

## **Just War Doctrine and Beyond – Relic or Relevant?**

Advance announcement and Call for Papers of EuroISME's 14<sup>th</sup> annual conference 21-23 May 2025 in Madrid

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### **Conference theme**

#### **Is Just War Doctrine keeping pace with the changing character of war?**

Until recently, this question would have seemed strange to many scholars of military ethics. For centuries, Just War Doctrine has been so pervasive that it was, for many students, academics, and the military, simply the ethical framework in which they operated. However, as modern conflicts become more complex, the question arises whether Just War Doctrine alone is sufficient to provide ethical guidance for soldiers in today's world.

#### **Expanding the Discourse: Just War in Contemporary Conflicts**

While Just War Doctrine continues to serve as a key ethical framework, the nature of conflicts is evolving. Wars like the 'narco war' in Mexico or the rebellious situation in Yemen often fall outside the classical definitions of warfare, while more regular types of warfare, like the Russo-Ukrainian war take on a new dimension given the emphasis on drones. New forms of conflict, such as cyberattacks, hybrid warfare, and the use of autonomous weapons systems, challenge the traditional categories of Just War Doctrine. This raises the question of how these emerging conflicts fit into the framework of Just War and whether new ethical models are required to address the changing face of warfare.

#### **New Forms of Warfare: Cyber, Hybrid, and Autonomous Systems**

Modern warfare is increasingly taking forms that do not align with traditional notions of armed conflict. Cyberattacks, hybrid warfare, and the use of drones or autonomous systems raise ethical questions that challenge the Just War Doctrine. One of the key focuses of this conference will be how Just War Doctrine can be applied to these new forms of conflict and whether there is a need for new ethical frameworks to guide military actions in these domains.

## **Practical Relevance: Concepts for Training and Operations**

A central aim of this conference is not only to engage in theoretical discussions but also to generate practical outcomes that can be integrated into the training and operational routines of soldiers. We aim to develop concrete guidelines and concepts that will help soldiers make ethical decisions in complex and dynamic environments. This includes exploring how ethical dilemmas can be resolved in real-time and how ethical principles can be operationalized during military operations.

## **Media and Narratives: The Ethics of War Perception**

In today's world, mainstream and social media play a decisive role in shaping perceptions of war. It is essential to examine how the justice of a war and the conduct of its operations are perceived by the public. To what extent can the battle for narratives enhance or distort the perception that a war is just and fought justly? What responsibility do military and political actors have in shaping and communicating these narratives? These are not only theoretical questions but also vital for the practice of warfare.

Following the results of the participant's evaluation of last year's conference in Tallinn, we aim to make this conference more topical. In other words, submissions which relate not only to the conference programme but also to developments which hit today's newspapers will be particularly welcomed.

## **Interactive Formats: From Theory to Practice**

Following the results of the participant's evaluation of the Tallinn conference, we aim to make this conference more interactive, providing more space for discussion and practical reflection. For instance, a submission does not necessarily have to be a *paper* – it can also be a war game the participants can engage in, a card board game that can be played, or a video which has been produced, or a format for a round table discussion. Authors are encouraged to seek more creative ways to use their time-slot, rather than merely reading from a paper; if you wish to present your thoughts in such an 'alternative' way, then please contact the Programme Committee – through Ms. Ivana Gošić – at your early convenience, so that we can take account of your wishes.

Moderated discussions will allow participants to explore the practical applicability of theoretical concepts and consider how they can be integrated into the daily routines and training of soldiers. Participants will be encouraged not only to present theoretical papers but also to contribute to practice-

oriented discussions. In contrast to previous years, time-slots for speakers will be limited to 15 minutes (*in lieu* of the usual 20 minutes) in order to allow, during panel sessions, more time for the Q&A.

Also as a result of the evaluations mentioned, the Programme Committee may contact you during the months ahead of the Madrid conference, if we feel that two or more participants plan to present on (virtually) the same topic – in which case we will encourage you to contact each other in advance. In this way, we hope to improve the quality of the exchange of views during the conference as such.

### **Invitation to Participate**

We hope that the expanded scope and practice-oriented focus of this conference will encourage both academics and practitioners to engage in this important debate. The goal is to explore ethical principles that are crucial for contemporary and future warfare, ensuring their practical relevance and applicability.

We invite you to join us in Madrid and participate in a discussion that holds significance for both scholars and practitioners alike.

### **Dates and venue**

The conference will take place on 21-23 May 2025. On the eve of the conference, Tuesday May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025 we will have an informal reception for all conference participants and their partners. The precise location will be disclosed at a later stage. The Programme Committee is looking into suggestions to make professional ‘speed dating’ possible during the meet & greet, with special tables for those participants who already want to share a drink with colleagues are working on roughly the same topic.

The actual conference will begin on Wednesday morning May 21<sup>st</sup>, and will end on Friday May 24<sup>th</sup>, around lunch time. The venue thereof is the Army War and Leadership School in the centre of Madrid.

### **Details of the Call for Papers & deadline**

All members of EuroISME's audience are invited to submit a paper on the above-mentioned conference theme. Given the increasing number of submissions which EuroISME receives for its annual conferences, and also given limitations of time & space, our policy for submissions is as follows. The following submissions are welcomed:

- **Professional submissions.** This concerns submissions of both the military (active or retired) or academics. The submissions are 850-1000 words (that is two or three pages) in length. These submissions need to give: 1) discuss the societal relevance of the proposed topic; 2) a definition of the research problem; and 3) a summary of conclusions. For academics, we appreciate a description of the research method. Professional submissions will be given a right of priority if the number of submissions received exceeds the number of time-slots available.
- **Full panel submissions.** Such panels need to consist of persons of at least two different nationalities. We define a panel session as a time-slot of 90 minutes. A panel has preferably 3, though a maximum of 4, presentations, to be followed by some 20 minutes for questions and answers. In practice, this implies that with three presentations, each presenter has 20 minutes (15 minutes with 4 presentations). A full panel submission will contain the submissions of each of the panellists *plus* the title of the full panel and the Point of Contact on behalf of that panel. A full panel submission should be made by means of a comprehensive email, which includes all the presentation which will be made in that panel. At request, EuroISME can assist in seeking a moderator or a presenter for a near-complete panel proposal.
- **Student's submissions/poster session.** EuroISME specifically invites cadets, midshipmen and civilian students (Executive Masters or Academic Masters) to submit. This may concern: (1) a submission on a research which has been recently concluded, but also (2) on an on-going research, whereby the author would appreciate receive input from the audience. During the poster session, each selected student will receive 10 minutes to present his/her research to the plenary. Subsequently, each student will be offered a corner in the conference hall, where they can – literally with the poster which summarises their research – can engage interested members of the audience and solicit their advice. Student's submissions will be 250 words in length. The authors are strongly encouraged to have a large sheet

of paper, perhaps from a flip-over, (approx. size A2) plus crayons or markers in various colours available during the conference.

All submissions shall be made in the English language. They shall be no more than 15 minutes in length, unless special and prior agreement with the Programme Committee has been reached. In contrast to previous years, the Programme Committee will no longer accept the so-called 'brief submissions'.

All submissions shall contain, at the top of the front page: the name, rank and title of the author(s), plus the institution to which they are affiliated, plus contact details. They will also state in which category of submission the author intends to fit.

The deadline for submissions is February 1st, 2025; submissions can be made via the online submission for at

<https://www.euroisme.eu/index.php/en/submit-abstract>

## **Registration**

Details on how to register, including the conference fees, will be announced during the early spring of 2025.

## **Assistance with travel costs**

EuroISME has a limited budget available for prospective presenters at our conference, who cannot attend for financial reasons. Details concerning the application for financial assistance can be found here [https://euroisme.eu/images/Documents/EuroISME\\_Criteria\\_funding\\_travelcosts.pdf](https://euroisme.eu/images/Documents/EuroISME_Criteria_funding_travelcosts.pdf). Applicants shall bear in mind that all applications must be made before the deadline for submissions expires: 1 February 2025. Applicants will be informed of the decision by EuroISME whether the application has been accepted.

## **Visa**

Spain is a member of the Schengen Area. Conference participants from outside the Schengen Area who need a formal invitation from EuroISME in order to

apply for a visa, are advised to contact Ms. Ivana Gošić bilaterally. Participants requiring a visa are strongly advised to ask for a formal invitation from EuroISME no later than eight weeks in advance and to start their visa application earlier if possible. If your visa application runs into trouble, then please contact us without delay, so that we can assess whether we can help. Participants travelling from Russia should contact Ms. Ivana Gošić as soon as possible, certainly more than eight weeks in advance.

All participants are urged to check the COVID-19 regulations in their country of origin before travelling.

### **Information package and joining instructions**

When the dates of the conference draw nearer, all registered conference participants will receive an information package plus joining instructions.