CHAPTER 1

Introduction

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Philosophy has a special relationship with other disciplines and not least with history and with anthropology, because of the many ways they connect over subject matter. By this we do not mean simply that philosophical methodology and theories are used by other disciplines; we mean also that when others consider problems of specific interest to their field fresh philosophical issues begin to emerge. Philosophers have, of course, written on peace and war historically. One of the most important examples is Immanuel Kant’s *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* (1795/1917: 134–135), an early manifesto for the idea of federalism with the fundamental aim of establishing peace in Europe. As Kant says:

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The practicability or objective reality of this idea of federation which is to extend gradually over all states and so lead to perpetual peace can be shewn. For, if Fortune ordains that a powerful and enlightened people should form a republic—which by its very nature is inclined to perpetual peace—this would serve as a centre of federal union for other states wishing to join, and thus secure conditions of freedom among the states in accordance with the idea of the law of nations. Gradually, through different unions of this kind, the federation would extend further and further.

The essay was written as France and Prussia signed the Peace of Basel, establishing French sovereignty over the West Bank of the Rhine, but allowing Prussia, Russia and Austria to divide Poland. Kant’s motivation was indignation at what he saw as the absurdity of state foreign policy with its pursuit of peace using inadequate, selfish and (often) deceptive means. Kant set out six principles and three articles for a programme of perpetual peace among sovereign states, which resemble the foundational principles of the pioneers of European unity after the Second World War.

The six principles are:

1. No treaty of peace shall be held valid in which there is tacitly reserved matter for a future war.
2. No independent states, large or small, shall come under the dominion of another state by inheritance, exchange, purchase or donation.
3. Standing armies (miles perpetuus) shall in time be totally abolished.
4. National debts shall not be contracted with a view to the external friction of states.
5. No state shall by force interfere with the constitution or government of another state.
6. No state shall, during war, permit such acts of hostility which would make mutual confidence in the subsequent peace impossible such as the employment of assassins (percussores), poisoners (venefici), breach of capitulation and incitement to treason (perduellio) in the opposing state.

The three fundamental articles are:

1. The civil constitution of every state should be republican.
2. The law of nations shall be founded on a federation of free states.
3. The law of world citizenship shall be limited to conditions of universal hospitality.

The crux is that no “sovereign” state, whether large or small, should come under the dominion of another state and that national armies should be abolished. The fundamental articles are concerned with relations among individuals, founded on republicanism, on a federation of free states and on a humanity derived from the virtue of universal hospitality. Others, such as Thomas Hobbes, developed philosophies of war and confrontation. In *Leviathan* (1651/2009), written towards the end of the English Civil War, Hobbes takes the dreadful power of the sea-monster as a metaphor for the absolute power of the state (the title being a reference from *The Book of Job*, verse 41). He argues that:

> Hereby it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called Warre; and such a warre, as is of every man, against every man. For, warre, consisteth not in Battell onely, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the Will to contend by Battell is sufficiently known and therefore the notion of time, is to be considered in the nature of Warre; … So the nature of War, consisteth not in actual fighting; but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary. All other time is Peace. (Hobbes 1651/2009: 70)

Hobbes believed that humankind is naturally in a constant state of conflict which led him to advocate strong government, specifically absolutist monarchy, to keep this “natural state of war” in bounds. Hobbes’ *Leviathan* is in complete contrast with the republicanism and pacifism of Kant’s *Perpetual Peace*.

Philosophy may be a forum for other disciplines, a place where they find a unifying language for discussion of common problems. Arguably, this applies across all disciplines, from the arts and humanities to the hard sciences and, not least, to what concerns us here: the study of peace and war. It provides also an opportunity to use interdisciplinary approaches and to revisit neglected contributions. This is what is attempted in the present book from historical, philosophical, and anthropological perspectives.

There are, of course, outstanding contemporary scholars of peace, war and other conflict studies, such as Gene Sharp (2011) among others, and feminine scholars, such as Christine Sylvester (2013), again among others,
as noted by Catia Cecilia Confortini in a comprehensive review article (Confortini 2020). Confortini argues that, by regarding all forms of violence as a continuum, feminists change the understanding of the concept of peace studies, and this makes women visible in both peace and conflict. This book does not seek to engage with such well-known work in any specific way. Instead, it presents a deliberately eclectic set of relatively neglected historical, philosophical, and anthropological perspectives on peace and war, explaining these profound aspects of the human condition.

We hope it will encourage readers to re-discover or to engage for the first time with important examples of the study of peace and war. We believe this is both important and timely, the book’s aim being to contribute to peace and conflict studies in an interdisciplinary way and to show it as a global field of study. It provides fresh historical, philosophical, anthropological and indeed educational approaches to peace and war that contribute to a nuanced understanding of the fundamental issues. It is this that gives the book its coherence and determines the logic by which the chapters are presented. The individual contributions shed light on important but often underserved theorists, and this provides the book with a common purpose and approach which is sensitive to different contexts.

Given the terrible impact of war on humanity and the seeming impossibility of establishing a perpetual peace among the nations, the guidance of scholarly reflection is fundamentally important if we are to make progress in achieving it. It was in such hope that Johan Galtung, a Norwegian, established the Peace Research Institute in Oslo in 1959. Galtung’s pioneering theoretical contributions include contrasting definitions of negative (such as the absence of violent conflict) and positive peace (such as that founded on collaborative relationships), as well as his “win-win” approach to peace mediation (in which both sides feel that they have “won”).

However, others, such as Julien Freund, the French sociologist who established the Institute of Polemology (Greek polemos = “war”) at Strasbourg in 1970, have focused directly on war studies (see Chap. 6 in this volume). From this perspective comes the idea of a “just war”. Michael Walzer in his seminal Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations (2015) affirms this. Considering perspectives such as those of Carl von Clausewitz’s On War (cf. von Clausewitz 1832/1984), Walzer says:
On the conventional military view, the only true aim in war is ‘the destruction of the enemy’s main forces on the battlefield’. Clausewitz speaks of ‘the overthrow of the enemy’. But many wars end without any such dramatic ending, and many war aims can be achieved well short of destruction and overthrow. We need to seek the legitimate ends of war, the goals that can rightly be aimed at. These will also be the limits of a just war. Once they are won, or once they are within political reach, the fighting should stop. Soldiers killed beyond that point die needlessly, and to force them to fight and possibly die is a crime akin to that of aggression itself. It is commonly said of just war theory, however, that it does not in fact draw this line at any point short of destruction and overthrow, that the most extreme military argument and the ‘moralist’ argument coincide in requiring that war be fought to its ultimate end. (Walzer 2015: 110)

The continuing relevance of history, philosophy, and anthropology to the study of peace and war is explained further by Leonardo Boff, a well-known Brazilian theologian and a founder of liberation theology. In *Fundamentalism, Terrorism and the Future of Humanity* (2006: 61) Boff argued that:

The prevalent global culture is presently structured around the desire for power. This is a desire that is fulfilled through the domination of nature, of the other, of people and of markets. This is a rationale of dinosaurs; it is a rationale that creates a culture of fear and of war. Of the 3400 years of human history that we can document, 3166 years have been of wars. The remaining 234 years were certainly not years of peace; they were years of preparation for war.

We turn now to the chapters of the present book:

Chapter 2, “Bartolomé de Las Casas’ Critique of War and Vision of Peace”, by David Thomas Orique, discusses a Dominican friar’s opposition to wars of conquest, his understanding of peace and his views on the peaceful evangelisation of the Amerindian peoples. For more than 50 years, Bartolomé de Las Casas (1484–1566) opposed vigorously and unrelentingly the wars of conquest and patterns of colonisation in the so-called New World. For this task, the early experiences of this native of Andalusia, born in the ancient suburb of Triana in Seville, contributed significantly to his later understanding of the evil and untenable consequences of widespread wars and territorial conquest that devastated the Indigenous peoples and subjected them to gross injustices.
Chapter 3, “The Heart of the Daodejing: Nonviolent Personhood”, by Tom Pynn, introduces the reader to an alternative account of the Daodejing, a Chinese classical text, usually understood to be a handbook for rulers, providing the knowledge for waging wars in an effective manner, on the pattern of Machiavelli’s The Prince. In the eighteenth century, Europeans began discovering canonical texts of philosophy and religion, derived from the cultures of the East, particularly Northern India and China. The text of 81 poems that became known as the Daodejing has a long-standing place in the Occidental imagination, with over 300 translations since the nineteenth century, mostly into its languages. This alternative reading understands the Daodejing as a book that offers spiritual teachings on nonviolence that addresses humanity’s tendency to violence.

Chapter 4, “The Augustinian Legacy of Divine Peace and Earthly War”, by Michael Hoelzl and Andrej Zwitter, analyses critically the Augustinian legacy of two types of Realpolitik that emerged in the twentieth century: a German decisionist Realpolitik in the inter-war period and an Anglo-American ethical political realism in the early stages of the Cold War (1945–1989). Such political theories representing the realist strand of international relations interpret Augustine not as a peace theorist but as a just war theorist. This chapter evaluates the Augustinian legacy of war and peace theory according to both types of political realism which emerged as disillusionment with Kant’s promise of a perpetual peace under liberal conditions. It is argued that they re-read Augustine and consequently Hobbes from premises that differ from those of Kant. Consequently, the Augustinian legacy is portrayed in terms of a theory of war rather than a theory of peace.

Chapter 5, “Pacifism or Bourgeois Pacifism? Huxley, Orwell, and Caudwell”, by W. John Morgan, comments on a specific aspect of pacifism in Britain: that of bourgeois pacifism and its critique. It considers pacifism in Britain between 1919 and 1946, public attitudes to war, and the relationship between concepts of communism, of imperialist war, and of bourgeois pacifism. In support of this the chapter analyses in detail the writings and opinions of three cultural critics: the libertarian Aldous Huxley, the democratic socialist George Orwell, and the communist Christopher Caudwell. It concludes that peace movements were accepted as legitimate elements of a political democracy, and this provides historical evidence for a view of inter-war British politics and society as mature, liberal, and relatively secure.
Chapter 6, “Julien Freund on War and Peace: Mitigated Realism”, by Daniel Rosenberg, discusses Freund’s controversial views on war and peace, paying close attention to his main influences, Raymond Aron and Carl Schmitt, and affiliation with the “Polemological” School of Gaston Bouthoul. In his theory of war and peace, Freund prioritises the mediation which exists between actors and the conceptual as well as institutional aspects of such mediation. The separation between war-making and state-making, which is the underlying supposition of modern political theory, is thus relativised by Freund and rendered historical and contingent. Freund’s theory of war and peace is essentially an elaboration of classical realist theory. He, like other realist thinkers, regards violence and conflict as being potential in any political situation.

Chapter 7, “Revolutionary War and Peace”, by Jennifer Mei Sze ANG, characterises the different relationships of violence, power, war, and revolution with specific reference to Hannah Arendt and Jean-Paul Sartre. It is argued that revolution is a reaction against situations where life itself is threatened, and this gives an opportunity for the oppressed to regain their humanity, restore their rights and create the possibilities of a humane future. It is argued also that, with revolution being a prelude to war today, it is necessary that humanitarian interventions recognise and align with the goals of revolutionaries to establish an order guided by human morality that places limits on the destruction. In this way, both revolutions and the war that follows are not mere extensions of violence but the beginning of possible sustained peace.

Chapter 8, “Catastrophe and Conversion: Culture, Conflict, and Violence in the Hermeneutics of René Girard”, by Geneviève Souillac, analyses the Girardian hypothesis that humanity is centred on an unique form of intimacy and that conflict drives and shapes culture; the implications of Girard’s views and his critique of Clausewitz’ thesis on war are considered, showing the cultural and religious resonance of apocalypse for modern history and political order. It is argued that Girard’s thought may also support the proposition that human meaning is found ultimately in efforts to overcome violence and make peace. This cultural transformation will depend on the prioritisation of nonviolence and cultures of peace. The critical and interdisciplinary exposure of a culture’s anthropological assumptions breaks through accepted dichotomies between secular and theological resources for emancipation and peace. It also begins a conversation about civic discourse by peacefully inhabiting the field of contested
meaning, reminding us that redemption will necessarily be inscribed within lived, historical experience.

Chapter 9, “Learning for Peace: The Montessori Way”, by Priya Darshini Baligadoo, provides a detailed account of the Italian feminist Maria Montessori’s views on the relationship between peace and education. It is argued that reconsidering her legacy is an opportunity to rethink educational systems in ways that might enable them to meet global challenges to peace. Although neglected by today’s educational theorists, the philosophical ideals of Maria Montessori could, it is argued, still contribute to an education and culture of peace. Montessori remains an inspiration for women struggling for the right to education and who are engaged in struggles against injustice and poverty. Montessori experienced personally the traumas of war and was far-sighted enough to realise that to achieve peace, the education of the child should be a priority. Therefore, totalitarian systems, especially in her native Italy, were hostile towards her.

Chapter 10, “Peace and Violence in Poor Rural Schools in Post-Apartheid South Africa”, by Yunus Omar and Azeem Badroodien, is an ethnographic study of competing views of peace and violence found in the schools and communities of the Eastern Cape province of South Africa, and how these notions are connected closely with historical inequalities, and with the different levels of lived social trauma. It considers how teachers and learners operationalise these views in school classrooms and in the surrounding rural contexts, the ways in which peace is understood in such contexts and how violence is defined and explained in educational settings. The goal is to show how such an anthropological ethnography can be connected philosophically with concerns for equity, reconciliation and social justice in post-apartheid South Africa. The chapter’s key contribution is its revelation of competing notions of “peace” found within different forms of conflict in local communities and their schools.

These chapters are, as noted earlier, deliberately eclectic but with the common aim of providing an interdisciplinary approach, historical, philosophical, and anthropological, to the various issues and contexts of peace and war. They consider an international range of relatively neglected topics and writers with the aim of renewing scholarly interest in them and thus contributing to an understanding of peace and war studies globally. The volume was prepared before the COVID-19 pandemic afflicted global humanity and there is no direct consideration of its implications, other than to note that it is a reminder of the fragility of our common world and
of the essential contribution of peaceful international cooperation to its strengthening and flourishing.

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