

poor church for the poor. In short, *Redeeming History*, while drawing on various Lonergan experts, produces a welcome book on social and cultural horizons of his work, in ways that can be increasingly relevant for theology.

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Just War: Authority, Tradition, and Practice. Edited by Anthony F. Lang Jr., Cian O'Driscoll, and John Williams. Washington: Georgetown University, 2013. Pp. viii + 328. \$34.95.

The discourse surrounding proposed US military intervention in Syria in 2013 highlighted both the continued relevance and divergent interpretations of the just war tradition and its category of legitimate authority. What exactly is the role of authority in relation to just war? This is the underlying question considered by 17 scholars in this edited volume. The book originated with a 2010 interdisciplinary conference sponsored by the US Institute of Peace and organized with the stated goal of encouraging “scholars of the just war tradition to think a little bit more deeply about how they treat the principle of proper authority” (303).

As a whole, this project considers authority from several perspectives. First, what gives this (Western) tradition any authority in the present global context? Second, who ought to be considered an authority on the tradition? Should the legitimacy of war be open to broad public interpretation or limited to the elucidation of experts? Third, how should authority be understood as a category within the tradition? As the authors contend, the complexities surrounding the practice of authority are often reduced to “a technical or tick-box definition” (302) blinded by notions of sovereignty. Rather than offering clear-cut answers to these questions, this project presents multiple, and at times conflicting, perspectives to aid the reader in considering issues concerning authority that are often overlooked.

As with most edited volumes, some chapters are more engaging than others. Lang, for example, constructively considers the authoritative role of narrative in relation to war. Narratives, he argues, provide alternative sources of authority in our moral thinking. After engaging moral philosophers and political theorists, he claims that churches and other religious institutions, with their master narratives, trained pastoral staff, and political independence, are well suited to communicate constructive narratives and moral visions about war. Unfortunately, Lang does not fully examine the risks associated with religious narratives and their history of supporting prideful nationalistic accounts that blur historical reality in favor of the storyteller.

Drawing heavily on Aquinas, Gregory M. Reichberg’s chapter constructively examines the punitive nature of just war. Can war, he asks, be legitimately waged as a form of vengeance or punishment for an offense? This same question is addressed in a challenging submission by Brent J. Steele on the role of revenge in international politics.

Nahed Artoul Zehr offers an interesting analysis of the question of authority within traditional Islamic teachings on war. Who has the authority to wage war and what circumstances gives those actors authority to do so? This is an important question in light of the rise of nonstate belligerent agents such as Al-Qaeda. Issues of authority in relation to nonstate actors are also addressed, albeit from a different perspective, by Michael Gross in his chapter on guerilla warfare. His analysis of nonstate combatants and their tendency to “shed their uniforms and assimilate among noncombatants” raises important questions of legitimacy in relation to civilian immunity (227).

Lara Sjoberg critically addresses the question of noncombatant immunity in her thought-provoking gender analysis of the performance of just war. According to Sjoberg, the tradition’s assumed dichotomy between men as actors in armed conflict and women as passive victims ultimately undermines the tradition’s force in limiting conflict. In the end, she argues for a rethinking of war ethics “from the ground up” (92). Such a task is indeed daunting and would require broad interdisciplinary conversations on conflict and the role of authority. Herein lies the strength of this book.

However, *Just War*’s consideration of authority is limited by two striking omissions. First, the collection could have benefited by sustained treatment of authority and sovereignty in relation to the evolving framework of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). While James Turner Johnson partially addresses the framework, R2P itself is largely overlooked. This is striking considering its reliance on the just war tradition.

The volume also omits any prolonged consideration of authority in regard to the category of *jus post bellum*. Almost in anticipation of this critique, the first note of the introductory essay explains that this is because it is not a “universally accepted” category (15). While this is debatable, the absence of attention to *jus post bellum* means that little attention is given here to questions surrounding reconciliation, war tribunals, and restorative justice. This is unfortunate, considering the relationship of present wars to unresolved conflicts of the past.

Despite these shortcomings, *Just War* is a useful resource for scholars and graduate students concerned with the morality of war and the practice of authority.

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A Defense of Dignity: Creating Life, Destroying Life, and Protecting the Rights of Conscience. By Christopher Kaczor. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 2013. Pp. x + 221. \$30.

This collection of essays showcases Kaczor’s careful and precise approach to key moral problems surrounding reproduction, death and dying, and the protection of conscience in health care. K.’s introductory essay thoroughly explains the contestation of the concept of human dignity by secular thinkers, and convincingly exposes the fallacies of those who reject dignity because of its “relativity” or “fungibility” (2), as well as questioning their reliance on similarly contestable concepts. Yet in many of the