

MORAL JUSTIFICATION OF WAR AND ITS EFFECT ON MANKIND: A PHILOSOPHICAL EXAMINATION

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Abstract

Technology advancements and increased skill in warfare pose a continual threat to our life today. War grew more harmful as civilization developed and became better structured. With a single click of a button, we now possess the capacity to annihilate the whole globe. In spite of this, we see that we are progressively unleashing a technological global catastrophe that has the potential to wipe out mankind as we are driven by certain factors to wage war with increasingly advanced and contemporary weaponry. As a result, we are now the most potentially harmful species on Earth. In order to ascertain the moral justification for war, this essay attempts to consider its reasons. This allows the paper to focus its discussion on two important facets of the study of war. It looks at two things: first, the current reasons for war; and second, the moral justification for war among humans.

Keywords: Moral, Justifications, War, Rights, Mankind

Introduction

The study on the subject of war in history started around 2,000 years ago when Thucydides recounted the events of the Peloponnesian War (431–400 BC). From then, a number of academics have come to believe that managing present wars and averting or reducing the likelihood of future ones need an understanding of what constitutes war. Scholars' submissions naturally differ according to their philosophical backgrounds. People's views on a few specific wars are reflected in the following discussion of this article. Is war, however, really necessary? How much does war make sense morally? Our discussion of the moral justifications for war delves into the second part of these problems. In order to achieve justice and as a show of strength and domination, several sides would sometimes engage in warfare. When a prospective dispute parties is prepared to go to war, the other side is prepared to either confront its attacker in self-defense or concede its authority and accept conditions.

Concept of War

One of the many characteristics of war is violence. "The fundamental idea of violence is that it is the intentional use of physical force to harm or kill another human," claims Nicholson (1992:17). An extreme example of this occurs during a war, when the deliberate use of force results in the deaths of some combatants and onlookers, frequently in enormous numbers. The purpose of the war is, in fact, this.

We agree that the state of war is the pinnacle of crisis, as described by Nicholson. Mao Tse Tung(1972:2), who views war as "the highest form of struggle for resolving contradictions, when they have developed to a certain stage, between classes, nations, states, or political groups, and it has existed ever since the emergence of private property and classes," draws a connection. This definition outlines what counts as a war, including the Nigerian Civil War and other major conflicts in human history. According to Wright (1966), war is the violent collision of different but related things. Further qualifying these confrontation entities" status as "independent political units" is a preference of some researchers. An armed confrontation involving two autonomous political units and organized military formations is referred to in this context as war. This term has a narrow meaning since, aside from the possibility that the opposing parties are not independent (sovereign) political entities, more than two nations or political entities may fight the same war, as evidenced by the allied forces' war with Iraq.

A more thorough definition of war as a genuine, deliberate, and widespread armed conflict between societies may be found in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2002). It views war as a phenomenon that only happens between political communities, which are seen to be entities that either already exist as states or want to do so. According to this definition, a dispute between two people or groups cannot be considered a war unless there is an armed conflict that is real, extensive, and involves fighting each other. Thus, hostility between states or inside a state or territory that is carried out by the use of military forces is defined as war by the International Relations Dictionary. When two or more states formally proclaim that they are at war with one another, this is known as a state war in law. Furthermore, there is disagreement among international jurists on the specific circumstances, intents, or behaviors that, according to legal definitions, qualify as war. However, there are many different kinds of war. The word "war" is used differently these days. It includes phrases like

"guerrilla warfare," "preventive warfare," "political warfare," "propaganda warfare," "psychological warfare," "nuclear war," "inter-state warfare," "cold war," "hot war," "guerrilla warfare," and so on. We frequently see phrases like "imperialist wars," "liberation wars," or "wars of national liberation," "revolutionary wars," and so forth, even in the communist enclave

Various wars, in various periods and locations, have been observed by us. Indeed, as Palmer and Perkins (2002:187) note, "no period of human history has been free (from war), whether tribe against tribe or nation against nation." Evidence of its atrocity does not need to be provided. From his perspective, war is a violent act used to force the other side to submit to the aggression's wishes. Though not every political issue can be classified as a war, we must exercise caution when defining it. "The majority of academics concur that warfare involves the disciplined application of force by individuals arranged in an efficient hierarchical structure," (Lackey, 1994: 201). Therefore, "wars" do not include simple skirmishes or feuds between two communities, like the one between the Umuleri and Aguleri in Eastern Nigeria, the Niger Delta crisis in Nigeria, or the Muslim Boko Haram crisis that began in Maiduguri in Borno state and spread to other parts of the country. Similarly, we have to acknowledge that just because we define war as the application of force for political ends, it does not entail that only state or governments may wage war. On the other hand, even inside the state, revolutionaries, organizations, or leaders of liberation movements might punish people via war. One such attempt was made by rebel commanders (Charles Taylor and Yorme Johnson) against Sergeant Samuel Doe's regime during the Liberian Civil War. Nevertheless, war is inhumane regardless of the form it takes. Regardless of position, age, gender, color, or creed, it damages and kills lives. Normal existence is made impossible by war, which places a great load on humanity. It is undoubtedly a "curse" that the whole community must deal with or work to eradicate from the planet. However, we must comprehend this puzzle's foundation in order to solve it. The diagnosis of war's root causes is supposed to help policymakers devise ways to stop them from happening. How then do wars come about?

Narratives Explaining the Reasons for War

War is a complicated thing. People have fought wars for a variety of causes, using a variety of strategies and tactics, and with varying degrees of success throughout history. The reasons, methods, and outcomes of various military operations such as the German attack on Belgium in 1914, the German attack on Poland and France in 1939, the Italian conquest of

Ethiopia, the Japanese attack on China, the Spanish Civil War, the Nazi conquests of Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Belgium, and Holland, the Two World Wars, the Nigerian civil war, the American invasion of Iraq, and so forth, varied.

As a result, there has been considerable disagreement in the ideas and research on the causes of war over whether factors may be considered similar to all of these horrific occurrences in human society. For instance, Thucydides (1954: 49) said that Sparta's dread of the growing Athenian dominance was what ultimately led to the Peloponnesian War. However, Thucydides' theory of the reasons for war (especially the Peloponnesian War) is not a sufficient explanation for why wars occur. War has persisted since humanity has failed to maintain peace, claims Kagan (1995). Thucydides' description of the Peloponnesian War (413–410 BC) serves as an example used by Kagan to bolster his claims. He holds that Athens, the leading city-state in Greece at the time, failed to uphold the peace that had been achieved as a result of its dominance, which led to the outbreak of the conflict between Athens and Sparta. According to Kagan, Greece was already at peace because of Athens' dominance, and Athens was responsible for maintaining this peace. Sadly, it allowed for the possibility of conflict by failing maintaining this tranquility. Accordingly, Kagan thought that Athens' inability to prepare for and organize a war in order to maintain peace, rather than Sparta's military aggressiveness, was what actually caused the conflict.

The assertion made by Kagan (1995:281) that "the Second World War emerged from the flaws of the previous peace and the failure of the victors to...vigilantly and vigorously defend the settlement they imposed" is similarly baseless. Kagan, on the other hand, believes that pacifism contributes to conflict and opposes it. Since it discourages militarism, pacifism, in his opinion, breeds conflict. Absence of military might breeds weakness, which breeds instability, which breeds the potential for conflict. In contrast to military deterrence, Kagan supports the pacifist and liberal ideologies of increased understanding, charity, and patience as means of preventing conflict. He is adamant that peace does not maintain itself. Instead, much as in battle, it calls for proactive effort. States that want to maintain peace must so keep a powerful military and be prepared to use it when needed. We disagree with Kagan, though, in that war cannot and ought not to be maintained by war because war breeds war, and any peace that is achieved via force is a "de-facto" peace that is based more on dread

of punishment than on commitment to human growth and respect for mankind. A "peace by force" like this can never last. Some academics have stated that man's innate hostility is what starts wars. Undoubtedly, the battle for survival is a common occurrence among all living creatures, but it is particularly true of humans; this is a type of social Darwinism.

With humans, competition for supremacy is inherent. The development or emergence of leadership is one outcome of this kind of rivalry. Aggression has been said to foster the formation of leadership since leaders are accountable for upholding discipline, enforcing group cohesion, and making strategic decisions. In the quest for existence, non-aggressive species and groups of individuals typically do not survive very long. As a result, it's said that group cohesiveness requires fighting. Today's mankind faces the challenge of controlling violence without wiping off the planet.

According to Stevens (1989), there are fundamental purposes that war has fulfilled that have helped ensured the survival of the species. He argues that historically, conflict has maintained social equilibrium between communities and the natural world. Additionally, peace and social structures within tribes have been aided by war. He claims that when a group challenges other groups, it becomes more profoundly conscious of its own togetherness. For Stevens, this is accomplished by meeting archetypal wants, which if unmet might undermine social cohesiveness. As a result, fear of an outside adversary discourages conflict inside the group, with hostility instead being channeled toward the shared opponent. As indicated by Davie (1929), unorganized population converts are transformed into well-trained soldiers under the command of a war chief. Dictatorships, monarchies, and dynasties are established in this way: once peace is won, the victorious war chief or leader frequently maintains his dominance. The threat of war and the means of organizing it developed into intriguingly significant tools for social integration as human groups grew larger and more complex. National prestige, imperialism, acquisition, irredentism, national leaders' diversionary tactics, religious and ideological extremism, mutual mistrust and suspicion, sociological and political disputes, and human aggression are, in his opinion, the root causes of international wars. The six reasons of war, on the other hand, are listed as follows: kind of regime, interactive behavior, lateral pressure, weapons race, deterrent and other threats, war, and ranking among states. However, the mobilization of the warrior's corporate aggressiveness is necessary for the effective pursuit of war. Encouraging hostility is a fundamental component of military

training. Military training aims to free aggressiveness and impulses from the superego's control and place them under the collective authority of the military hierarchy. Military men are naturally aggressive both physically and mentally. Bringing attention to the use of this innate biological tendency in humans to defeat his foes is the aim. Soldiers or military recruits lose their prior identification as civilians when they accomplish this. In order to have soldiers ready for any aggressive conduct, military trainers trigger and direct biological imperatives. It has been contended by academics that the biological necessity for humans to engage in warfare is the source of conflict. Are certain conflicts morally acceptable, though, given all of these established reasons? When does war become acceptable? We must first take the Ethics of War and Peace into consideration in order to respond to these inquiries.

The Ethics of War and Peace

Concerning the ethics of human engagement in warfare, this is a philosophical facet of war. Philosophy's basis in International Relations and Peace Studies is evident in this significant field. To assess the two main tenets of international relations- war and peace- it employs ideas, namely ethical theories: According to Palmer and Perkins (2002), theory and philosophy are intimately related, and in the field of international relations, philosophy may even be more significant than theory. This explains why their observations are accurate. Philosophy addresses significant facets of human character and behavior, social norms and behavior, the forces and principles that underpin and drive national and international activity, and judgments and theories about values. For a social philosopher, these and many others related issues are deeply troubling. According to Feliks Gross, a philosophy of international relations may thus be a suitable word for this field of ideology, vision, values, principles, future goals, and solutions in the field of foreign politics (Palmer and Perkins, 2002: xvii).

The ethics of both war and peace are based on this surrender. The three traditional schools of thought on the morals of war are pacifism, realism, and just war theory. According to the just war theory, there are situations in which politically autonomous communities can legitimately use force or go to war on a global scale. This implies that, on sometimes, war is ethically justified. Realism, on the other hand, is of the opinion that morality has no role in the pursuit of war. Rather, power and national security are what drive governments or policy makers during a conflict, according to realists (Morgenthau, 1985).

In the sense that it views all forms of war as bad and immoral, pacifism is entirely different from the other two viewpoints. We conclude that the fair war theory is the most contentious of the three because it views war as occasionally just and occasionally unjust, given the motivations underlying realists' acceptance of war and pacifists' rejection of it. Thus, it is up to us to decide when war is justified and when it is not. In contrast, Lackey (1994) contends that a war is ethically justified when it is just. Justice, human rights, the common good, and any other pertinent moral principles are considered, evaluated, and compared to the available evidence and one another before drawing this conclusion. However, the majority of wars entail the use of force, which pacifists detest and see as man's inhumanity to man and is frequently disastrous. If this is accepted as the proper mindset and the foundation of human relations, are there any alternative ways for us to structure the society without using force? In order to answer this, we must first examine the Just War theory in order to provide some clarity regarding the morality of war.

Morals of War and Its Implications

It is difficult to define the moral of war when we take into account the opinions and sentiments of individuals from various historical periods and geographical locations on the practice of warfare. Some of the greatest thinkers and academics in human history have praised the benefits of conflict. As Aristotle defended slavery, so too did certain ancient philosophers and intellectuals defend war as an essential tool for further society and human advancement.

Their perspective was that war was a means of bringing out the best in people, shielding the economy from harm, achieving and maintaining political and economic autonomy, and so on. Undoubtedly, there are many who think that World War II was ethically acceptable; nevertheless, the fundamental issue with this perspective is that it offers no assistance to those who advocate for pacifism, which opposes the use of force in warfare. This exemplifies the kind of conundrums that this portion of the article attempts to solve within the framework of "just war theory." Aristotle's Politics is where the just war doctrine originated. It is used to describe a battle that is ethically just or justifiable. The argument is made by assessing the conflict via the application of specific ethical principles and standards. Gonsalves (1985: 522) asserts that "war is the ultimate in human social failure." In contrast to natural calamities, war appears pointless and

senseless, but it is a completely human endeavor motivated by hatred, jealousy, ambition, and passion. Gonsalves brings out two important issues: Does this imply that a nation should suffer in silence when it strikes another nation for any reason? Or do the latter have the right to redress, resistance, and self-defense? The foundation of just war theory is the belief that nonviolence is the norm (Hollenbach, 1983: 16–24). The idea makes an attempt to assess war and maintains the moral justification of force usage in specific circumstances. According to the theory, it is imperative to look into the moral justifications for fighting and the best way to conduct the conflict. This clarifies the dispute between pacifism and realism and the just theory of war. St. Thomas Aquinas believed that in order for a war to be considered fair, it had to meet three requirements: it had to be proclaimed by an authorized body, it had to have a legitimate reason, and it had to be waged with honorable intentions. Therefore, the just theory of war aims to examine the justice and injustice of choosing to go to war in order to exact revenge as well as the justice and injustice of going to war and carrying it out. According to Lackey (1994: 201), "in just war theory the term "just" and "unjust" are logical contraries." It also determines which of the fighting sides is just or unjust.

Thus, in a battle, the righteous side may be one side at most. However, it is erroneous to assume that if one side can be proven to be unfair, then the other can also be proven to be just. It is conceivable for both sides to be unjust. It is equally feasible for a fair war to be waged in an unjust manner, and for an unjust war to be waged rigorously in compliance with accepted norms of warfare, as noted by Gonsalves (1985). The difference between morally appropriate or required wars and morally unacceptable wars is clarified by these three components of the just war theory.

Justification for Engaging in a War

This relates to the military's or the armed forces' moral application. It mandates that the state only go to war when it is justified. Aristotle states that "we wage war, for the sake of peace" (Politics, 1333 A). As stated According to John Stuart Mill (1867: 209), "human beings must be willing, when need be, to battle for one against the other, as long as justice and injustice has not terminated their ever-renewing fight for ascendancy in the affair of mankind."

A clash of interest between two politically autonomous societies that cannot be controlled and leads to war is what the battle between justice and

injustice is. During his discussion of the second just war principle, St. Thomas Aquinas (1988: 222) states that "...a just cause is required, namely that those who are attacked should be attacked because they deserve it on account of some fault." Just theory maintains that "right intention" is one of the additional prerequisites for war.

Ideal intent for War

Just cause is closely allied with valid objective. A state's armed forces must be used with good aim. It is acknowledged that the head of state possesses the authority to direct the armed forces to perform any task that is suitable for them. However, the real reason for going to war needs to be ethically acceptable and legitimate; is it self-defense? Or is it to protect citizens' lives and rights? Or is it to protect independence or sovereignty? Or is it to increase the state's geographical boundaries? In order to decide if something is right or unjust, all of these need to be outlined and weighed against moral standards. As to the third just war theory concept of St. Thomas Aquinas, the war ought to be waged with morally correct intentions.

Nonetheless, Gonsalves' explanation of the "right intention" aims to protect the rights of all people, even those of troops conscripted by the government or state leaders. He states: "Conscientious objection is a painful problem in which an individual's conscience conflicts with the leader of the nation." The underlying ethical precept is that no nation has the authority to compel its citizens to act in a way that they really believe to be immoral. Whether one feels this way about all wars or simply this one in particular, it is ethically required of someone recruited to participate in what appears to be an unjust war to refuse to combat. The matter at hand does not concern whether the individual's assessment is objectively correct or incorrect. González (1985: 529). A fundamental area that requires attention is leadership competence. Although some of this will be covered earlier in this work, it is important to emphasize here that the commander's or head of state's integrity is crucial when it comes to both assuming leadership roles and managing the nation on a day-to-day basis. After all, most decisions made by someone put in charge of a country will be made poorly if they are a psychopath, criminal, insane, or indecent. In actuality, there are specific attributes that a leader should have and should be selected based on; these attributes include vision, charisma, education, commitment, possession of instruments of wisdom and sound judgment, etc. According

to Plato, in order to be in the realm of forms, which is the home of truth, a person must be a philosopher king who is above mistake.

The Relative Importance of Good over Evil

Prior to going to war, the involved state must assess the overall good expected to come from the war. If the state believes that going to war will advance the general welfare of its citizens, protect the state's independence and integrity, uphold justice, or allow for self-defense, then going to war is justified. However, in doing so, the state must ensure that the proportion of the overall good that will come from the war is fairly high (the utilitarian principle of "the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people" may be used to assess the value of the war proactively). Jeremy Bentham's Hedonistic Calculus, for instance, may be used by a leader to assess the benefits of war by calculating the pleasure that the state's citizens will derive from it. Guidelines for seeking and obtaining pleasure are included in the hedonistic calculus. Our choice of pleasure is determined by seven criteria: (a) Intensity: this means we should search for intense pleasure that will involve less agony throughout the conflict; (b) Duration: this means we should search for pleasure that lasts longer rather than that which is fleeting; (c) Certainty: this means we should only select pleasure that is certain; The concepts of propinquity and fecundity tell us to prioritize the pleasure that comes from the war now over the pleasure that will come from it later. Purity instructs us to choose only pure pleasure and to avoid choosing between pain and pleasure. as well as (f) Extent: we must ensure that the majority of people benefit from the conflict. In order to prevent their nations from suffering more evils, leaders may learn a lot from Bentham's calculus and approach their acts with a proactive mindset. Nevertheless, not every one of them is applicable in every military scenario.

War as the Last Route

Another is the need that just war be employed as a last resort. It is important to realize that war is the last choice after all other channels of conflict resolution- diplomacy, negotiation, mediation, economic pressure, etc. - have been followed. Under such circumstances, a state will have to prepare to fend off any aggressor and save its citizens, assets, and sovereignty. If a state's strength keeps it from facing the enemy, it may approach the international community for assistance. If not, it should be ready to lose and be humiliated.

On the other hand, a pacifist does not consider war to be the final choice. Two extreme views on war are pacifism and militarism. Wars are an unavoidable way to resolve conflicts or get what they want, according to militarists. In contrast, the pacifist detests using force to resolve conflicts or seek justice. There is no moral case for war in the eyes of pacifists. An example of this intellectual movement in action was Gandhi, who lived in India. War, in his opinion, cannot occur if people choose not to engage in combat.

The Possibility of Victory in the War

In their 1991 book *A Quick & Dirty Guide to War*, James F. Dunnigan and Austin Bay said, "No one can predict an outbreak of war by psychic magic or mathematical hocus-pocus." However, much as meteorologists can anticipate a hurricane's path, intelligent analysts can assess the possibility of war or armed conflict. A state must be well-prepared and certain of its victory before entering a conflict. Sending soldiers into combat when you know they will fail serves no purpose. If a leader of state engages in such behavior, they have disregarded their duties and committed war crimes. Consequently, it is anticipated that a decent level of readiness will always be shown. Prior to starting a battle, the army needs to be sufficiently strong and trained. As a matter of fact, the army's proficiency with military strategies, its ability to employ a wide range of weaponry, its soldiers' skills, their knowledge of terrain, their ability to accurately assess the strength of their opponents, and other factors all play a role in determining the army's superiority in combat. All of these precautions and procedures are vital, but it is important to remember that they do not ensure victory in battle. A strong army might occasionally lose a war due to an error in judgment. When an aggressor chooses to use a pacifist state as a pretext to inflict terrible pain on its adversaries rather than honoring or respecting the spirit of such moral principles, the issue becomes even more complicated.

Rights of War

This has to do with fairness in war and throughout wartime. This is under the purview of the military commander, who is in charge of developing and carrying out the state's war strategies. The strategies that will be used to carry out the battle are created by him or her. Thus, we are forced to consider the troops' morality and war style under rights of war. Rules for fighting the war must be followed, such as: how and when a soldier may be killed in combat; who is morally justified to be killed during the war (enemy soldiers and their noncombatants); noncombatants should not be

attacked unless absolutely necessary; soldiers must use proportionate force to achieve their goals (weapons of mass destruction, for example, are deemed too much to use in conventional warfare); soldiers may not use weapons or tactics that will harm themselves, and so on.

Justice after War

When a war comes to an end, this is justice. The aim of this concept is to govern the conclusion of a war and the subsequent peace process. The five guiding principles are given careful thought, including: having a justification or reason for ending the war; having the right intention to do so; making a strong enough public declaration to that effect; focusing punitive measures on the elites who are driving the aggression; and imposing reasonable and appropriate sanctions on the aggressor without causing the citizens to lose their rights. However, when decisions are made to end the war, several of these concepts are rarely taken into account. For example, it is plausible that after a string of harsh actions taken against them, either explicitly or secretly, by the relevant authorized authority, citizens may start to demand mercy. Because of this, the "justice after war" concept enhances the other tenets of the just theory of war.

Conclusion

The contradiction of war is that, although it can occasionally be beneficial, no nation should hope for war. It comes down to a great deal of need. Factors, some of which have been covered before in this work, force us to go to war. There are, in fact, good reasons to support war; our sole objection is to its darker side. As an illustration, many governments in the modern world sprang from liberation wars. There are wars that are both essential and superfluous. However this essay criticizes the circumstances that may lead to war, not the war itself. A significant portion of future wars can be avoided when crises are promptly recognized, handled, and resolved by taking the required action. War must be fought with careful thought and rigorous adherence to the just theory of war if this strategy fails and it becomes the only alternative that remains.

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