself to be killed without resisting. Even if it is accepted that earthly states are worth defending to the death, still, Augustine's case justifying the defence of the temporal state is tenuous. This is especially so in the case of a state ruled by a wicked sovereign. The fact that sovereigns are to be obeyed by virtue of their position, no matter how wicked they are, as long as they do not give a command that is in direct opposition to the revealed word of God, sounds reminiscent of the doctrine that 'might makes right'.[26]

At this point, questions of hierarchy become rather tangled: which takes precedence, the righteous citizen or the wicked ruler; the right intention of the subject or the evil command of the sovereign; the public demands of

citizenship in the temporal state or the private imperatives of citizenship in the City of God? While the Patristic writers who precede Augustine decry the idolatry of the Roman Army, the outward observances of pagan military ritual among the Romans may have been merely symptomatic of a far more pervasive disordering of temporal priorities based on 'a false scale of values' wherein the political state received the adoration and obedience actually reserved for God and demanded 'the human sacrifice which God forbids'.[27] Giannelli states that:

> No citizen had the right to refuse the honours due to the gods of the empire. The Christians, however, thought differently, and they could not compromise on this point. For it was impossible for them deliberately to take part in a religious act which they considered demon-worship.[28]

However, as Hornus notes, Christian refusal to observe pagan rituals

> must not be construed as meaning that the believers were simply rejecting the rite by itself. The rite showed that a particular power was totalitarian. Its absolute claim was the real idolatry, and it was this that the faithful were refusing.[29]

However, if Hornus is right, his claim invites the question of whether Augustine's hierarchically based solution to the problem of war is entirely satisfactory. For, if engagement in war has service to the state as its ultimate aim, then the worship of the state does appear to displace the worship which is properly due to God; and such a result runs counter to Augustine's entire programme. An Augustinian solution to the problem may be to argue that God, Himself, through the voice of the Scriptures, enjoins submission to the demands of the temporal state; and since the command so to do issues from God, His position in the hierarchy of being and value is not compromised.

Similarly, in his zeal to advocate the maintenance of order, Augustine fails to provide any mechanism for subjects to throw off those yokes of injustice imposed by regimes whose offences are so grievous that revolt against the regime in the form of a revolution constitutes the only viable remedy. Yet another problem related to the hierarchy of being and value pertains to the status of the sovereign in his dealings with other sovereigns. How a sovereign might be justified in punishing one of his own subjects is an easier matter to understand than how one sovereign is justified in punishing another sovereign. A rather Augustinian explanation sometimes used to address this problem is that 'a state which commits an offence becomes, by that very act, subject to the state which it injures, in respect to that particular act; automatically, therefore, the injured state becomes both judge and executioner of the

offending one'.[30] McKenna seeks an Augustinian-style resolution by arguing that within the confines of established society, the individual is not free to take upon himself or herself the responsibility to punish those who act contrary to society's edicts:

> As between societies, however, there is no one to whom effective appeal can be made. The moral empowerment of the injured state therefore receives a kind of extension: to pass and execute judgment on those who are normally beyond its jurisdiction. Just as the government may right wrongs and punish wrong-doers inside its boundaries, so it may act outside.[31]

Thus, an unjust state, by virtue of the injustice present in it, occupies a position in the hierarchy of the Augustinian universe that is subordinate to that occupied by comparatively just states. However, the problem is not so much that the sovereign must serve as judge and executioner as it is that the sovereign must act as both judge and one of the litigants in the dispute – either as the plaintiff in the case of an offensive war or as the defendant in the case of a defensive war.

Peace as the ultimate objective of war

At every turn, Augustine sees war as a vehicle for the attainment of peace. Both the wicked and the righteous fight, says Augustine, precisely so that they can obtain a peace that accords with and is reflective of their desires. Hence, both just and unjust wars accomplish that aim. However, if that be the case, the question arises as to what difference it should make whether one fights a just or an unjust war. The Augustinian reply is, of course, that one should fight a just war rather than an unjust one because a just war will result in a 'better' kind of peace than will an unjust one. However, the fact that a state engages in a just war in no way implies that the state is destined to win. Thus, a state might engage in a just war with every good intention and end up with a worse peace than that which it had before the war. Conversely, a state might prosecute an unjust war and end up with a better peace (from its perspective – and for Augustine, peace among mortals is always understood perspectivally) than it would have had by prosecuting a just war.

An allied issue which this raises is whether peace is necessarily the most important thing that one should fight to obtain in the present transitory world. Even if one agrees with Augustine that most wars are fought with the view in mind of obtaining a peace that reflects the desires of the instigators of the war, whether morality dictates that it *ought* to be that way is an altogether different matter. Perhaps there are times when it is more important to fight in

defence of principle rather than to fight for a temporal 'peace at any price'. The most prominent example that could profitably be considered in an Augustinian context is that of Jesus Christ, who Himself unjustly suffered violence as atonement for human sin. While the point can be made that Christ submitted to injustice so that he could ensure the ultimate attainment of heavenly peace for the redeemed, the fact remains that His suffering did not result in immediate peace for the present world. A just war might likewise produce results which tend towards ultimate peace and happiness; but that is no guarantee that either peace or happiness on earth – even for the victors – will be the immediate result of any just war.

Augustine's theory and the postmodern world

Even if these problems cannot be resolved altogether, that does not mean that Augustine's theory cannot shed a helpful light upon the perennial issues of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*. Indeed, it is his just-war pronouncements which have framed Western just-war discourse for more than 1600 years. Even if his theory of just war cannot be transplanted, without adjustment, into soils separated by space, time, and a significant reordering of social structure, still it may be that the postmodern world might benefit from the perspective on war that it affords. Let us conclude, therefore, with a brief consideration of how the theory of just war as propounded by Augustine might be seen to apply at the dawn of the third millennium AD.

Just cause and comparative justice

The essential portion of Augustine's *jus ad bellum* principle requiring that just wars be fought for and only for a just cause remains applicable even if the societal changes which have occurred since his day dictate a new specification of just causes. For example, Augustine's specification of just causes still could be used to preclude justifications of the kind advanced by Rothe, who 'defends the war of conquest, at least in extraordinary times, as legitimate in order to [facilitate] the replacement of a lower by a higher civilization, or for the correction and improvement of a nation which has become effete and degenerate'.[32]

A particularly interesting challenge to Augustinian thought is found in the idea that what the modern world seeks is not 'justice' at all, but rather 'security'. According to Kunz, security is more fundamental than justice precisely because security in the presently common sense of the word 'is obviously that which permits men and nations to continue living, even in a world where injustice abounds'.[33] Miller responds to Kunz's proposal by calling it a position

in which the theory of just war is '"stood on its head" so that it may be used not as proof of the justice of a cause which, in itself, justifies war, but as proof of the threat to security that requires community action'.[34] Augustine's reply to Kunz is easily imagined: Community action is fine, but do not suppose that mankind will ever be able to produce true justice. True justice, one might argue in Augustinian fashion, is not produced; it is bestowed as one's loves become properly ordered. If all mankind loved God pre-eminently, then there would be a good chance for true justice to prevail; but in that case, there would be no wars to justify. The bestowal of true justice is a much-sought-for eventuality that will enjoy realization only in the heavenly city. For the present, however, true justice is absent, and war is a reality which is thrust upon the Christian from time to time and with which the Christian is expected to cope. The best that he or she can hope for at present is that the wars thrust upon him or her, and which demand his or her participation, be just wars. And, in any event, the Christian has licence to respond to war in only just ways such that the task is now, as it was for Augustine, 'to condemn war as evil, to limit the evil it entails, and to humanize its conduct as far as possible'.[35]

Right intention

The concern is sometimes expressed that 'Modern warfare is not readily contained by good intentions.'[36] Nevertheless, the same critique could be applied to wars fought throughout the whole of human history. Never has there been a time in which one could not attempt to disguise morally bankrupt behaviour with a veil of good intentions. Likewise, the critic might argue that modern wars are often formally declared (or at least 'authorized') by collective bodies acting on behalf of states or groups of states – not by the unilateral action of a sovereign as in medieval times; that just as states have no 'cheeks to turn', they also have no power to 'intend' and, hence, that right intention is an altogether outmoded concept as pertaining to *jus ad bellum*. However, the major conflicts which have ensued since the Treaty of Westphalia have, in fact, been declared either by individual heads of state or by comparatively small bodies, and not merely by enormous bureaucratic entities which could not be identified, much less called to account. Intention is still an individual concept – not an organizational one – and it is still applicable to those individuals who occupy key positions in the political apparatus responsible for the decision of whether to go to war and to those in the military apparatus responsible for the moral conduct of the war. States, as such, may not be able to act morally or immorally, but individuals acting on behalf of states can. To critics of the viability of Augustine's principle of right intention, Hehir sharply responds:

> Merely because some contemporary theologians move beyond the tradition, know little of Augustine . . . and shift their moral focus from individual to social sin, social scientists cannot let them escape with the methodological sloppiness of attributing to modern governments the concepts of intention and threat as if such complex bureaucratic structures were perfectly analogous to individual persons or medieval monarchical sovereigns.[37]

Individual persons, and not nameless bureaucracies, continue to be the source of intention when it comes to the decision to go to war or to the decision of how to act on the field of combat.

The American National Conference of Catholic Bishops has urged that Augustinian insights pertaining to right intention continue to constitute the 'central premise'[38] of the just-war argument. The bishops specify two premises as the point of departure for the moral theory of just war: (1) that one should do no harm to one's fellow human being, and (2) that 'the prospect of taking even one human life' is one that should be considered 'in fear and trembling'.[39] In order to locate the philosophical bridge which links these premises with the idea that it is possible to justify the use of lethal force in human relations, the bishops turn directly and unambiguously to Augustine, in whose view

> war was both the result of sin and a tragic remedy for sin in the life of political societies. War arose from disordered ambitions, but it could also be used, in some cases at least, to restrain evil and protect the innocent. The classic case which illustrated his view was the use of lethal force to prevent aggression against innocent victims. Faced with the fact of attack on the innocent, the presumption that we do no harm, even to our enemy, yielded to the command of love understood as the need to restrain an enemy who would injure the innocent.[40]

In reality, the whole success of modern just-war theory stands or falls not on the ability of the theory to provide a rational account for every possible contingency of human behaviour as pertaining to warfare, but upon the right intentions of those who would declare war or engage in warfare. Augustinian just-war thought

> arose not from autonomous natural reason asserting its sovereignty over determinations of right and wrong . . . but from a quite humble moral reason subjecting itself to the sovereignty of God and the lordship of Christ, as Christian men felt themselves impelled out of love to justify war and by love severely to limit war.[41]

Moreover, the extensive influence of the Augustinian position on this point has been recognized by others, such as Hehir, who notes that 'Augustine provided the basic rationale for other just-war theorists by utilizing a moral argument which legitimized the use of force as a means of implementing the Gospel command of love in the political order.'[42]

Reflecting upon the brutalities of the twentieth century, Deane observes that 'it is no accident that Augustinian pessimism and realism have enjoyed a considerable revival among both theologians and secular thinkers'.[43] However, Deane does not consider the value of this 'revival' to be merely a matter of philosophical interest. Writing at the height of the Cold War, he soberly observes that 'in our era of war, terror, and sharp anxiety about man's future, when, again, a major epoch in human history may be drawing to a close, we cannot afford to ignore Augustine's sharply etched, dark portrait of the human condition'.[44] Whether the prognosis is actually that grim or whether the human figure in the portrait is actually that dark, the general disillusionment that characterizes much of post-Enlightenment modernity still suggests ample room for an Augustinian-style assessment of the kind of intentions which accompany contemporary decisions to go to war.

Competent authority

The Augustinian view of the state was, for centuries, obscured by two influences: first, the medieval notion that Church and state were essentially one – an idea which had the effect of 'sanctifying' the state; and second, the re-adoption in modern times of the classical view that the secular state is the highest manifestation of society – 'an organization intended to promote the good life in this world and to produce good and virtuous men'.[45] As pertaining to the former, while it truly may be said that the Augustinian notion of 'the separation of the authority of religion from that of the state' is a distinction which has 'no ancient antecedent',[46] it equally well may be said that the current separation between Church and state in the Western world at large is as great as, or greater than, it ever has been. On both accounts, the Augustinian conception of the state might, in fact, hold greater appeal now than it has held for most of the time intervening between the Treaty of Westphalia and the present. As globalization chips away at the edges of the Westphalian system and reveals a world in rapid social transition, there may be substantial value in viewing the world from the perspective of Augustine who, like persons now living, 'lived at the beginning of a new age and also at the end of an old one'.[47] If the demands of a thoroughly secularized Western civilization insist upon the setting aside of Augustine's strictly theological assumptions, the emerging world-order, which emphasizes international consensus before resorting to military force against wayward member states in the international community,

might find much that is philosophically appealing in Augustine's Neo-Platonic foundations for justifying the waging of war.

Peace as the ultimate objective of war

Indeed, modifications to the international system, occasioned by globalization, may well produce a world more familiar to Augustine than to those of even a quarter-century ago. This unmistakable trend, which affects nearly every aspect of life in the industrialized world, and to an ever-increasing degree in the developing world, may require 'global systems of governance to manage the resulting conflicts and ensure our common security'.[48] Indeed, it may be, as the American Catholic Bishops opine, that:

> Major global problems such as worldwide inflation, trade and payment deficits, competition over scarce resources, hunger, widespread unemployment, global environmental dangers, the growing power of transnational corporations, and the threat of international financial collapse, as well as the danger of world war resulting from these growing tensions – cannot be remedied by single nation-state approach. They shall require the concerted effort of the whole world community.[49]

The whole idea of a world ordered in this way serves to redefine the idea of 'peace' from the maintenance of an acceptable balance of power among a world of states polarized around two superpowers enjoying a rough military parity, as was the case during the Cold War, to one in which a single superpower is dominant and charges itself with the role of maintaining what Augustine calls the 'tranquility of order'[50] – a postmodern *pax Romana*. The American Catholic Bishops allude to this kind of peace in unmistakably Augustinian terms: 'Peace is the fruit of order. Order in human society must be shaped on the basis of respect for the transcendence of God and the unique dignity of each person, understood in terms of freedom, justice, truth and love.'[51] If the postmodern world rejects the 'transcendence of God'[52] as an indispensable part of a well-ordered peace, that same world might still find some temporary – but only temporary – solace in the Augustinian position that the peace of Babylon is better than no peace at all.

Jus in bello

The Cold War threat of the annihilation of humankind through nuclear holocaust cast widespread doubts from many quarters concerning not only the containment of general war once begun, but also the continued applicability of just-war theory. The traditional approach to the problem of war was 'first to

prevent war and then to limit its consequences if it occurred'.[53] The real possibility of nuclear war, however, led to a serious questioning by many of the assumption that war could any longer be conceived in terms of non-absolute consequences. The end of the Cold War coupled with continued nuclear proliferation in the developing world means that, while the risk of nuclear war has by no means disappeared, its character has changed decisively. For all of the uncertainties that surround the use of weapons of mass destruction by non-democratic regimes and non-state actors – including terrorists bent on disrupting the established order of Western society by flaming the fires of various strains of fundamentalism – the proposition that conventional wars must not escalate into massively destructive holocausts is one which continues to be a matter of greater urgency. As a result, Augustinian notions such as those which advocate the application of violence consistent with military and moral necessity deserve renewed attention. The assumption that traditional just-war theory is no longer applicable in the nuclear era is as perilous as the assumption of the homeowner who elects not to purchase insurance because the policy specifies that coverage does not apply in the event of some widespread and catastrophic 'act of God' such as an earthquake, a hurricane, or, ironically enough, a war. Indeed, '[a] brief inspection of Augustine's views will show that most later formulations of the theory of *justum bellum* and, as a consequence, the verdict that no actual war can meet the conditions of the just-war theory, are radically un-Augustinian'.[54] *Some* moderation of violence, just like *some* insurance against catastrophe, is better than none at all. As one surveys the constant threat to stability and order – such as it is – in the postmodern world, it is well to remember that Augustine found himself in an analogous situation, living as he did in the twilight years of the Roman Empire. For him, the destruction of the *pax Romana* which, by divine appointment, had made the world fertile for the promulgation of Christianity, meant the collapse of a divine order created with equal deliberateness. From his vantage point, the collapse of that order could mean only one thing: the apocalyptic end of the world. Still, one finds in Augustine no advocacy for unlimited war. Past eras of human history have also found utility if not virtue in observing limits to violence even in war. Augustine's advice to postmodern Man might well be to understand that the truly just person will seek to be as just as he or she possibly can be in his or her approach to war, all the while recognizing the irony that true justice of the kind unattainable in the present human condition would preclude any necessity for fighting at all. 'The just war theory', says Dougherty, 'keeps reappearing in history simply because the real world in which morality and politics have to remain intermixed cannot do without it.'[55] Replace 'morality' with 'the City of God' and 'politics' with 'the earthly city', and Dougherty's observation becomes one which Augustine himself might have uttered.

* * *

In some ways, Augustine's just-war theory is an explanatory device to account for the way in which the elect of heaven find themselves engaged in war. In other ways, it is a prescriptive and a proscriptive device useful to fallen Man for the maintenance of the natural order – an order of which war appears to be a natural part. On the one hand, the inadequacy of Augustine's theory as a strictly rational – and perhaps more importantly, completely failsafe – recipe for the conduct of a just war is clearly apparent. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that Augustine is the first to recognize these facts. And, indeed, the modern reader might expect that he would call them 'facts' about the theory as opposed to 'faults' that beset his theory more than they beset any other approach to the problem of just war. At no time does the first Christian philosopher promise a strictly rational account of anything. Rather, he merely assures us that human rationality is such that it can assist the honest seeker of truth in attaining an understanding of those eternal verities which lie, via the leap of faith, beyond the immediate grasp of unaided reason. Moreover, he has no expectation that any mortal coping mechanism will be failsafe; life in the present world is fraught with perils to the extent that an appeal for divine grace offers Man the only real hope for justice, order, and peace – and then, in their perfect realizations, only in the world to come.

On the other hand, the merits of Augustine's theory, with its emphasis on the rightly intended maintenance of justice and order through the sole instrumentality of duly recognized agents of legitimate states, its absolute prohibition against the infliction of unnecessary harm to combatants and non-combatants alike, and its aim of a speedy restoration of a just peace, are of such enduring value to humankind as to warrant their continued contemplation. The interiority of Augustinism renders ultimately impossible the objective specification of justice and injustice. Nevertheless, Augustine surely would inform his critics that, if true justice is ever to be found in this present world, it will be found in the deep recesses of the rightly ordered human heart; and that, though states rise and fall, it is only within that most important precinct that the theory of just war, or any other moral theory, can find genuine meaning and application.

Notes

1 Holmes 1989, 146.
2 Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* CXI.2, *NPNF* VIII, 545.
3 For a helpful and concise statement of the issues involved, see Spade 1994, especially 60–3.
4 Augustine, *City of God* XX.7, 908–9.
5 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichaean* XXII.78, *NPNF* IV, 303.

6 Franciscus de Victoria, *On the Law of War,* in *De Indis et De Iure Belli Relectiones,* being parts of *Relectiones Theologicae XII,* trans. John Pauley Bate. Vol. VII, *Classics of International Law.* (Washington: The Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1917): 177.
7 Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will* I.5, 11.
8 This is the interpretation which Dr Martin Luther King, Jr applies to this passage. He goes on, however, to break with Augustine on the matter of civil disobedience, using this passage as a justification for civil disobedience – a position which, for better or worse, runs counter to the spirit of Augustinism. See Martin Luther King's 'Letter from Birmingham Jail'. See also Coretta Scott King, *My Life With Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1969): 228.
9 von Campenhausen 1968, 169.
10 Swift 1983, 116.
11 Augustine, *Letter* 93.4, *NPNF* I, 383.
12 *Theologiae vera Christianae Apologia.* Amsterdam: 1676, English version, 1678, Ch. xv, quoted in James Hastings, ed. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), s.v. 'War' by W. P. Paterson.
13 Peter J. Burnell, 'The Problem of Service to Unjust Regimes in Augustine's *City of God*', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 54 (April 1993): 182.
14 Psalms 24.3, 4.
15 Augustine, *Expositions on the Book of Psalms* XXIV.4, *NPNF* VIII, 61.
16 Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan* XXII.70*, NPNF* IV, 299.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
19 Ramsey 1961, 50, 51.
20 Hartigan 1967, 211.
21 See, for example, Augustine, *Reply to Faustus the Manichæan* XXII.78, *NPNF* IV, 303.
22 Hebrews 11.13.
23 Egan 1982, 186.
24 Windass 1964, 30.
25 Dougherty 1984, 34.
26 A number of commentators have noted this. See, for example, Hiram Caton, 'St. Augustine's Critique of Politics', *The New Scholasticism* 47 (Autumn 1973): 453.
27 Hornus 1980, 16.
28 G. Giannelli, 'La Primitiva Chiesa cristiana di Fronte alle Persecuzioni e el Martirio', *Nuovo Didaskaleion* 3 (1949), 5–22; quoted in Hornus 1980, 27.
29 Hornus 1980, 27.
30 Windass 1964, 75.
31 Joseph C. McKenna, 'Ethics and War: A Catholic View', *American Political Science Review* 54 (September 1960): 650.
32 Rothe, *Theologische Ethik,* 5 vols, Wittenberg: 1867–71, Section 1160, cited in James Hastings, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), s.v. 'War' by W. P. Paterson.
33 Miller 1964, 279.
34 Ibid., 283.
35 John Courtney Murray, 'Remarks on the Moral Problem of War', *Theological Studies* 20 (1959): 57.

36 National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 'The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response. A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace', 3 May 1983, in *Catholics and Nuclear War*, ed. Philip J. Murnion (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1983): 304.
37 Dougherty 1984, 162.
38 Ibid.
39 'The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response. A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace', 276.
40 Ibid.
41 Ramsey 1961, 59. While Ramsey does not make this claim as pertaining specifically to Augustinian just-war theory, its application here is well within, and expressive of, the spirit of Augustinism.
42 J. Bryan Hehir, 'The Just War Ethic and Catholic Theology: Dynamics of Change and Continuity', in *War and Peace? The Search for New Answers*, ed. Thomas A. Shannon (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1982): 16.
43 Deane 1963, 241–2.
44 Ibid., 243.
45 Ibid., 242.
46 Caton 1973, 433.
47 Grant 1954, 260.
48 'The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response. A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace', 316.
49 Ibid.
50 Augustine, *City of God* XIX.13, 870.
51 'The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response. A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace', 250.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid., 288.
54 Ramsey 1961, 15.
55 Dougherty 1984, 53.

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