



THE CENTRALITY OF PEACE IN THE TEACHINGS OF
ISLAM IN RELATION TO INTERNATIONAL LAW:
TOWARDS A HARMONIZATION OF THE CLASSIC
AND MODERN FRAMEWORKS

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims at uncovering the diverse sides of peace according to Islamic teachings with reference to international law as stipulated in the Muslim ethical system. It identifies the potential contributions of Islam to the preservation of justice and balance, prevention of conflicts and respect for human rights and dignity for the safeguarding of peace for humanity, and in the light of the universal nature of Islam and the role played by the Muslim *Ummah* in the achievement of fair relations amongst the world's civilizations. This dissertation reveals that Islam is the only monotheistic religion that, apart from being universal, provides a comprehensive system of ethical teachings and principles for the preservation of peace in the field of international relations. It also shows that Islam, as a way of life, approaches peace from a political perspective and provides the legal mechanisms to avoid conflicts among states. The teachings provided by Islam to preserve peace can be implemented in contemporary times through analogy and consensus, as long as the statements contained in the Qur'an are not contradicted. In demonstration of the results it was necessary to identify those teachings of Islam contained in '*Ilm al-Siyar*: the classic Islamic science concerned with the regulation of foreign relations of Muslim states together with the core values and principles concerned with peace and war in Islam. By analyzing the teachings on peace and war contained in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, and demonstrated by the conduct of Prophet Muhammad (S. 'A.W.) as statesman and diplomat throughout his life or *sirah*, along with the insights derived there-from by such classic scholars and pioneers of the subject as Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Shaybani and Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Sarakhsi, this dissertation has identified the fundamental principles in the teachings of Islam and the centrality of peace therein. The study recommends that Muslim statesmen, leaders, diplomats and scholars, individually or collectively, employ the remarkably flexible Islamic juridical system of '*Usul al-Fiqh* and the inherent principles of *qiyas* (analogy) and '*ijma*' (consensus), as well as modern resources available in the current world, namely information technology, mass media, and multi-lateral diplomacy, in their challenging quest for peace. This will enable them to make significant contributions to future development in International Relations generally and the establishment of peace in particular, thus making them worthy legatees of their forefathers who first laid the foundations of the Science of International Relations.

خلاصة البحث

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الكشف عن جوانب متنوعة من السلام وفقاً لتعاليم الإسلام مع الإشارة إلى القانون الدولي كما هي موضحة في نظام الإسلام الأخلاقي، وهو يحدد المساهمات الإسلامية في الحفاظ على العدالة والتوازن، والوقاية من النزاعات واحترام حقوق الإنسان والكرامة من أجل صون السلام للبشرية، وذلك في ضوء كون الإسلام نظام عالمي والدور الذي يهدف إلى تحقيق علاقات عادلة بين حضارات العالم. هذا البحث يكشف عن أن الإسلام هو دين التوحيد الوحيد الذي، مع كونه عالمي، يوفر نظام شامل للتعاليم والمبادئ الأخلاقية للحفاظ على السلام في مجال العلاقات الدولية. وتظهر أيضاً أن الإسلام، كطريقة حياة، يواجه عملية السلام من منظور سياسي، ويوفر الآليات القانونية لتجنب الصراعات بين الدول. ويمكن تنفيذ التعاليم التي يقدمها الإسلام للحفاظ على السلام في الأزمنة المعاصرة من خلال القياس والإجماع، طالما أنها لا تتناقض مع البيانات الواردة في القرآن. عند إثبات النتائج كان من الضروري تحديد تلك التعاليم الإسلامية الواردة في علم السير: العلم الكلاسيكي الإسلامي الذي يعتني بتنظيم العلاقات الخارجية للدول الإسلامية، مع القيم والمبادئ الأساسية بعملية السلام والحرب في الإسلام. من خلال تحليل تعاليم السلم والحرب الواردة في القرآن والسنة، والتي اتضح من سلوك النبي محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم كرجل دولة و دبلوماسي طوال حياته وسيرته، مع الرؤى المستمدة منها من قبل العلماء الكلاسيكيين والمتخصصين في الموضوع، كأمثال محمد بن الحسن الشيباني ومحمد بن أحمد الساراحسي. وقد حددت هذه الدراسة المبادئ الأساسية في تعاليم ومركزية السلام في الإسلام. وتوصي الدراسة بأنه يجب على رجال الدولة والقادة والدبلوماسيين والعلماء، فردياً كانوا أو جماعياً، توظيف النظام القضائي الإسلامي المرن في أصول الفقه والمبادئ المتأصلة في القياس والإجماع، وكذلك الموارد الحديثة المتاحة في العالم الحالي، وهي تكنولوجيا المعلومات ووسائل الإعلام، والدبلوماسية المتعددة الأطراف، في سعيهم لعملية السلام. وهذا سيمكنهم من الإسهام المتميز في التنمية المستقبلية في العلاقات الدولية بصفة عامة وفي تحقيق السلام خاصة، مما يجعلهم يستحقون إرث أجدادهم الذين أرسوا قواعد علم العلاقات الدولية.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts (Muslim World Issues).

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Supervisor

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Zhaybel Alejandra Cárdenas Sosa

Signature:.....

Date:.....

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

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TRANSLITERATION TABLE

أ	‘	ج	J/j	ز	Z/z	ظ	Ẓ/ẓ	ل	L/l
أ	’	ح	Ḥ/h	س	S/s	ع	‘	م	M/m
أ	’	خ	Kh/kh	ش	Sh/sh	غ	Gh/gh	ن	N/n
ب	B/b	د	D/d	ص	Ṣ/ṣ	ف	F/f	هه	H/h
ت	T/t	ذ	Dh	ض	Ḍ/ḍ	ق	Q/q	و	W/w
ث	Th/th	ر	R/r	ط	Ṭ/ṭ	ك	K/k	ي	Y/y

Short Vowels		Long Vowels	
أ	a	أ + ا	Ā/ā
إ	i	إ + ي	Ī/ī
أ	u	أ + و	Ū/ū

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

INTRODUCTION

Over the last years Islam has been fiercely and unjustly criticized for being a religion which encourages its followers to perpetrate attacks against those who do not share the Islamic belief. Such criticism constitutes a lie which is as big as the enormous place occupied by peace in the core of Islam.

The belligerent image of Islam in the West is a consequence of the media bias and the unilateral policy implemented by the USA and its allies, regarding the extremist behavior of some selected individuals who claim to be Muslims. Also the lack of information about teachings of Islam regarding the importance of peace within the framework of Islamic international relations has contributed to the distortion of Islamic values in the eyes of the West.

From the above mentioned a research question emerges. What is the place for peace within the Islamic ethical system and how the Islamic principles related to peace are meant to be implemented in the field of international relations, according to the Qur'anic statements, the Sunnah, the Prophets' Sira and the analysis by those classic scholars, whose pieces of work reflect the Muslim values as referred in the original sources of Islam?

Consequently, the objectives of this dissertation are as follows. First of all this dissertation is aimed to uncover the different sides of peace according to the Islamic teachings with reference to the international law as seen according to the Muslim ethical system.

This research is also meant to identify the potential contributions of Islam to preservation of justice and balance, prevention of conflicts and respect for human rights and dignity for the safeguarding of peace for the whole humanity, and in the light of the universal nature of Islam and the role played by the Muslim *Ummah Wasatah* (group of (the middle – mediator – community or the balanced community)¹ in fair relations amongst the world's civilizations.

Peace in the context of this dissertation:

Due to the theocentric and all-embracing nature of Islam, theology, spirituality, ethics and juristic reasoning cannot be separated. However, once a general theoretical framework for peace in Islam is provided, the centrality of peace will be allocated in the field of international affairs.

To do so the broad spectrum of peace will be gradually limited throughout the first two chapters from its most abstract dimension to the particular sphere of international law in Islam.

What is meant by Islamic international law for the purpose of this dissertation?

It is important to note that the classic Islamic international law—known as *al-siyar* (plural form for Arabic *Sirat* meaning conduct and behavior)², as a branch of the general shariah (Literally, the way to the water hole; it is the code of conduct for human life, the Islamic legal system)³, is a reflection of the principles contained in the Qur'an and Sunnah (All the authentic reports of the acts, utterances and silent approval of the

¹ Abdul Rashid Moten & El-Fatih A. Abdel Salam, *Glossary of Political Science Terms: Islamic and Western*, (Kuala Lumpur: THompsom, 2005). p. 160.

² Muhammad Hamidullah. *Muslim Conduct of State*, (Lahore: Ashraf Printing Press, 1977) P. 9.

³ Abdul Rashid & El-Fatih, p. 141.

Prophet)⁴. Therefore, classic Islamic international law is a religious based system defined by Islamic ethical principles which are harmonized through tawhid (Indivisible, inalienable divinity of Allah)⁵, as the cornerstone of Islam.

In this sense and for the purpose of this dissertation, the principles related to peace, war and the interaction between the Islamic state and non- Muslims (Muslim rebels or *bughat* are also included) which are contained in the Qur'an and endorsed in the Sunnah and the Sira (Biography of Prophet Muhammad)⁶ will be addressed as Islamic international law, as they are reflected in the branch of the shariah known as *al-siyar*. Some statements by the Hanafite Al –Sarakshi and Al-Shaybani will also be taken as a theoretical reference.

LITERARY REVIEW

Apart from the original sources and classic approaches to *al-siyar*, contributions to the study of Islamic international law by modern scholars will be included. Thus the research and documented opinions of Muhammad Hamidullah, Mohammad Talaat al-Ghunaimi, Majid Khadduri, Isma'íl Rajj Al-Faruqi, Sayyed Qutb, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, C.G. Weeramantry, John Kelsay, Muddathir Abd al–Rahim, Abdul-Hamid A. Abu Sulayman and Abdullah al-Ahsan, among others, have been incorporated to this analysis.

⁴ Ibid., p. 147.

⁵ Ibid., p. 150.

⁶ John Esposito, *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003). P. 297.

Plan for the dissertation:

There will be five chapters which are as follows:

To contextualize the definition of peace in Islamic terms, the first chapter will focus on the diverse Western approaches to peace throughout history. Special mention will be made to the monotheistic views of peace before Islam. The *Pax Romana* will also be discussed due to the similarities of the latter with the contemporary *Pax Americana*.

The other side of the coin in the definition of peace is war and the different approaches of just war in the Western history will be described, including the *Jus ad Bellum* and *Jus in Bello* theory upheld by Hugo Grotious, considered as the father of Western modern international law.

In the second chapter the Islamic approach to peace will be described in detail through a defining process which will allow the reader to understand how the abstract dimension of peace can be narrowed to very specific means in international relations. Peace will be approached according with the statements contained in the Qur'an, the Hadiths and the Prophet's Sura, with special emphasis in the Charter of Medina, the Battle of Badr and the Treaty of Hdaybiya.

Also in this chapter peace will be interwoven with some other key Islamic principles, such as justice, balance, respect for agreements and conciliation. Additionally, the different paradigms of peace for international relations, such peace through equity, peace through conciliation and peace through universalism will be described.

In the third chapter, all the concepts and principles which constitute the classic Islamic international law (Islamic Law of Nations / *al-siyar*) will be displayed and framed in the ethical system of Islam determined by tawhid. In this section, certain statements by al-Sarakshi and al-Shaybani will be referred; the issue of jihad will be

extensively discussed, as well as elements of the classic scenario for international relations, such as the division of the world in “*dar al harb*” (Abode of War)⁷ y “*darb al Islam* (Abode of Islam)⁸”, the characteristics of the rebels, *dhimis* (non –Muslim citizens who are protected when living under Muslim rule in exchange for certain obligations)⁹ and apostates will be defined. Finally, the means for juristic reasoning, namely: *Qiyās* (Literally measurement, comparison, correlation)¹⁰ and *ijma*’ (Consensus. It is the verbal noun of the Arabic word *ajma*’a which has two meanings, to determine and to agree upon something)¹¹, will also be analyzed.

The Islamic classic framework for international relations ends with the chapter. Then a second part on the contemporary framework and the suggestions to harmonize it with the classic means will follow.

In the fourth chapter, on the current scenario, the emergence of nation-states, international organizations, IT and media impact, as well as the role played by modern Muslim rulers, intellectuals and extremists, will be presented as a part of the contemporary framework Muslims need to take into account to regain the classic *al-siyar* for the sake of world peace and the revival of Islamic teachings

Finally, in the fifth chapter, the classic and the modern framework will be interwoven through implementation of classic *ijma*’ and *qiyās*. Pragmatic actions will also be suggested at religious, academic, political, diplomatic and multilateral level.

This dissertation is the result of the research undertaken by a Westerner who attempted to learn from the true teachings of Islam without bias or cultural prejudices. It is also a small testimony of truth to be shared in the West for the construction of

⁷ Abdul Rashid & El-Fatih, p. 33.

⁸ Ibid., p. 34.

⁹ Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 127.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 67.

bridges on the basis of Islamic ethics and the regaining of *fitrah* (According to the Qur'an, the original state in which humans are created by God)¹² at the other side of the world for the sake of peace and mutual understanding.

¹² John Esposito. The Oxford Dictionary of Islam (New York, Oxford University Press, 2003) P. 87.

CHAPTER I

DEFINING PEACE

A wide range of meanings is conveyed by Peace, which makes likely to fall into confusion by mixing its philosophical - spiritual and political aspects. To avoid any distraction from the main subject of this dissertation, I will start by covering the different aspects of peace, according to the main traditions of their influence in the current international scenario, and subsequently adjust the concept of peace to the field of international relations within the Islamic tradition. In this chapter, a Western approach to peace will also be provided, in such a way that Islamic definitions of peace can be understood in context.

Even though peace will be approached from a philosophical perspective, I will focus mainly on its connection to international relations. It is worth of note that war, as its antonymous, will also be analyzed, particularly regarding the justification of waging war as a way to preserve or regain peace. In this regard, the Western Just War tradition will be defined, and the Islamic jihad will be mentioned when appropriate. A detailed description of jihad will be provided in a further chapter, within the framework of the Islamic foundations of international relations.

Peace has been defined in many ways throughout history. Usually it is related to harmony and tranquility. Deeper definitions, especially those pertaining to the social sciences field, elaborate on its causes and consequences. In this chapter a brief description of the Ancient Greeks approach will be provided followed by the Roman experience, including its emblematic *Pax Romana* - and the monotheistic tradition, within which Islam is included.

Finally, the current Western concept of peace within the new world order, based on imposition and double standards, including the *Pax Americana* and the Charter of the United Nations, will be looked at, followed by a brief description of the role played by corporatism in the making of an artificial Peace based on alienation and consumption.

As for the Islamic concept of peace, it will be described in its diverse dimensions in the next chapter, starting from: 1) The cosmological harmony in light with Allah's mandate; and ideal Peace, as promised to be in Paradise; 2) The concept of peace, as a principle rooted in justice (meaning fairness, balance, equity and respect for the sworn oaths); 3) As a part of an integrated body, in line with the fact that Islam is a way of life, which does not admit ethical contradictions; and, last but not least in connection to international relations.

THE WESTERN APPROACH

Greek Approach: From a Cosmological to a Political Definition

In ancient Greece the original concept of peace was a state of natural harmony in the universe, where “material regularities were present”¹. This approach was defended by theoreticians such as Pythagoras, who opposed it to discord and conflict in nature. However, such a philosophical view was gradually transformed into a political one, due to the emergence of frequent wars.

The fact that war became more frequent (War against Persia – 546-478, Peloponnesian wars -460- 404 BC), encouraged Greek philosophers to “develop the notion

¹ Charles Chatfield & Ruzanna Ilukhina, *Peace/MIR: An Anthology of Historic Alternatives to War*, (USA: Syracuse University Press, 1994), p. 11.

of natural harmony into a vision of universal and peaceful civilization in the distant future”²

Charles Chatfield, in his book *Peace/MIR: An Anthology of Historic Alternative to War*, describes the changing process of the concept of peace within the framework of ancient Greek philosophy as follows:

The Greek word for peace, the name of the Goddess Eirene (...) implied repose and concord. Certainly, it meant the opposite of war. By the time of Hesiod, it implied harmony, prosperity. In the fifth and fourth centuries B.C, however, it became identified with practical relief from war, as in peace negotiations. Eirene, or peace, was not only an ideal but also a very practical matter of creating a political and social order³

Since the main topic of this dissertation is not the Greek approach to peace, we will not go into more detail about the many tendencies Ancient Greeks developed on the matter. Instead, we will focus on the Stoic, Sophist and Socratic schools, including Socrates’ student Plato, due to his influence in later Western civilization.

The Stoic school attempted to interpret nature as a place which should be free of violence and all kind of discrimination “in favor of universal human equality”. Subsequently, this idea influenced Hellenistic and Roman thinkers who identified peace with nature.

Sophists stated that “Philosophy is a machine for attacking the laws, a non-violent alternative to weapons”⁴. This statement shows the peaceful nature of this Greek school, called after “wisdom” (Sophia). Sophists believed in “Replacing armed conflicts with debate, preventing violence by compromise, and expediting reconciliation to agreement”⁵

² Charles & Ruzanna, p. 13.

³ Ibid., p. 14.

⁴ Antony Adolf, *Peace: A Word History*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), p. 43.

⁵ Ibid.

The Socratic School aimed to find truth through questions and answers. It was believed that wisdom was inside people's soul and through this mechanism human beings were supposed to find truth. While discussing the Socratic Method and its relation to peace, Antony Adolf comments "Socrates practice still stands as a paradigm for studying and teaching peace, as well as for making and maintaining it. However, reducing the Method to a formula blinds us to the social significance of his way of life"⁶

Plato - Socrates' best disciple - deduced through the Socratic Method that war "is derived from causes which are also the causes of almost all evils in states, private as well as public (...) Thus, every one of us should live the life of peace as long as well as he can (...) Cities are like individuals in this, for a city is good to have a life of peace, but, if evil, a life of evil"⁷.

Plato formulated a civic ethical principle, according to which citizens have actual responsibility in the preservation of collective peace. On the other hand, Plato's *Republic of Law* had an impact on St. Augustine, one of the main theoretician of the Western Just War.

Roman Approach:

Despite the master pieces written by thinkers like Virgil, the Ancient Roman concept of peace (Latin: *Pax*) was at best contradictory. The following statement on the so-called "*Pax Romana*" by Charles Chatfield is quite explicit:

The Latin word for peace is *pax*. It is related to *pacisci*: to make a pact that defines a relationship with other states under the *pax romana* was quite different from that assumed by the Greeks (...) For the Romans, and alliance signified submission to the authorities of Rome. Thus, the treaty that ended war with Antiochus in the Near East began, "There

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., p. 45.

shall be friendship between Antiochus and the Romans for all time if he fulfills the conditions of the treaty'. *Pax* also suggested security and tranquility, because it could refer to a sacred agreement for friendly relations in the absence of military pressure, but it still implied an order of accepted authority. Peace in this sense was essentially an extension of power⁸.

As the reader will see later in next chapter, Islamic approach to peace regarding international relations is by far different from the Roman one, particularly regarding the respect for other people's rights. Whereas Romans belittled the rights of their opponent, Islam's fulfillment of agreements is deeply respected in line with what was stated in the Holy Qur'an and endorsed throughout Prophet Muhammad life. In fact, some scholars have found the origin of the *Pacta Sunt Servanda* principle within the Islamic tradition.

The reader will also see later how the framework imposed under the *Pax Romana* would be imitated by the contemporary *Pax Americana*, through which the United States of America has attempted to gain control over the whole world by disregarding other States (rights). Such a foreign policy, also identified as "unilateralism" has mainly targeted Islamic countries ever since 11th September, when former US President George Bush launched his contemporary "Crusade" against what he called "Islamic terrorism".

It is worthwhile to mention that the Western Just War tradition: "Doctrine concerned with the question of when it is morally just to fight a war and how and against whom it should be conducted"⁹, is rooted not just in the Medieval Christian thought but also in "Roman thought notably Cicero", as shown in his *De RePublica* III, XXIII:

A war is never undertaken by the ideal state, except in defense of its honor or safety (...) Those wars which are unjust are undertaken without provocation. For only a war waged for revenge or defense can actu-

⁸ Charles & Ruzanna, p. 18.

⁹ Abdul Rashid & El-Fatih, p. 81.

ally be just (...) No war is considered just unless it has been proclaimed and declared and unless reparation has first been demanded¹⁰

Monotheistic Peace:

The Prophet Mohammed, “whose genealogy is traced back to Abraham, is viewed as the fulfillment of the Judeo – Christian prophetic tradition preceding him”¹¹. This explains the similarities between the three monotheisms. “Those who uphold these traditions are referred to as the People of the Book (*ahl al-kitab*) aligned with Islam, rather than ‘unbelievers’ who are separate from it, which is why Muslims have historically been more tolerant to Jews and Christians than other religious groups”¹²

However, in Judaism and Christianity, peace has been approached with certain differences and nuances. Jews, who still use the Hebrew word “*Shalom*”: peace, as a “customary Jewish greeting”¹³, claim to promote the principle of “love thy neighbor as thyself”. What it is not usually mentioned is that the first part of the sentence: “Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people”¹⁴, which explains the exclusion of those people who are not Jewish, those who do not belong to the selected group “chosen” by God, including Jesus. Judaism approach to peace is not a universal one, contrary to Christianity and Islam. Even for Christianity, Jewish people are the chosen ones, regardless what they believe or what they do, because Judaism is inherited from mother’s womb. Islam, on the contrary, encouraged inter-racial marriages and anyone who submits himself to Allah becomes a Muslim. On the other hand, anyone can become a Christian provided that s/he accepts Jesus by baptism.

¹⁰ Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Re Publica*, (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1928), Bk. 3, XXIII, p. 213.

¹¹ Antony, p. 97.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., p. 83

¹⁴ Leviticus, 19:18.

If Judaism is exclusive by definition and those who are not Jewish are not entitled to be treated in equal terms, then the Jewish concept of peace and justice is not at all universal. Consequently it is very unlikely that Jewish tradition contributes to preservation of international peace.

The above is endorsed by Antony Adolf, who has stated in his book *Peace, a World History*:

The Spiritual covenant with God, by which Abraham's progeny would be plentiful and prosper in the Promised Land with divine protection, was in away a conditional treaty on the tributary model. For these blessings, full submission and undivided devotion to the deity was required on them. The originality of this 'covenant of peace' that God continually renewed with Abraham and his descendants is that it tied a single god to a single group of people exclusively and indefinitely, whereas syncretism and henotheism were then the main modes of religious peacemaking in the region at the time¹⁵

Regarding the Jewish's difficulties to deal with others different from them, Afzal Iqbal, author of *The Prophet's Diplomacy*, provides us with concrete examples: "The Hebrews evolved a culture of their own under Moses and the Divine Pentateuch. The Jews refused to recognize other groups. They were sworn enemies of some foreign nations such as the Amalekites with whom they refused to have any relations in war or in peace"¹⁶.

Christianity, on the other hand, is very much related to peace, although history have accumulated many examples of violence perpetrated mainly by the Catholic Church (The Crusades and the Conquest of the American Continent, for instance). Jesus of Nazareth, who was born Jewish and is acknowledged by Islam as one of the Prophets before Mohammed, was known for preaching peace and "preparing humanity for God's final judgment and peaceful heavenly Kingdom (...) Christians believe

¹⁵ Antony, p. 84

¹⁶ Afzal Iqbal, *The Prophet's Diplomacy: The Art of Negotiation as conceived and Developed by the Prophet of Islam*, (Delhi: Idarah Adabiyat-I Delhi, 2009), p. xxvi.

that “when Jesus met with hostility he never reciprocated avoiding violence with subterfuge or persuasion”¹⁷

Perhaps the most illustrative speech Jesus ever delivered about peace is the Sermon on the Mount:

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they be called sons of God... You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye and tooth for tooth’. But I tell you: resist no evil. If someone strikes you on the right check, turn to him the other also... You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy’. But I tell you: Loves your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.

With the Sermon on the Mount Jesus depicts not just Christianity as a religion based on peace, but differentiates the old Jewish paradigm from the Christian one. Like Islam, Christianity’s approach to peace is universal.

However, a gap seems to exists between the precepts stated in the Bible, and what in certain periods the Christian Church, particularly the Roman Catholic, did against followers of other religions.

In contemporary times, Pope John XXIII have issued a papal encyclical in 1963, known as “Peace on Earth” (Full title: *On Establishing Universal Peace, in Truth, Justice, Charity and Liberty*), and addressed not just to Catholics but to “all men of good will”. Through this message, Pope John XXIII, urged humanity to realize the “need for equality among nations”¹⁸

¹⁷ Antony, p. 87.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 89

Western Just War Tradition and Christianity

As we already explained, although this Chapter is devoted to peace, war, as the other side of the coin, needs to be mentioned, especially when it comes to justifying the rupture of peace. The concept of Just War tradition, already defined in this chapter, needs to be approached carefully not just because it is to a great extent the precedent of current international law when it comes to waging war and making peace, but because of the parallels usually established between the Islamic jihad and the Western Just War. In a subsequent chapter, the Islamic jihad as a just war will be discussed.

Needless to say, Just War is not only a Christian nor a Western attempt to resolve the perennial peace – war conflict. On the contrary, as John Kelsay has pointed out: “Historical and anthropological evidence suggests that every human culture has generated some analogue of just war tradition: a consensus of belief, attitudes, and behavior that defines the terms under which we are justified to resort to violence and the limits, if any, on the use of violence by members of that culture”¹⁹ However, “Peace is one of the few positive symbols having meaning for the whole of humanity”²⁰

Paul Christopher complements John Kelsay’s statement by illustrating it with concrete historical examples:

The policy of recognizing prescriptions, concerning the just conduct of war is found in some form across all cultures (namely): Fifth Century B.C. China recognized rules that stipulated that no war should begin without just cause (...) Different territorial groups of Aztec Empire fought battles with fixed numbers of warrior at set times on predetermined battlefields (...) The Babylonian leader Sennacherib treated the

¹⁹ John Kelsay, *Just War and Jihad*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), p. 3.

²⁰ Nathan C. Funk & Abdul Aziz Said, *Islam and Peacemaking in the Middle East*, (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2009), p. 50.