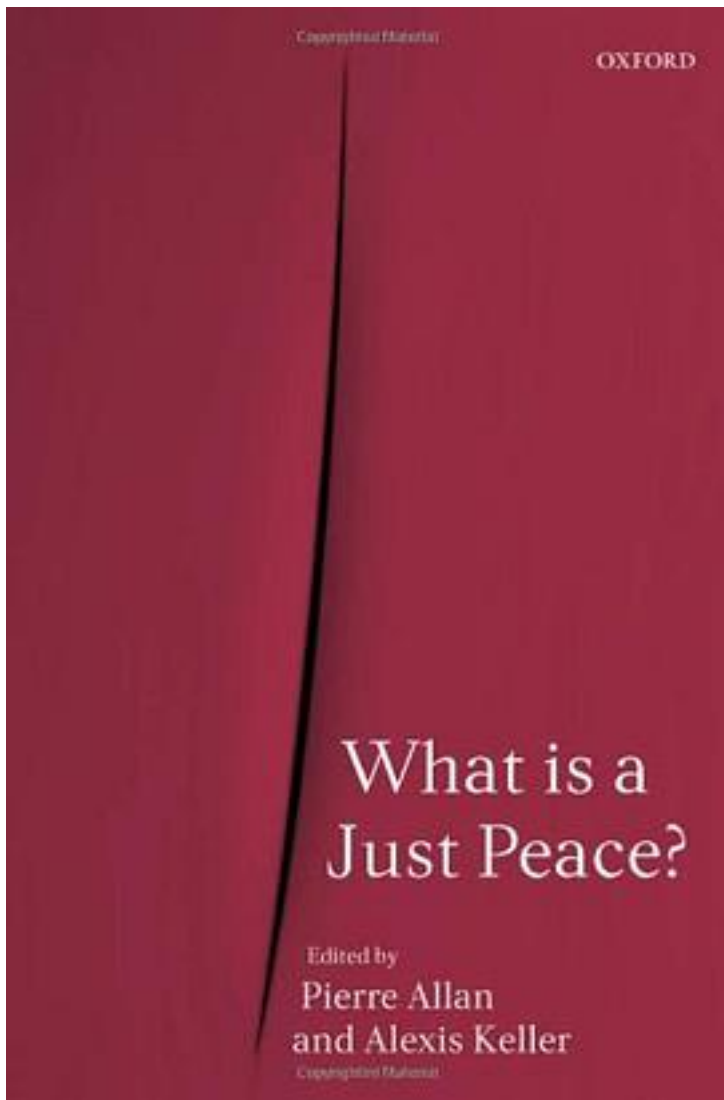


What Is a Just Peace?



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Just War has attracted considerable attention. The words peace and justice are often used together. Surprisingly, however, little conceptual thinking has gone into what constitutes a Just Peace. This book, which includes some of the world's leading scholars, debates and develops the concept of Just Peace. The problem with the idea of a Just Peace is that striving for justice may imply a Just War. In other words, peace and justice clash at times. Therefore, one often starts from a given view of what constitutes justice, but this a priori approach leads - especially when imposed from the outside - straight into discord. This book presents conflicting viewpoints on this question from political, historical, and legal perspectives as well as from a policy perspective. The book also argues that Just Peace should be defined as a process resting on four necessary and sufficient conditions: thin recognition whereby the other is accepted as autonomous; thick recognition whereby identities need to be accounted for; renouncement, requiring significant sacrifices from all parties; and finally, rule, the objectification of a Just Peace by a "text" requiring a common language respecting the identities of each, and defining their rights and duties. This approach based on a language-oriented process amongst directly concerned parties, goes beyond liberal and culturalist perspectives. Throughout the process, negotiators need to build a novel shared reality as well as a new common language allowing for an enduring harmony between previously clashing peoples. It challenges a liberal view of peace founded on norms claiming universal scope. The liberal conception has difficulty in solving conflicts such as civil wars characterized typically by fundamental disagreements between different communities. Cultures make demands that are identity-defining, and some of these defy the "cultural neutrality" that is one of the foundations of liberalism. Therefore, the concept of Just Peace cannot be solved within the liberal tradition.

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