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In Defence of War, by Nigel Biggar

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these will be familiar to students, *More than Just War* makes for an excellent supplement to the curriculum at military service academies, war colleges, and civilian institutions.

While the book's strength rests in its ability to unmask the just war tradition critically and outline its alternative, there are several points where the author could have done more to substantiate the philosophical views that undergird the argument's positive side. For example, Jones leans quite heavily on the American pragmatism of John Dewey without fleshing out the exact connections between Dewey's epistemology and his own. Nevertheless, since most readers will be nonphilosophers such omissions are the slightest of concerns.

At over one hundred dollars (hardbound), the book's expense may be prohibitive for many. Routledge is expected to offer a less expensive paperback sometime in 2015. Meanwhile, an affordable digital (Kindle) version is available.

JOSEPH M. HATFIELD



Biggar, Nigel. *In Defence of War*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford Univ. Press, 2013. 384pp. \$55 (paperback \$30)

Nigel Biggar is Regis Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology and Director of the McDonald Centre for Theology, Ethics, and Public Life at the University of Oxford. This volume collects seven essays on various aspects of the just war tradition. It is very much a book of theological ethics, although in strong dialogue with contemporary philosophical just war thinking and the international legal framework of the law

of armed conflict. Although the essays are to some degree independent of each other, they are united by Biggar's clear and consistent theological perspective.

Anyone familiar with the culture of "mainline" Protestantism and much liberal Roman Catholicism will recognize that these traditions, at least since the Vietnam War, have moved strongly toward positions that are to various degrees close to pacifism. Some are straightforwardly pacifist—a position most closely identified with the American theologian Stanley Hauerwas. Some Roman Catholic organizations such as Pax Christi are on this end of the spectrum as well. Others hold a position generally called "just war pacifism" in that they continue to use the categories of just war, but apply them in such a way that almost no actual conflict could meet them (by, for example, interpreting "last resort" as requiring one to do literally everything conceivable short of war). A position called "just peacemaking" has emerged in many denominations as preferable to just war, stressing anticipatory actions to be taken to prevent war over the necessity of the use of force in some circumstances. Biggar's first two chapters address these trends directly, arguing against the coherence of the pacifist view and in favor of a meaningful sense in which Christian love can be manifest, even in the midst of military conflict.

The next two chapters take up two central principles of classic Christian just war thinking: double effect (in which a given action is militarily desirable but also has a foreseen, but not intended, "evil" effect such as destruction of civilian lives and property) and proportionality. The principle of double effect has been under considerable criticism from philosophers, who prefer to reduce it to

utilitarian calculus, and from Christian thinkers who worry that it smacks of hairsplitting casuistry. Biggar strongly defends it, noting that a hallmark of distinctively Christian ethics is its attention to the intentional state of the actor—an emphasis that reaches all the way back to the Sermon on the Mount. Christian ethics has always maintained what the Germans call a *Gesinnungsethik*—an ethic of intention. Therefore the “foreseen but not intended” requirement of double effect captures that in an essential way.

The proportionality requirement of just war appears on both the *jus ad bellum* and the *jus in bello* sides of the just war ledger. Biggar’s fourth chapter considers it on the *jus ad bellum* side and takes up the most challenging of cases to test it: World War I. In the face of widespread belief that World War I was a blunder and certainly not worth its vast toll, Biggar argues that it indeed was worth it. While this reviewer didn’t find the argument completely persuasive, it is closely and carefully argued and provides an excellent presentation of an uncommonly held and therefore provocative view.

Chapters 5 and 6 deal with questions of the relationship of international law to the parallel ethical tradition of just war. Against black-letter-law fundamentalism, Biggar strives in these chapters to establish the principle that the ethical tradition is deeper and may on occasion trump the legal. Some contemporary philosophers (most notably David Rodin and Jeff McMahan) critique aspects of just war tradition from the perspective of a modern liberal rights-based perspective. In particular, they attack the traditional division of responsibility in war between the political leaders who make the decision to go to war in the first place (*jus ad bellum*) and the soldiers who do the actual fighting (who

bear no responsibility for the overall justice of the war, but only for the conduct within the war [*jus in bello*]). They challenge the “moral equality of soldiers,” which holds that soldiers on both sides are not culpable for the killing they do as long as they fight within the bounds of the law of armed conflict. In their account, at least one side in any war must be wrong in fighting it, and therefore the soldiers who prosecute that side are *not* morally equivalent to their opponents. Biggar rigorously critiques this account, while granting it flows from the ethical framework its advocates are bringing to bear on the issue. But that is itself the problem, as Biggar sees it: the older and deeper traditions of Christian just war, he asserts, provide the resources and show the wisdom of retaining the traditional account.

Biggar also challenges the complete adequacy of the current international system in capturing fully legitimate decisions to use military force in the first place. According to the legal framework of sovereign states, possessed of political sovereignty and territorial integrity, response to aggression is the “gold standard” justification for the use of force. At least since the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928, and certainly according to a close reading of the Charter of the United Nations, states may use force only when responding to aggression, when assisting another state responding to aggression, or when part of a collective security action authorized by the United Nations. Biggar uses the Kosovo conflict as one that clearly falls outside that normative legal framework and yet, he argues, was absolutely necessary as an ethical matter.

The book concludes with another hard case: the war in Iraq beginning in 2003. Against those who argue the war was justified on manufactured

and dishonest grounds and not worth the cost, Biggar once again provides a clearly argued case that the cost was justified. Whether readers come away persuaded or not, Biggar's argument will sharpen their thinking.

Biggar's is very much a theological book, and therefore mostly of interest to readers interested in a strong normative Christian argument. In that context, whether one is persuaded on every detail or not, it is a welcome tonic among the often shallow and sloppy thinking about war and the international system from some Christian circles. Yet there is value in the book even for readers who may not share the full theological view. It certainly brings a historical depth to the discussion that much contemporary philosophical just war thinking does not, detached as it is from the long historical tradition in the West Biggar represents, and attempting to grapple with the ethical problem of war with a comparatively small tool kit.

MARTIN L. COOK



Pattee, Phillip G. *At War in Distant Waters: British Colonial Defense in the Great War*. Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2013. 274pp. \$59.95

Phillip Pattee, a retired naval officer and professor at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, examines British efforts before the First World War to craft a global maritime strategy to deal with threats that were expected to arise during a war with Germany. In doing so, he makes a compelling case that British naval thinkers were not completely fixated on the German High Seas Fleet, nor were they unconscious of the critical need to keep the sea-lanes

of commerce and communication open for their merchant navy and England's national economy. Threats included the inevitability of impossibly high insurance rates during times of war, the combat capability of the overseas German East Asia squadron, and the possibility of persistent predations by German raiders. British leaders also understood that, despite the size of the Royal Navy, British assets would initially be stretched thin, as most British capital ships would be kept in home waters to respond to potential action by their German counterparts.

Pattee discusses British efforts to overcome these threats. His review of British involvement in insurance programs designed to keep merchant vessels in trade is fascinating and illuminates what must be one of the least known programs of the First World War. Strategies to deal with the German East Asia squadron, raiders, and shore-based supporting communication systems are better known, but Pattee still does them justice. Taken all together, *At War in Distant Waters* is a useful addition to a complete account of the First World War.

However, this book could have been much more. For starters, the title is misleading. Although the book chronicles actions taken in colonial waters, the depicted purpose is much more aimed at defending Britain, not its colonies. Nor does Pattee convincingly prove that Great Britain conquered German colonies to provide maritime security. Although some actions, such as the seizing or destruction of German high-frequency radio installations, were designed for this purpose, others, such as the conquest of German Southwest Africa, were not. Britain could have easily conducted limited operations and