

On implementing Sumak Kawsay in Post Bellum Principles: The Reconstruction of Natural Damage in the Aftermath of War

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Abstract : In post-war scenarios, reconstruction is a principle towards creating a Just Peace in order to restore a stable post-war society. Just peace theorists explore normative behaviour after war, including the duties and responsibilities of different actors and peacebuilding strategies to achieve a lasting, positive peace. Environmental peace ethicists have argued for including the role of nature in the Ethics of War and Peace. This text explores the question of why and how to rethink the value of nature in post-war scenarios. The aim is to include the rights of nature within a maximalist account of reconstruction by highlighting sumak kawsay in the post-war period. Destruction of nature is usually considered collateral damage in war scenarios. Common universal standards for post-war reconstruction are restitution, compensation and reparation programmes, which is mostly anthropocentric approach. The problem of reconstruction in the aftermath of war is the instrumental value of nature. The responsibility to rebuild needs to be revisited within a non-anthropocentric context. There is an ongoing debate about a minimalist or maximalist approach to post-war reconstruction. While Michael Walzer argues for minimalist in-and-out interventions, Alex Bellamy argues for maximalist strategies such as the responsibility to protect, a UN-concept on how face mass atrocity crimes and how to reconstruct peace. While supporting the tradition of maximalist responsibility to rebuild, these normative post-Bellum concepts do not yet sufficiently consider the rights of nature in the aftermath of war. While reconstruction of infrastructures seems important and necessary, concepts that strengthen the intrinsic value of nature in post-bellum measures must also be included. Peace is not Just Peace without a thriving nature that provides the conditions and resources to live and guarantee human rights. Ecuador's indigenous philosophy of life can contribute to the restoration of nature after war by changing the perspective on the value of nature. The sumak kawsay includes the de-hierarchisation of humans and nature and the principle of reciprocity towards nature. Transferring this idea of life and interconnectedness to post-war reconstruction practices, post bellum perpetrators have restorative obligations not only to people but also to nature. This maximalist approach would include both a restitutive principle, by restoring the balance between humans and nature, and a retributive principle, by punishing the perpetrators through compensatory duties to nature. A maximalist approach to post-war reconstruction that takes into account the rights of nature expands the normative post-war questions to include a more complex field of responsibilities. After a war, Just Peace is restored once not only human rights but also the rights of nature are secured. A minimalist post-bellum approach to reconstruction does not locate future problems at their source and does not offer a solution for the inclusion of obligations to nature. There is a lack of obligations towards nature after a war, which can be changed through a different perspective: The indigenous philosophy of life provides the necessary principles for a comprehensive reconstruction of Just Peace.

Keywords : normative ethics, peace, post-war, sumak kawsay, applied ethics

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