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THE DEVELOPMENT OF AUGUSTINE'S JUST WAR THOUGHT: CONTEXT, THEOLOGY, AND THE FORMATION OF A COHERENT MORAL FRAMEWORK

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This article examines the development of Augustine's reflections on war and violence. It argues that his thought, although dispersed across sermons, letters, and apologetic writings, constitutes a coherent theological framework shaped by the political and ecclesiastical transformations of Late Antiquity. Writing during the decline of the Western Roman Empire and the rapid Christianization of public life, Augustine addressed questions that early Christians, as a marginalized minority, had largely avoided. His reflections on the ethics of just war represent an effort to reconcile the New Testament commandments of love of enemy and non-retaliation with the responsibilities and possibilities that Christians had come to assume. This study traces the development of Augustine's theological foundations, including his views on human nature, divine providence, and the nature of peace, which underlie his conceptual elements of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*. It discusses his approaches to divine command, legitimate authority, and right intention. Moreover, Augustine emphasizes restraint, proportionality, and the inner moral disposition of soldiers and clergy. Rather than constructing a formal legal theory, Augustine articulates an ethical framework that engages the harsh and tragic realities of a fallen world while underscoring the importance of Christian moral integrity. The article concludes that Augustine's evolving reflections laid the conceptual foundations for the later just war tradition, not as a rigid system, but as a morally grounded theological response to the crisis of his age. In addition, the study demonstrates how the Augustinian approach integrates pastoral concern with political responsibility, without reducing Augustine's position to pacifism and the unconditional justification of violence. The analysis also reveals an internal tension between the ideal of peace and the necessity of coercion, a tension that becomes a defining feature of subsequent Christian political ethics. Thus, Augustine's legacy emerges not only as a historical phenomenon but also as an enduringly relevant source for the moral reflection on war.

Key words: Augustine of Hippo, just war theory, Christian ethics, *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello*, Late Antiquity, political theology, violence and morality.

Introduction. Augustine's legacy in relation to the question of just war is immense. There have been the wide considerations that he is the father of Christian just war doctrine [19, p. 50, 57]. Of course, the argument is there that Augustine was not the first to talk about the issues of war and violence and many fathers of the church before him talked and discussed the issue. In spite of it being true and the just war theory had been discussed, however, as noted by L.J. Swift, no Christian writer had contributed more to the discussion of just war and Christian attitude to war and violence than Augustine [26]. In addition to that, according to J.T. Johnson Augustine's approach to the matter had been more systemic than any other fathers and thinkers before him [19, p. xxiv, xxv]. It is true that many fathers, thinkers and philosophers attended to the issue of war and violence before Augustine, but he was the one to write an extensive amount of works that has been referred to in the centuries to come and in our time by both Christian and secular thinkers. It is argued he placed the question of just war on the map of western philosophy as no one before him.



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Of course, there is ground for critique and doubts if he indeed had produced real theory. One of the arguments against it is that his writings on just war have no real system and are scattered among his works like sermons, apologetics and letters, and do not present a unified system. While indeed his writings on the just war are being placed amidst other materials and often times were not even the main issue in the discussion, but the amount of it is extensive and often placed by chapters or separate parts. In addition to that, it is hard to argue against something not being a system only on the basis of it being written and incorporated as parts of other materials. Many things that Augustine does are typical for other writers as well and it does not prove a point that he did not have a system. Many topics came out of his works that are quite systemic like punishing criminals, state and violence, Christians and military service and others. J.M. Mattox argues on this matter well in my opinion, that: “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” [22]. Of course, the Scriptures are sacred texts, but if we draw systems of thought and rules for actions from apostle Paul, for example, and believe that it is possible considering the amount of material produces by the one, so we should be able to call something a system and treat it as such, even though it is not written in one piece and found among other materials but still offers the patterns and approaches to the different topics within just war. In addition to that, as Gilson states that it is natural for Augustine to treat other topics in a similar manner and the natural order of Augustinian doctrine is to branch out around one center [17, p. ix]. So, it is typical for Augustine to combine many different materials together in one tapestry and then build thinking patterns out of it.

Research questions. The current article has two main questions. First, can Augustine’s scattered writings on war and violence be pieced together into a cohesive moral structure based on consistent theological foundations? Second, without ascribing to Augustine a complete just war theory in the later legal sense, what conceptual components related to the initiation of war and its conduct can be identified in Augustine’s writings? These questions help to analyze the scope of Augustine’s reasoning and the extent of the contribution to the just war tradition, as it pertains to the war and peace writings of Augustine and the accompanying historical and theological context.

Methodology and sources. This study analyzes historically and theologically a selected corpus of Augustinian texts, specifically *The City of God*, *Contra Faustum*, *De libero arbitrio*, *De sermone Domini in monte*, and some letters (Letters 93, 138, 185, 189, and 228). These sources are studied in the different literary genres – apologetic, exegetical, pastoral, and epistolary – to understand and analyze the presence of patterns of reasoning and constraints of collective judgments and not singular or sporadic judgments. The study analyzes the presence of core theological elements and the different aspects of Augustine’s anthropology, the doctrine of providence, the understanding of authority, and the conception of peace as frameworks or governing elements of his thinking, or how he roughly thinks about and evaluates war and coercion in various instances.

This study does not attempt to impose a system on Augustine’s thought or to introduce an anachronistic doctrinal framework or place a system to Augustine’s thought and attempt to organize it in a manner that goes beyond what the sources themselves substantiate. Rather, it reconstructs the moral logic of Augustine that is implied and somewhat hidden, because there is a tension that is observable in his texts, and this study is primarily focused on the historiography of his texts. This study does not seek to present normative solutions to contemporary problems of political or military nature based on what Augustine wrote. Instead, it seeks to offer a clearer

understanding of the rationale that was present, and is still present, in the theological reasoning that Augustine employed, through the historiographical lens, while reasoning about the issues of war and coercion.

This article is a work of historical-theological reconstruction. Its aim is to clarify the logic and constraints operative within Augustine's writings. It situates them in the context of Late Antique political instability and ecclesial transition. That is why the analysis does not view nor treat Augustinian language about providence, authority, or obedience as a transferable authorization for later conflicts. In addition to that, it does it offer contemporary normative guidance. In the references where Augustine appeals to biblical narratives of divinely commanded war, function rather as elements within an overarching system of salvation-historical paradigm rather than as criteria for designating "God's wars" in subsequent history. Similarly, Augustine's views on obedience to political authority are considered descriptively as part of his effort to sustain civic order and earthly peace. It is not prescriptive as a blanket moral justification of violence under command. The article focuses on the discussion and illumination of Augustine moral and ethical reasoning in its own context.

The Historical Context of Augustine's Theological Development. Before we dive into the discussion of Augustine views on the issues that constitute his body of the just war theory, let's have a brief look at the settings and context in which Augustine operated and produced his materials. Earlier philosophers and thinkers who engaged into the just war discussion and lived their lives and developed their thoughts in the prosperous Empire whereas Augustine's lifetime on the contrary coincided with the decline and coming fall of the Western Roman Empire. That particular period is famous for its political and economic instability. The territories of the empire were often invaded by barbarian tribes such as but not limited to Visigoths, Vandals and Alans. They played a significant role in the destabilization of the Empire's authority and had an immense destructive effect on its economic and military powers.

Western Roman Empire was heading toward the end and in these times, Christianity sets itself on the way of transition from being a religion of persecuted minority to the official religion of the Empire and all of it happens in a life time of Augustine. So, naturally the paradigm shifts from being merely focused on the doctrinal purity and apologetics to the questions that a new reality posed like how Christians should relate to the military service? What are the responsibilities of Christians who found themselves in the positions of power? What should the relationships between church and state look like and so forth. One of the lines that go through his elaboration on the just war is the attempt to reconcile the New Testament imperative to love your neighbor and also to love your enemy, forgiveness of one's enemy and non-resistance with the newly raised need in a new context to defend common wealth of the nation a Christian is being part of.

The Theological Foundations of Augustine's Just War Theory. Traditionally, it is believed that the Christians of the first and second centuries maintained their opposition to military service and participation in wars and violence. As S. Windass suggests, their views mainly were based on the interpretation of two New Testament teachings [28]. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus stated that blessed are the peacemakers, persecuted and merciful. In addition to that there is a strong command for Christians to love their enemies, bless them and pray for them and to avoid seeking to kill and take a revenge on those who wronged them. The second teaching they adhered to is the Kingdom of God that is not from this world. So, the only fight Christians should engage in is spiritual one, but not the one with flesh and blood. Like our Lord and Savior did not fight back so his disciples must follow his path even if death is imminent because He was crucified. Of course, to some extent it is safe to suppose that these beliefs partially are impacted

by the timing and context. As Christians and Christianity at large, being marginalized outsiders at that time, it is natural to stay aside from mainstream thought of the Empire. As we noted above, Augustine's theology developed under very different circumstances and brought about different line of argument even about the formerly discussed assumptions.

It is difficult to imagine Augustine being on the opposite side of these convictions. One of the main themes that is crossing most of his discussions on war and violence is the idea of loving enemies without exception. In his interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount he talks about the importance of suffering and receiving bruises and insults no retaliation but rather with the spirit of patience. Similarly, Augustine deals with the question of Kingdom of God. He cuts a clear line between the Kingdom of God and earthly kingdom [5]. Kingdom of God is pure and yet to come, a dwelling place for believers. It is not tarnished and has no blemishes and, on the contrary, earthly kingdom is immersed and dwells in moral dilemmas and conflicts. It is deprived of internal harmony and often surrounded by existential external threats that dictate its behavior. So, it is clear that Augustine's views are aligned with the assumptions and traditions of the past, but there are a lot of points of debate where pacifists would hold against the Augustine's position. As it is well depicted by S. Windass, Augustine embarked on a very difficult task to reconcile changing Christian world with solidified interpretations of certain Christian biblical codes. He was the pioneer to do that, so, it is no surprise that often his attempts to fix the contradiction looked as an attempt to justify something that is not natural to Christian thought.

In the City of God Augustine discusses the citizens of both cities that live alongside each other and have very different motives and attitudes and as long as both cities exist "the total avoidance of war or its effects is a practical impossibility for all men, including the righteous" [22]. He is emphasizing the lack of desire and ability in human nature to adhere to the order and even less to maintain the state of holiness. His perception of human nature is very negative. Humankind is impacted and impaired by *libido dominandi* – which is the lust for domination and control, alongside with pride that pushes mankind to engage in violence and wars. In his dealing with war and violence Augustine had employed something that had not been a part of the discussion before. He does not consider war and violence as purely evil elements completely despised by God. For Augustine the existence of wars is conditioned in the same way as the rest of the things that exist in the created world. They also exist by the will of God and play their role and hold a purpose. According to God's justice, wisdom and mercy limits had been put on each war and conflict in order to come to an end rather faster than slow.

In a way, he provides some biblical foundations for war and violence. Augustine quotes passages from the Old Testament about Moses for example, indicating that the wars were carried and initiated by the divine command [22]. This is one of the perspectives of how Augustine sees the role of war. It mainly has a punitive in nature, due to the vices and tendencies described above, he states that "*God rules...* when mankind needs to be corrected and chastised by such means" [3, book VII, chap. 30, p. 291, 292]. Augustine sees wars in his theology as always serving as a stimulus and a reminder to the humanity about the necessity of righteous and holy life. In the same vein, H.A. Deane commenting on Augustine's societal aspect of justice, correctly emphasizes, in my opinion, that "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" [16, p. 30]. So, it is clear, that for Augustine the war and violence is something very different than for his predecessors. He is not running from it, but he faces the reality and delves into the discussion and makes an attempt to embrace a new reality that all Christians are going to deal with in the years to come. It was clear for Augustine, that it would not be possible for Christians to avoid such questions as war and violence and constantly run from them, but at

the same time he was very much concern with the total and overarching justice in the wars and conflicts. So, if you cannot run away from it, you, as a Christian must conduct yourself in the most just manner possible. J.M. Mattox is right when he is calling that *jus in bello* is determined by Augustine as “copping mechanism” [22] for righteous people, who found themselves, by the divine providence with no option, but to be under the higher authority [6]. For Augustine those Christians must make sure their war duties are accomplished in as just manner as possible.

Indeed, Augustine does not “pretend to lay down principles for the law of nations” or «legal rules for regulating war”. It is rather scattered ethical considerations and texts throughout his entire body of works that he intended merely to be “a workable ethical guide for the practicing Christian who also had to render unto Caesar his services as a soldier” [28]. For war to be considered just certain moral constraints must be in place. In our research we are going to consider two main aspects of just war that are found in Augustine’s body of works that function as governing conceptual elements in the initiation of war and the conduct within the war. Those are “*jus ad bellum*” and “*jus in bello*”. Now let us consider those conceptual elements.

At this point, it is important to make some conceptual clarification on the matter. When reflecting on war and violence Augustine refers to wars initiated by divine command. The context is crucial here, as he refers to them as such within the specific framework of particular biblical narratives and he does not invent a generalized criterion for identifying just wars in his own time or beyond. Another crucial point is that while Augustine contends that historical events could happen under the providence, however it does not mean and should not be conflated that specific contemporary wars are being initiated or conducted by the divine providence. In Augustine’s theology divine command functions more as a scriptural category tied to salvation history. Which is it contrast to the reality of war in the post-apostolic world is addressed primarily in terms of divine permission, human responsibility, and the constraints imposed by a fallen order. This distinction places clear limits on the applicability of biblical exempla and prevents the appeal to providence from serving as an unconditional justification for concrete political or military actions.

Augustine and Jus ad Bellum. This section reconstructs Augustine’s theological logic as a historical phenomenon and does not treat it as a normative template for evaluating or legitimizing modern conflicts. *Jus ad bellum* refers to the moral considerations of justice that govern the decision to go to war or the justification for initiating war. It encompasses the moral criteria that must be met in order for a war to be considered ethically justifiable. In a manner consistent with his predecessors and thinkers after him, the question of just cause is paramount for Augustine. The war can only be just if it had a “just cause”, but it is interesting, however, that his position is rather vague that specific. Mattox states that “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” [22]. Indeed, he discusses many, contradictory reasons at times to initiate a war, like territory expansion, and the only specific cause he provides, throughout his body of works and widely discusses is the war initiated by the Divine Command. For him, this kind of wars is the manifestation of the providence of God and His righteous judgment and within those scriptural narratives Augustine treats it as unquestionable obedience, rather than as a transferable criterion for assessing later historical conflicts. He states that in the wars initiated by the Divine providence the one shows “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” [13, p. 300–301] So, the war initiated by the Divine command is the punitive one that aims to bring some retribution and the restoration of moral order and restrain and limit human passions and vices and also to warn those who are

dwelling on the line between being right and wrong. It works well in the Augustine theology, because he believes that everything is subdued and controlled by God, so He is able to use any means to achieve His purpose. So, if the war is waged in the obedience to the Divine providence, it is the participation in the Divine economy where He rebukes, humbles or destroys the sinners, and if it is the case the ones waging the war are doing it in a righteous way.

In addition to that, many other reasons could also constitute a right cause. Often it is not the specific factor like acquiring more land that matters but rather motives and inner disposition. Augustine employs this line of argumentation on several occasions. For example, in the context of Assyrian Empire Augustine is critiquing the territorial expansion and its growing domination, arguing that it goes against the demands of justice. He calls it banditry and indicates that this expansion has no ground nor reason such as provocation and is solely based on the desire to extend the dominion [3, book III, chap. 10, p. 142], but when talking in terms of the Roman Empire Augustine stipulates the possibility of such endeavors in order to preserve the Commonwealth security and “defend the life and liberty” [3, book III, chap. 10, p. 90]. It is hard to argue, that the motivations behind the Roman Empire’s expansion wars are purer than Assyrian’s, but this is how Augustinian logic operates when it comes to evaluating the just cause for entering the war. Another instance when he retreats to the considering motives and inner dispositions present in his dialogue with Manichaean bishop Faustus, where Augustine was commenting on the New Testament text from Matthew 5:39 about “turning other cheek” and saying that “this was not about outward action but about interior disposition” [14]. These instances are being discussed in order not to show the inconsistencies in the Augustine’s position or to develop argument against pacifism [24], but to emphasize that true causes to initiate a war lay in rather inward dispositions and motives than in the superficial or physical manifestations of external circumstances or factual justifications. This is why any cause could be justified as long as motivations and inner dispositions are right.

Since the only undisputable just cause in Augustine’s thought appears within specific scriptural narratives of divine command, his theology remains far removed from the later ideology of holy war that emerged in subsequent centuries. R. Kany argues that Augustine did not consider wars waged during his own lifetime could be wars commanded by God [20]. Here we come to the very important juxtaposition of elements regarding “*Jus ad Bellum*” in Augustinian theology. Further we are going to deal with various factors of Augustinian “*Jus ad Bellum*” that are closely interwoven with each other. In the Divine Command cause the legitimate authority to command the action of war is God himself. Since it is not possible to argue the presence of Divine intervention in the context of contemporary wars, though many make this kind of attempts, what or who is that legitimate authority? In order to start our discussion on the question of legitimate authority we should consider Augustine’s view of peace.

Augustine treats the state of peace with paramount importance. In his book *City of God*, he depicts two categories of people, that are referred to as cities. These cities have diametrically opposite views on reality [3, book XV, chap. 1, p. 595]. One category of people puts their trust in earthly things, while other in the things of heaven. The heavenly city are the people who are merely pilgrims and strangers, while earthly city are the people who are at home. The doings of some reflect the desires of flesh while the others are looking to live life by the guidance of the spirit. Nevertheless, these two cities are deeply interwoven, and ultimate separation could only happen at the last Judgement [3, book XVIII, chap. 49, p. 831]. Furthermore, alongside two cities, Augustine also describes three categories of peace that are present in the God’s Universe. The ultimate peace that is unattainable on the earth and present only in the City of God, the peace that is experienced by the people of heavenly city, and the peace that is common, horizontal and

aimed at by the citizens of both cities [23, p. 99]. For Augustine the earthly order or legitimate authority is imperfect but necessary continuation of ultimate authority of God. It is a natural requirement for both cities that coexist together to dwell in an ordered and well-defined system. Nowhere Augustine argues against the earthly powers and authorities for him it is “the natural order which seeks the peace of 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 in behalf of peace and safety of the community” [12, vol. 4, par. 75]. So, for him earthly authorities must be obeyed because they are natural continuation of the universal order and “the natural order conducive to human peace demands that the power to counsel and declare war belongs to those who hold the supreme authority” [1, p. 83] the ones that God has put in place to govern for a designated time.

In addition to that, Augustine does a little attempt to argue that only righteous authority is a legitimate authority. He understood the realities of the fallen world and acknowledged that rulers generally do not live up to the divine standards, but it does not mean that obedience is not required. Talking about the heavenly city he emphasizes that it “does not hesitate to obey the laws of the earthly city by which those things which are designed for the support of this mortal life are regulated; and the purpose of this obedience is that, since this mortal condition is shared by both cities, a harmony may be preserved between them in things that are relevant to this condition” [3, book XIX, chap. 17]. For instance, talking about the soldiers who commit a wrongdoing while in the war, he is not talking about analyzing the order if it is morally permissible and legitimate, but he is talking about soldiers’ being wrong if they fail to obey the order [7, p. 38]. However, in the final analysis, the state’s ultimate responsibility is to provide and maintain the “earthly peace” [3, book XIX, chap. 17, p. 877]. To summarize, Augustine’s doctrine on authority acknowledges the ideal of righteous rule but also recognizes the need for obedience to imperfect authorities for the sake of societal order and achieving and maintaining at least earthly peace. His teachings emphasize the importance of harmony between heavenly and earthly realms, with obedience to earthly laws serving this purpose.

Right intention is the final element we are going to discuss under the Augustinian “*ius ad bellum*” framework. This element is also closely tied with the rest of the aspects of “*ius ad bellum*” discussed previously. J. Langan rightly emphasizes, for example, that for Augustine “the whole problem of war... is primarily spiritual...” [21, p. 22] and God uses the war as a mean to correct the wrong and warn the humanity and make them to straighten their path. Since God uses war as an instrument it is wrong for humans to bring improper elements to it. First of all, it cannot be initiated as one of the options. For Augustine, even just war should invoke grief and be a rather lament the necessity [3, book XIX, chap. 7]. It is something that should not result from the wickedness of human heart. The motives and intentions must be clean because they play crucial role, and in Augustinian theology, potentially have the power to make the war just or unjust. He vehemently condemns “the desire to do harm, cruelty in taking vengeance, a mind that is without peace and incapable of peace, fierceness in rebellion, the lust for domination, and anything else of the sort” [2, p. 352]. On the contrary, as it was mentioned above, the question of peace is paramount for his theology. It is clear to Augustine that, if the war is to be fought it must be fought for the sake of peace and not any other motive. He states on the many occasions throughout his entire discussion on the ethics of war that “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” [9]. He calls to maintain and guard the spirit of peacemakers even while in the war with the intention of instilling peace in those who are under your attack. He admonishes “even in waging war, cherishes the spirit of a peacemaker, that, by

conquering those whom you attack, you may lead them back to the advantages of peace. Let necessity, therefore, and not your will, slay the enemy who fights against you” [9]. We can see at times, that Augustine is not really concerned as much that the war is taking place and Christians find themselves taking part in it. He considers it as something unavoidable, but at the same time outward things concern him less than the things that are happening inwardly in the hearts of people that in their pride disregard God’s rule and impose their rule on upon their equals. They abhor, the just peace of God, and loves its own unjust peace [3, book XIX, chap. 12] and it is something that Augustine considers unacceptable in the context of his discussion of just war. Now we are going to discuss Augustine’s views on “*Jus in Bello*”.

Augustine and proto-elements of “*Jus in Bello*”. In his treatment of “*Jus in Bello*” Augustine employs similar line of argumentation, however adding a lot more nuanced detail. His concern for the right intentions and peace aspirations are also the part of the “*Jus in Bello*” discussion, but slightly from a different perspective. Here Augustine is deeply concerned with the conduct while waging war. War, even if initiated, should not turn to bloodbath and maniac killings, but proper treatment of the adversaries and limitations on tactics and strategies should be taken into the account. His position mainly comes down to this, if the considerations are made about the initiation of the war and use of violence, so much more there must be considerations about the behavior and attitudes of those who conduct fighting. Just war, for Augustine, must be conducted in a manner shaped by moral restraint.

In the same vein, again, Augustine emphasizes the importance of the inner dispositions in his discussion. As in the question on “*Jus ad Bellum*” he states the significance of the right heart or right intentions. He contrasts the actual physical brutalities of the war with such things as love of violence, for instance, and states that later is way more dangerous and inappropriate. For Augustine it is wrong to be at war and have feelings and dispositions that are “fierce and implacable enmity... lust for power... revengeful cruelty” [12, p. 301] because this is exactly the things the one must wage the war against. To exemplify it, Augustine brings an example, from the mythological tradition about Romans conquering Alba. He disproves the actions of Roman forces saying “by this lust Rome was overcome when she triumphed over Alba, and praising her own crime, called it glory” [3, book III, p. 107], accusing them in having wrong motives and attitudes that they cherished and purported in that victory. It is clear that he defended the retreat to war and violence in the circumstances, and we have seen that before the war is waged, everything, proper intentions, right authority and the aim at peace must be the paramount elements of the discussion. In addition to that, he adds one more layer to the discussion, and saying that not only those that decide if the war is to be stated must do it justly, but also the ones that are going to meet the enemy and do harm to them must maintain the right disposition of their hearts and abstain from the vices mentioned above and keep the war just.

Of course, it is hard to imagine that such positivist aspects of Augustinian theology might sound like an idealization or romanization of war. A. Coates is right when he argues that these approaches are still necessary even though they are often disregarded and dismissed, but “they keep the physical and moral costs of war clearly and constantly in view” [15]. Therefore, Augustine continues to emphasize the imperative to minimize violence and bloodshed. He calls “...everyone, therefore, who reflects with pain upon such great evils, upon such horror and cruelty, acknowledge that this is misery” [4, p. 929]. Only the necessity to put an end to injustice should be a main factor for the ones that are waging war. It is peace that should be aimed at, in order to lead enemies back to the advantages of peaceful living [9]. In later scholarships, such views are often described as an incipient or proto-form of proportionality [25]. It is a debatable topic in contemporary context, but it is of the crucial elements for Augustinian theology. Taking into

consideration vices of human nature that concerned Augustine, things we discussed previously, such as lust of power and love of violence, cruelty that aggravates inside a person's heart, they all must be addressed with some sort of moral constraint that would measure the service of justice for the heated heart. In discussing elements related to this constraint, He makes an attempt to provide this visible line and not to use the means of war to the greater extent than necessary for the context when one must stop using force and violence if the issue had been dealt with.

There is one more crucial proto element of “*jus in bello*” discernible in Augustine's writings, often described in later scholarships as a form of discrimination. We are going to look at two key elements of this approach. Three main elements can be identified within this proto element of discrimination in Augustine's thought. For the two, the soldiers' morality and status of clergy, he provides specific discussions, but the status of innocent or non-combatants is not being discussed specifically but still could be inferred from his discussion on the related topics. In his discussion on the morality of soldiers, he compares the ones that bear arms to the state's authority and agents of the law and fulfill duty similar to what judge does. For Augustine not every killing is a murder, and it can sometimes happen with no sinning. The soldier is considered as mere instrument of justice and the correction of wrongdoing. In Augustine's line of thought “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” [11; 3, book I, chap. 26]. To the concern to an unrighteous command, the outcome is the same [12, p. 301]. In Augustine's reasoning, moral responsibility is not primarily attributed to the soldier acting under command, although this position remains contested and qualified within his broader theological framework.

Naturally, this position lays on the presumptions that are quite debatable. L. J. Swift indicates that those sorts of words about “soldier kills a man in obedience to the legitimate authority” must be considered rather in “a restrictive sense” [27]. He explains that Augustine meant that discernment must be applied at least in the situations where state commands act in the “denial of Christian dogma or worship” [27, p. 371], because in the letter 185 Augustine argues that “any man who refuses to obey imperial laws that are enacted contrary to God's truth receives a great reward” [8]. In addition to that as an example, he discusses it in the context of Julian the Apostate. Christian soldiers fought on the command of the emperor but refused to sacrifice to pagan deities [27]. Even though Augustine allows a lot of subordination to the imperial commands, it still does not look like he is a complete proponent of an automatized view for the Christian soldier who is there, merely to fulfill commands of the authorities. All of the elements we have discussed and the insubordination case above involve a lot of demand for discernment and analytics, but still the position has a lot of weak points. Such as, for example, as comparison between the soldier and judge or magistrate who basically puts a man to death. This comparison looks rather weak, because judge would consider the case of each individual separately with a proper argument for and against the specific person and his or her actions, and has time to evaluate it and decide if the one is a guilty party, but the soldier does not do any of that. He just kills one, and then the other one and one more, until the war is won. There is little discernment involved in the case with the soldiers at war. This leads us to another issue that is important in relation to this discussion. This is why there is really not a lot written by Augustine and little distinction made about the combatants and non-combatants.

Augustine connects the just war with the earthly authority, that is the extension of the divine authority and he quotes extensively passages from the Old Testament, especially of Moses and Joshua, to indicate that God initiated wars as punishment for the wicked nations and never ordered to spare non-combatants, but on the contrary ordering killing children, women and

old people, literary everyone in order to annihilate the nation. It could be supposed that, in Augustine's line of thought, conduct in a just war is interpreted within a providential horizon; however, providence does not function as a general rule for suspending the moral evaluation of concrete historical warfare. Moreover, the reason is that Augustine did not think in the categories that war is "a matter of the personal volitional commitment of each individual" [27] consists in the matter that "he is primarily concerned with eliminating the opponent's active cooperation in an unjust act rather than seeing to it that individual subjective moral guilt is adequately punished" [27]. As it is, indeed, impractical and absolutely impossible to learn for sure the volitional commitments. According to L. J. Swift, Augustinian remarks most probably refer to the end of the war, when the enemy is defeated, the mercy should be granted to them [27]. It seemingly aligns with Augustine's ideas of peace and the end of the war, as we have seen above, he calls and insists on offering them not aggravation of punishment but peace and which may instill the order in those that are wicked. "Cherish the spirit of a peacemaker" [9], he states, and, "by conquering those whom you attack, you may lead them back to the advantages of peace" [9]. For Augustine these biblical examples function as part of a scriptural-theological horizon and is not developed into a general doctrine on moral evaluation of a specific historical wars and conflicts. Instead, they serve to illustrate the breadth of divine sovereignty and judgment within salvation history. It is incorrect to consider them to be directly transferable moral authorization for later political or military action. Augustine does not systematize these narratives into operative norms but integrates them into a broader theological reflections that marked by caution, restraint, and unresolved tension.

The last aspect of this proto element of discrimination that is discussed by Augustine is the status and responsibilities of clergy. There are several proto-elements that overarch the clerical duties and rights. There are several references cited from the New Testament in the letter 228 that provide ground for clergy to protect their own lives. He uses the example of apostle Paul who was "let down in a basket through a window" in order to be saved from the enemies that were looking to harm him. In addition to that, Augustine allows clergy to flee from one city to another because this is something that was allowed by Jesus himself in the gospel of Matthew. In this respect, he states, "let those, therefore, who are servants of Christ, His ministers in word and sacrament, do what he has commanded or permitted. When any of them is specially sought for by persecutors, let him by all means flee from one city to another" [10]. In addition to that, we can generally infer that in Augustinian considerations to the respect of military involvement clergy alike other noncombatants have no right to participate in the military action, because they are not enlisted and have no military duty that would require them to obey orders and participate in the acts of violence of war. Moreover, there is a condition, besides being "sought for by persecutors" on which they can flee and that is "provided that the Church is not hereby deserted" [10]. In this discussion, a clear call for mission is in place. There are several notable points to overview. They must "supply spiritual food to their fellow servants [10] for those who is dependent on it". In the case of mortal emergency, when everybody is under the attack, all "bishops, clergy and laity, is alike.... and let all remove together to fortified places... let them share life in common or share in common whatever is to suffer..." [10]. This is where one more time Augustine refers to the Divine authority, when talking about the context of war. He brings the example of bishops from Spain, who fled and left their congregations at the mercy of fate and many of those congregations were annihilated, and the "the members having either fled, or died by the sword, or perished in the siege of their towns" [10]. "He condemns that behavior and says that they were not taught to do so by divine authority, but were, through human infirmity, either deceived by an error or overcome by fear" [10].

To summarize, Augustine allows some provisions for the clergy to attend to the need of their safety, especially, if they are specifically targeted by the enemy. They are allowed to flee from one city to another but on a condition that the church is not being left on its own fate or to the mercy of the enemies.

Augustine's Framework in Just War Thought. As previously noted, Augustine's reflections and discussions do not produce developed just war theory in the later technical sense. However, they still remain relevant and establish theological and moral premises that served as foundation for subsequent discourse. They undergo analysis and discussions and get systematized, refined, and in certain respects corrected by later thinkers. Therefore, it must be clear that Augustine's views and treatment of war remain primarily spiritual and pastoral. He considers war and violence as a tragic feature of the temporal political order. He views it as a flawed mean that arises from disordered and broken human desires and the misuse of the will. In his view political authority is understood as a constrained instrument that aims at securing peace even an imperfect form of peace. This is precisely why he focuses more on moral evaluation and pays less attention to external success. These developments remained decisive in the discussion for the later Western Latin theological tradition. Political actions must always have peace as an ultimate goal. The will is the main locus of moral responsibility. Coercive power is never considered as intrinsically good, only as a mean of restraining disorder.

One of the most significant developments of these reflections formulated in medieval scholasticism. Thomas Aquinas elaborates on the Augustinian works and insights and not only reorganizes them into a more explicit analytical and legal system. He builds his case about permissibility of war, just cause, and right intentions is structured around legitimate authority directly on the moral and ethical concerns discussed by Augustine actually translating them into a form that is much more fit for juridical and institutional reasoning. Aquinas reorients and shifts his emphasis. While Augustine finds the primary moral threat of war in the heart – articulated through the *libido dominandi*, vengeance, and cruelty – Aquinas more tends to associate moral justification with social order. For Aquinas, a law of war is justified in the correcting a prior injustice by restoring moral order, not by gaining advantage, and war falls within a greater schema of law, political power, and the common good. In this regard, one can argue that Aquinas does not simply repeat Augustine; he moves from an Augustinian spiritual approach to a more developed moral and ethical model.

Further developments in the just war tradition build on this trend of clarification in addressing tensions present in Augustine, particularly with regard to the questions of obedience, the moral agent, and the boundaries of coercion. For Augustine, the condemnation of cruelty and domination is, in some respects, unbalanced; he does not establish a full framework for the protection of noncombatants or a system that questions the means. The following tradition seeks to describe more fully these boundaries of war with a focus on Augustine's central conviction that the only legitimate end of war is peace and not victory.

Conclusions. Augustine's contribution to the development of Christian just war thought has been foundational in many respects not because he produced an overarching system, but because he was one of the first, who had articulated a coherent moral vision that could address the drastic and dramatic sociopolitical transformation. His time had been a historical moment when the Christian community could no longer avoid the realities of statehood such as military responsibility and political instability, Augustine reconsider and developed earlier Christian instincts toward nonviolence within a broader theological anthropology and doctrine of providence. His scattered reflections and meditations on the questions of violence that are

found in his sermons, letters, and treaties and display a conceptual unity grounded in his understanding of human nature, divine governance, and the pursuit of peace.

His considerations resulted not in a rigid system but an ethico-theological framework that revolves around three central Augustinian insights: 1. War belongs to the tragic necessities of a fallen world, not to God's ideal order. 2. Right authority and right intention are indispensable, for no external circumstance can justify a war waged from disordered loves. 3. Peace and not victory is the only legitimate objective of military action.

Augustine's *jus ad bellum* conceptual elements – divine command, legitimate authority, and right intention signify his attempt to preserve Christian moral integrity but at the same time to acknowledge the reality, that there are the inevitable demands of earthly governance. His willingness to discuss the permission for war under certain conditions stems not from moral looseness, but from the idea that God governs even through imperfect institutions and through imperfect situations. So even when Christians acting under lawful command, must hold themselves accountable for the interior motives that impact and shape their participation.

These tensions are further deepened his *jus in bello* reflections. Augustine argues throughout his entire body of work that the outward execution of violence is less important than the inner dispositions of the one that uses the sword. For soldiers such things as restraint, proportionality, abstinence from cruelty are non-negotiable elements of Christian obedience. In spite of the harsh and brutal context of late Roman warfare, He argued for a conduct that is shaped by lament and moderation alongside with the refusal to let *libido dominandi* to define the behavior and final reactions during the warfare. His nuanced treatment of clergy and non-combatant reveals further an ongoing concern for the moral vulnerability of those not called to bear arms.

Finally, Augustine does not deliver a self-contained and completed “theory” in the modern sense. He sets the discussion through which Western Christianity would speak about war for the next millennium. This discussion is grounded in a profound theological understanding of peace, sin, authority, and moral intention. Therefore, as Just War Theory is questioned and debated greatly over its inconsistencies, the guilt for it hardly could be imputed to Augustine as he was one of the first to recognize the time and offer a tragic, disciplined, and deeply Christian attempt to reckon with violence in a world where peace is always provisional.

In the relation to the first research question, this study has demonstrated that Augustine's dispersed reflections and statements on violence and war can potentially be formulated in a coherent moral framework. That framework could be grounded in stable theological premises such as doctrine of providence, understanding of authority, and conception of peace. Although Augustine never formally completes a systematic theory of just war, his remarks impress with high level of consistency of constraints placed across genres and contexts. They unilaterally support the presence of an underlying moral and ethical logic rather than impulsive and random reasoning.

In the context of the second question posed by this research, the distinct conceptual elements were identified that govern simultaneously the initiation and conduct of war. Those were later described as *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*. These are not the criteria fully formed by Augustine, but something that had been developed later as a consequence of his initial efforts. These elements are viewed and operate not as legal criteria but as ethical constraints and limitations shaped in that way as a result of reflection, discussion, and pastoral concern. It reflects not a juridical doctrine per se, but formulate theological realism, and the tragic conditions of a fallen world.

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РОЗВИТОК ТЕОРІЇ СПРАВЕДЛИВОЇ ВІЙНИ АВГУСТИНА: КОНТЕКСТ, ТЕОЛОГІЯ ТА ФОРМУВАННЯ ЦІЛІСНОЇ МОРАЛЬНОЇ СИСТЕМИ

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У цій статті розглядається розвиток думок Августина про війну та насильство. Стверджується, що його роздуми, хоча й розпорошені в проповідях, листах та апологетичних творах, утворюють цілісну теологічну основу, сформовану політичними та церковними трансформаціями пізньої античності. Августин, працюючи в період занепаду Західної Римської імперії та швидкої християнізації суспільного життя, розглядав питання, яких ранні християни, як маргіналізована меншість, переважно уникали. Його роздуми про етику справедливої війни відображають спробу узгодити заповіді Нового Заповіту про любов до ворога та невідплату з обов'язками й можливостями, які отримали християни. Це дослідження простежує розвиток богословських основ Августина, зокрема його поглядів на людську природу, божественне провидіння та природу миру, які лежать в основі його принципів *jus ad bellum* та *jus in bello*. У статті обговорюються його підходи та погляди на божественну заповідь, законну владу та правильні наміри. Крім того, Августин наголошує на стриманості, пропорційності та внутрішньому моральному настрої солдатів і духовенства. Августин не будує формальної правової теорії, а радше формулює етичну основу, що стосується суворих і трагічних реалій грішного світу, водночас підкреслюючи важливість християнської моральної цілісності. У статті робиться висновок, що роздуми Августина, які поступово розвивалися, заклали концептуальну основу для пізнішої традиції справедливої війни не як жорсткої системи, а як морально обґрунтованої богословської відповіді на кризу його епохи. Додатково стаття демонструє, як августиніанський підхід поєднує пастирську турботу з політичною відповідальністю, уникаючи як пацифістського абсолютизму, так і безумовного виправдання насильства. Аналіз також показує внутрішню напруженість між ідеалом миру та необхідністю примусу, яка стає визначальною рисою всієї подальшої християнської політичної етики. Таким чином, спадщина Августина постає не лише історичним феноменом, а й тривало актуальним джерелом морального осмислення війни.

Ключові слова: Августин Блаженний, теорія справедливої війни, християнська етика, *jus ad bellum*, *jus in bello*, пізня античність, політична теологія, насильство і мораль.

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