

*After the Smoke Clears*  
*The Just War Tradition and Post War Justice*  
by Mark J. Allman and Tobias L. Winright

Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010. 220 pages. \$20.00

What are the responsibilities of promoting a just peace after military conflicts conclude, and whose are they to uphold? In *After the Smoke Clears*, Christian ethicists Mark Allman and Tobias Winright seek to construct a “framework or list of moral criteria” that can be utilized to better answer these questions (9). It is their hope that post-war priorities become codified within just war thought and among international actors to the extent that these principles become normative in the conduct of war. Firmly established, these principles would hold people accountable for their post-war actions and omissions. Additionally, the authors work to demonstrate the centrality of the principle of right intent for just war thinking, namely, that the purpose of a just war must be to establish a just peace. This book largely succeeds in achieving these stated goals.

Allman and Winright understand themselves to be part of the just war tradition, a lineage they trace from its earliest origins in Plato all the way to contemporary theorists like Brian Orend and Michael Walzer. In the first section of the book, they identify four basic areas of just war thinking: *jus ante bellum*, *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello*, and *jus post bellum*. While recognizing that *jus post bellum* remains the least developed area, they show how this subdivision has been present in previous generations of just war thinking, though it has generally been ignored until recently. On several occasions, they mention the need of “closing the loop” in just war thought, appropriately connecting post-war justice with just peacemaking commitments in ways that complement current proposals for the latter (55).

While acknowledging that other fields of inquiry have examined post-war obligations, Allman and Winright see themselves as contributing to scholarship on these discussions by providing a

more systematic and theological perspective. They recommend that the level of post-war justice should be measured through four criteria: just cause, reconciliation, punishment, and restoration. In developing these criteria, they rely significantly on Orend's work on post-war justice, though they frequently identify points of divergence. Their exposition of reconciliation accentuates the larger goals of a just peace, demonstrates the importance of right intent before waging war, and is connected to the Roman Catholic sacrament of Reconciliation. Punishment, through compensation and war crimes trials, is compatible with reconciliation by allowing victims to heal through holding guilty parties accountable for their actions. Restoration does not seek to return to the pre-war status quo (since those are the conditions which led to armed conflict in the first place) and accordingly includes providing stable security, political reform, economic recovery, and environmental cleanup. Though elements of these categories overlap, the result is not one of redundancy but rather a successful demonstration of the inherent interconnections among the proposed criteria themselves and with other writings on the ethics of war and peace. For example, those familiar with Winright's work on the "community policing" paradigm will recognize this model in *After the Smoke Clears*' section on the restoration phase.<sup>1</sup> The authors' approach of interweaving distinct elements prevents *jus post bellum* from becoming a laundry list of disparate principles.

The fusion of the importance of right intent with *jus post bellum* is one of the book's highlights. When conceptualized merely as an inward disposition, right intent has not been highly relevant to warring political actors (because how could it be empirically verified?). However, when claims of right intent are compared with measurable efforts for a just peace after the cessation of hostilities, the utility of the concept becomes apparent in ways that enhance the just war tradition. Additionally, the book's argument that the costs of the obligatory post-war cleanup should be shouldered by the victor(s) presents an incisive reminder that countries should take into account the costs of restoring ravaged economies and decimated environments when measuring whether or not to go to war (as per the *jus ad bellum* criterion of proportionality). If heeded, these additional costs might act as a brake in the rush to war and even reduce the likelihood of initiating unjust wars.

Allman and Winright devote considerable attention to Orend's question whether one can get "good fruit from a bad tree," meaning whether one can have a just aftermath even in an unjust war (90). They conclude not only that there are gradations of a just war, but also that an unjust cause increases, rather than diminishes, the obligations to work for a just peace afterwards. While the recent (or ongoing?) wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are the primary examples they draw upon, it is here that this reviewer is left unconvinced by their arguments. The authors describe the occupation of Iraq as part of *jus post bellum* (88), but more people have died on both sides in the extended occupation than in the initial invasion, and the same is true for Afghanistan. They recognize that there are no clear lines for the ends of a conflict, particularly in asymmetrical wars, but the principle of requiring a just cause before exiting an occupied nation raises questions. Do Allman and Winright, for instance, meet their own standard that "the purpose of just war theory is not to rationalize the rush to war but to limit its brutality and duration" (99)? By placing such an importance on occupying forces leaving only after establishing a just peace, one worries whether they have raised the potentiality of extending and exacerbating unjust wars and occupations.

In spite of this perceived flaw, this book can be an effective supplement for advanced undergraduate or graduate students studying the just war tradition and especially its recent developments. While Allman and Winright write from their Catholic commitments and give special attention to Roman Catholic thought, this book is not written primarily for a Catholic audience. In fact, non-Christian just war theorists can benefit here through the authors' reintegration of right intent in just war thinking via *jus post bellum*. Christian realists will appreciate the concept that there are varying degrees of just and unjust wars but will remain skeptical whether it is possible to implement *jus post bellum* criteria. While both authors subscribe to just war thinking, readers from traditions such as pacifism and just peacemaking can benefit from their criteria in understanding what constitutes a just peace. In fact, they welcome "pacifist Christians to invoke and use these criteria to hold their fellow just war Christians and others accountable" (51). Thus, *After the Smoke Clears* is ultimately an invitation to all those wanting to contribute to the ongoing conversation towards what makes for a just peace.

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1 Tobias L. Winright, "Community Policing as a Paradigm for International Relations," in *Just Policing, Not War: An Alternative Response to World Violence*, ed. Gerald W. Schlabach (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007), 130–52.