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# God in the Midst of Human Warfare

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SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

GOD IN THE MIDST OF HUMAN WARFARE

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JEWISH-CHRISTIAN STUDIES IN

PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF JEWISH-CHRISTIAN STUDIES

BY

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SOUTH ORANGE, NEW JERSEY

DECEMBER, 2009

**DEDICATION**

**THIS THESIS IS DEDICATED TO ALL LOVERS OF PEACE AND SOCIAL ACTIVISTS AROUND THE**

**WORLD**

Approved

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## **Abstract**

*Violence (as inappropriate use of force) is a tendency in Man that is learnt and so can be eradicated through training and positive thinking. It is basically a disease of the environment polluted by man's rebellion against his Creator whose loving kindness humans sometimes overlook as weakness. Violence/war is an abuse and rejection of the divine gift of peaceful existence to man. It is a refusal to acknowledge the divine wisdom that wrought the beauty of unity in diversity in human existence. It is therefore the product of man's false freedom that turns against him and puts him in danger of extermination. So in vain do the nations amass sophisticated nuclear and biological warheads, in vain do religious sects defend their stances for either support or condemnation of war and conflicts, and in vain do philosophers and thinkers of our epoch produce theories and logic, the truth is that humanity needs peace as in shalom, a holistic concept of peace that takes care of the common good and tranquility in all its aspects. God's involvement/intervention in this predicament of human beings flows out of his hesed (loving-kindness) and his concern for the salvation of the innocent and the defense of the defenseless.*

## Abbreviations

Deut.....	Deuteronomy.
Col .....	Colossians
Eph .....	Ephesians
Exod.....	Exodus
Ezek .....	Ezekiel
Gen .....	Genesis.
Hos .....	Hosea
Isa.....	Isaiah
Jer.....	Jeremiah
Joel.....	Joel
Josh .....	Joshua.
Judg .....	Judges.
JWT.....	Just War Theory.
Kgs .....	Kings.
Lev .....	Leviticus.
Lk.....	Luke.
Matt.....	Matthew.
Num.....	Numbers
O.I.C.....	Organization of Islamic Countries.
Ps .....	Psalms
Rom .....	Romans
Sam .....	Samuel
BCE .....	Before Common Era.
JBL. ....	Journal of Biblical Literature.
RSV .....	Revised Standard Version.

TRC..... (South African) Truth and Reconciliation Commission.  
S.I.D.I.C .....Service International de Documentation judéo-chrétienne.  
NATO.....North Atlantic Treaty Organization.  
U.N.O.....United Nations Organization.  
U.S.A.....United States of America.  
UNESCO.....United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization.  
UNICEF.....The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.

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## INTRODUCTION

The early part of twentieth century ushered in the glories of our age marked by inventions of various automotive processes. Since then modern technologies have steadily improved modern man's standard of living in various walks of life. Today, the leading aspects of these technologies are communication and its communicative processes, which are affecting the modern mind both positively and negatively. Though this technological advancement and other political systems of our recent world seem glamorous, the social order is still in disarray. Wars, injustice, oppression and other evils still ravage and manipulate the destiny of man. The world order is in continuous flux, the danger of nihilism and relativism, which are the remote propelling forces behind the anarchic condition of our world order, seem to be imminent. Our future is bleak and yearns for a meaningful guidance to its divine purpose. In any case, our modern era could be rated in the superlatives; it's actually one of the greatest in human history.

However, when critically analyzed, our society is like a machine that keeps turning out awesome technologies. But we are seemingly unaware that without moral guidance, these inventions are dangerous in the hands of unpredictable human beings who can turn them into deadly weapons to exterminate humanity in a minute. For instance, who could have

suspected that the terrorists of the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001(9/11), could have used passenger airplanes as bombs, snuffing out many lives onboard and killing and devastating many more within the environs of their target on that fateful day in New York? Our age is one of great philosophical poverty, and as a result, we live in an age of tremendous moral and ethical confusion. This is a tired culture. It is a culture laden with philosophical confusion and theological desolation. Ours is a culture that turns against its Creator, accusing him of a malady that it has brought upon itself. But just as the famous dictum goes "Ideas and thoughts shape and determine action" (Matthew Kelly -2002). The crisis of our modern world is a crisis of ideas. It is a society of Nietzsche's *Ueberschensch*/superman who has replaced God with enthronement of self (*ego*). It is an era of "dictatorship of relativism" says the Holy Father, Pope Paul VI. In other words, there is a massive presence of "culture of relativism" which recognizes nothing as definitive, but leaves the ultimate criterion for judgment/decision to the self and its desires. The fruit of this individualism has always been greed, selfishness, exploitation and violence at the various levels of modern man's life style. Infested by this amorally fabricated ideology, it becomes less surprising why these ugly waves of crimes besiege and threaten our societies. Every day comes with new stories of gruesome violence and wars among nations. The precarious nature of this hidebound militarism and round robin carnage of our age has come to a point when one begins

to wonder if humanity is doomed to violence. The ubiquitous presence of war in human history and the ferocious and terrorizing impact of the nuclear weaponry of our age also keep one wondering whether humanity is born for the battlefield. Are we congenitally and hormonally incapable of putting war behind us? Is there no alternative to our bullet-riddled socio-political scene? How and when did man develop this *marshal-craze* for a DNA<sup>1</sup> when mankind was supposed to have been created in the image of the divine perfection (Jewish/Christian and Islamic concept of man)?

My compulsion to this study is a response to this precarious *sitz im leben* of modern man. My main objective is to highlight the need for mankind to seek an urgent solution to this predicament of ours, in God who is the ultimate peace. This work is a call on mankind to accept responsibility for the shattered mundane situation and to step-up and make it a better world. One of the greatest endowments to humanity is the gift of freedom and free choice flowing from their gift of reason from the Creator. This endowment was given to mankind as the crown and apogee of creation, so that they will harness the earth (Gen.1& 2) and actualize themselves as true images of their Creator. Unfortunately, human exuberance and excesses led to the misuse of this very positive endowment and misplacement of its value. One of the signs of this misplacement of

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<sup>1</sup> Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) is a nucleic acid that contains the genetic instructions used in the development and functioning of all known living organisms and some Viruses.

priorities is human choice of war instead of peace, which is the major characteristic of the Creator, whose image we bear. This choice of war is substantially evil and is described as "*lack of reason*" and cannot be justified by any claims of God's commandments, theories or political policies and ideologies. Considering the perennial nature of war with regard to the history of mankind, the just war theory could have been given the credit of being the best effort of mankind towards eradicating war/international violence on earth but with the introduction of the nuclear warhead with its devastating capacity, the human situation came back to *point zero*. So the horrendous effect of these warheads<sup>2</sup> remains a conspicuous proof that modern warfare is substantially evil without a justifiable logic whether it is a pre-emptive, defensive or aggressive war. A total disarmament and discouragement of the arms race are pragmatic imperatives to rid our world of the malady of violence and insecurity. Plausible programs of peace and peaceful co-existence of all are the ways out of our situation that is infested with violence. The quality of peace in question is that of *shalom*, which in Hebrew includes wholeness, completeness; such is the peace that gives justice to all. This can only materialize among men through *imitatio Dei-the imitation of God* from whom loving-kindness (*hesed*) emanates.

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<sup>2</sup> These weapons (Atomic, Bacteriological and Chemical warhead-A.B.C) are evil even from the intentions of their inventors who built them to that capacity. In other words, even from the beginning they were meant to kill indiscriminately.

To grapple with a comprehensive study of these phenomena, I have carefully explicated the terms in use within the course of this study in chapter I. This chapter focuses on some lines of arguments that disprove the uncritical assumption that war is innate in man and establish the fact that there is no such thing as an inevitable war; if war comes, it will be from failure of human wisdom.

The second chapter of this work explored the concept of holy war and the various attitudes of the religious communities, especially the three Abrahamic faiths (*Judaism, Christianity and Islam*) regarding the occurrence of war. God's involvement in the act of human warfare is the basic contention in this chapter. The meaning of the Israelite *divine warrior* concept is expounded and the implications of *herem* and total belligerence of *that* history on Judaism and Christianity are highlighted. The Islamic appraisal of the *holy war* is embodied in the *jihad*. *Jihad* mentality as a fundamental inspiration to the Islamic attitude to warfare is explored here, especially as it relates to terrorism and modern warfare. Chapter three takes up the *just war* theory discussions. It examines the issue of its relevance to the modern warfare situation, a critique of this theory and arms race issues and favors total disarmament as a possible solution to our confrontational quandary.

Chapter four, projects the imitation of divine *hesed*, justice and peace as the fundamental dispositional factors that will facilitate the laying down

of these deadly weapons (disarmament). Shalom (שָׁלוֹם) is therefore posited as mankind's only inspiration and source of hope for a better world.

The last chapter brings to the fore the image of the authentic peace and advocates the urgency of building up programs of a more sustained and permanent *peace culture* as a replacement to our present *culture of violence*.

## CHAPTER I

### God's Involvement in the Act of Human Warfare

#### 1.1 Explication of the Concepts of War and Scope of this Study

My concern for the study this topic is timely and crucial in an age of complexities like ours when violence, wars and rumors of war have become the order of the day. This is an age when the name of God no longer evokes respect and reflection but rather has become abhorrent and obsolete to many who are becoming disenchanted with the negative connotations that is being linked to it recently. Ours is an age when the knowledge of God is being misconstrued and the misdeeds of his creatures are being blamed on him. While reflecting on this, Martin Buber wrote:

What word of human speech is so misused so defiled, so desecrated as this! All the innocent blood that has been shed for it has robbed it of its radiance. All the injustice that it has been used to cover, has effaced its features. When I hear the highest name called "God" it sometimes seems almost blasphemous.<sup>3</sup>

This thought of Buber's was taken up from another dimension by Susan Niditch, when she wrote:

The particular violence of the Hebrew Scriptures has inspired violence, has served as a model of and model for persecution, subjugation, and extermination for millennia beyond its own reality<sup>4</sup>.

Niditch certainly alludes to situations of ethnic cleansing, racism and other religious chauvinism where the Hebrew Scriptures has been misconstrued and quoted to

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<sup>3</sup> Martin Buber, *The Eclipse of God: Studies in Relation between Religion and Philosophy*. Intro. Robert M. Seltzer (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1988) p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Niditch Susan, *War in the Hebrew Bible: Study in the Ethics of Violence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) p. 4

serve or cover atrocities that humans commit in the name of God. However, this work doesn't pretend to offer all the solutions to these precarious exigencies of the modern man, but hopes to investigate who should take the bulk of the blame: God or the excesses and the exuberances of man? However, the main motif of this work will be to suggest some alternatives to the present war and violent culture of our modern times.

The complex nature of this task therefore requires an in-depth insight of the *status a quo* and the *terminus ad quem* of the human being as regards his challenging existence on earth. These complexities of human nature therefore cuts across various disciplines (philosophical, psychological, social, political and religious dimensions) since man is a microcosm in whom nature combines both spiritual and temporal concerns. This work therefore seeks to place all these dimensions of the human being in dialogue, to facilitate a holistic comprehension of this pervasive and demanding perennial phenomenon (war) of our existence.

In attempt to define human beings and their propensity to warfare, violence and aggression, T. R. Hobbs fell into equivocation but settled for the commonly held view that "violence is innate to man's nature".<sup>5</sup> Such a prevarication which logically presupposes that God is responsible for the violent culture that ravages our world today is what this work wishes to refute. So to start off this task, let us consider some fundamental questions that will certainly facilitate achieving a better understanding of the issue at hand. These questions include: Is God really the

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<sup>5</sup> T.R. Hobbs, A Time for War: A Study of Warfare in the Old Testament: (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1978) p. 70

originator of war and violence on earth or the opposite? Is he not rather the grantor of peace and tranquil co-existence of all creatures? To what extent can humans be said to be responsible for war? Is it ever right to wage war? Should certain acts of war be permissible? Who should be the legitimate authority to declare war? What are the ethical and political implications of war? What are the moral, social and political obligations of every individual to the other to ensure peaceful co-existence of all human beings?

When the conservative philosopher Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) defined war as a "condition of contending forces", he took us closer to a better understanding of it because he emphasized three major factors that constitute war: conflict, force, conditions or situations. The implication of his definition is therefore, that a situation of war is a condition which is believed to allow behaviors and actions normally considered apprehensive and contrary to peaceful co-existence. Examples include killing others (including innocents), destruction of property, lying (usually called propaganda), other pugnacious actions, etc. War, seen from this point of view, captures much of what characterizes a wide variety of situations which qualify as conflict rather than peace.

For the sake of precision, I wish to examine the basic philosophical questions relating to war. These questions include: what are the causes of wars and are humans naturally warlike?

## 1:2. The Etymology of the Term “War” and Its Implications

Perhaps, a cursory review of the roots of the word “War” will provide a glimpse into its conceptual status. For example, the root of the English word *war* is Frankish-German-*werra*, meaning confusion, discord, or strife, and its verb *werran* meaning to confuse or perplex. The Latin term *bellum* gives us the word *belligerent*, and *duel*- an archaic form of *bellum*; the Greek word for war is *polemos*, from which derives the English *polemical*, which in turn, implies an *aggressive controversy*. This Frankish-Germanic definition hints at *confusion or strife*; it suggests involvement of violence and conflict. All these terms capture the possibility of two sides doing the fighting. Therefore, wars are direct results of human-conflicts. Of all life’s troubles, conflicts are probably the most common. Jones and Gerard (1967) define conflict as: *a state that obtains for an individual when he is motivated to make one or two incompatible responses*.<sup>6</sup>

For Raven and Kruglanski, conflict is the:

Tension between two or more social entities-individuals, groups, or larger organizations-which arises from incompatibility of actual or desired responses.<sup>7</sup>

Considering their views, conflicts arise when we are faced with two incompatible demands, opportunities, needs, or goals. There is no complete resolution of human conflicts. We must either give up one of our goals, modify one or both, delay one, or learn to accept that neither of them is going to be fully satisfied. There are two

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<sup>6</sup> Jones, E. E., & Gerard, H. B. *Foundations of Social Psychology*. (New York: Wiley, 1967)-As cited by Charles G Morris (1982). p.520

<sup>7</sup> Raven, B. H., & Kruglanski, *A Conflict and Power*. Ed. Paul Swingle (New York: Academic Press, 1970).

basic types of conflicts: intrapersonal and interpersonal. Psychologically considered, the Intrapersonal conflicts are more of the somatic functions or personal psychic life of human beings. In the actual sense, it is this aspect of humans that largely determines the pattern of human behaviors and life in general. They influence human actions either positively or negatively. However, the scope of this work is focused on interpersonal conflicts. Interpersonal relationship refers to associations between two or more people. Interpersonal relationships are basically social interactions, associations, connections, or affiliations between two or more people. They often tend towards the discovery or establishment of common ground, and may be centered on something(s) shared in common. It involves a diverse range of issues including; issues concerning globalization, nationalism/state sovereignty, ecological sustainability, economic development, global finance, human security, foreign interventionism and human rights. It is within these kinds of associations and interactions that conflicts arise. Conflict is, therefore, a part and parcel of interpersonal relationship. Interpersonal conflict is therefore defined as "an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from the other party in achieving their goals".<sup>8</sup> The highlights of this definition include perceptions and expressed struggle. This means that for a situation to qualify as a conflict, the two sides must have perceived that their goals, resources, and interferences are incompatible with one another. Interpersonal conflict or social conflict arises,

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<sup>8</sup> Wilmot, W. W., & Hocker, J. L. (2001). *Interpersonal conflict*: McGraw Hill Higher Education.

therefore, when the available resources are unequally distributed among two or more parties.<sup>9</sup> Obviously, conflicts of this kind vary greatly from simple competition to physical struggle. Brickman suggests that there are four basic types of social conflict, which are distinguished by the amount of social control superimposed over them. In the *unstructured conflict*, almost anything can happen. There are few social controls to regulate the action. Examples of these are: riots, mob violence, and a bar-room brawl. These are unstructured conflicts. Some rules or expectations govern a *partially structured* conflict while in a *fully structured (or normative)* conflict; the behavior of each party is completely prescribed by the rules of society or by the situation. The resources at stake and how those resources are allocated are clearly spelled out. There are rules governing all aspects of the situation that everyone accepts. Athletic contests, games, and elections are examples of this kind of conflict. In other words, structured or normative conflict is a conflict, but there is a systematized way to deal with it. Finally, in a revolutionary conflict, the socially prescribed rules are overturned or challenged. This occurs not only during social upheavals, e.g. as in the French and Russian Revolutions, but even in smaller conflicts, as when, for instance, a faction of the crew of a ship engages in a mutiny and takes it over.

It is therefore, an intense or severe conflict that gives rise to aggression. Aggression in human beings includes all behaviors that are intended to inflict physical or

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<sup>9</sup> Brickman, P. *Social Conflict*. (New York: Heath, 1974) p15.

psychological harm on others.<sup>10</sup> The phrase *intent to harm* is emphasized here because it is a major fact at play in aggression. Although many wars are rationalized as self-defensive acts of protection, but in actual sense, most wars are begun as nothing more than hugely inflated acts of angry aggression.

According to Freud and those belonging to his school of thought, aggression is simply an expression of bodily needs and functions. Aggression is part of our continuing, unconscious efforts to balance the ego's rational forces with the *id's* irrational forces. They held that the aggressive urge, like the sexual urge, must be released, either directly or indirectly, otherwise it will constitute a disastrous aggression towards others. Freud believes that:

The important function of society was to subdue the natural urge of aggression. Such urges may be worked off in constructive, socially acceptable ways (like) jogging, boxing or even debating (if not), they may be channeled into destructive, socially unacceptable ways (like) fights, insults, child abuse.<sup>11</sup>

Employing Carl Jung's concept of *archetypes*<sup>12</sup> Konrad Lorenz (an etiologist), declares human aggression to be prototypical. Following Jung's footsteps therefore, Lorenz believes that aggression is largely an instinct left over from our prehistoric past, an archetypal instinct that is not negative in itself, since it serves to reduce population and to strengthen the species. Lorenz popularized this in his statement:

Aggression only becomes a negative force, when the species (our own, especially) fails to develop an appropriate instinctual guard against the use of aggression toward members of its own species.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Morris, C.G. *An Introduction to Psychology*. (Englewood NJ, 1982). p.526.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* p.526

<sup>12</sup> An archetype is a generic, idealized model of a person, object, or concept from which similar instances are derived, copied, patterned, or emulated. They are innate group of memories or universal prototypes for ideas.

<sup>13</sup> Lorenz, K. *On Aggression*. (New York: Harcourt, 1968). As cited by Morris-(1982). p.527.

Elaborating on this, he classified all animals into *fighters and fleers*; for instance, the lion naturally belongs to the fighter group and antelopes belong to fleers. Lorenz believed that, until they invented weapons, humans were among fleers; however, clubs, spears, and guns changed and reversed it all.<sup>14</sup> Thus today, humans alone, among all animals, have the means to destroy each other and lack the instinct to restrain themselves from doing so. In other words, Lorenz believed that aggression is inherent and innate in man and so his actions are a mere representation of this inbuilt/latent drive, so he cannot do otherwise. The implication is that humans may not be blamed for what they do sometimes, including acts like waging wars. Whether or not this theory of aggression is true, we will have to discover much later. However, R.S. Lazarus (1974)<sup>15</sup> denies the veracity of this theory. For him, it is very simplistic. He contended that there is no substantial research to show that people have an inbuilt, uncontrollable urge to fight and kill. For him, it is rather the other way around; the release of the aggressive energy in an altercation is more of a gratification rather than control over it. Another view of aggression has roots in the Aristotelian dictum that “*there is nothing in the intellect that did not pass through the senses.*” This suggests that it is not a latent drive at all, but a form of learned behavior. However, while the aggressive behavior of lower animals can be explained by innate, instinctual urges or drives: aggression and violence among humans are learned. This is further explained by the two basic learning processes: *instrumental learning and observational learning.*

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<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately today, humans have progressed and increased the gruesomeness of weaponry as humans may become endangered species at the face of biological and other mass destructive warheads, if care is not taken.

<sup>15</sup> Lazarus, R. S. *The Riddle of Man*. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1974).

- ***Instrumental learning.*** This occurs when behavior is re-enforced if it is rewarding. In other words, if a child always gets his or her way through aggressive behavior, that behavior will possibly be reinforced in the future.
- ***Observational learning.*** This occurs when we observe or imitate models, such as parents, teachers and even television characters.

In fact, children who are severely punished for aggressive behavior are found to be more aggressive toward others, even toward dolls. In various experiments performed by Bandura, Ross, and Ross, children were far more aggressive in their play after seeing adult aggression<sup>16</sup>. However, one point is clear here, as far as aggression is considered an action of man, it is not strictly innate and so could be controlled or even be avoided. There are certainly other methods of controlling aggression and violence like *Freudian Catharsis*, which is one of the oldest ideas for controlling aggression. It states that the “aggressive drive” can be reduced by expressing the aggression. Freud called it the *catharsis of aggressive feeling*. It is exactly what we mean when we say that we want to *let off* steam. As we have seen, Freud presumed that we always have a reservoir of aggressive energy and that any expression of aggression would help reduce the aggressive energy that remained.<sup>17</sup> There are also *punishment and rewarding* behavior models but the long term approach has always been the best recommended. In this, it is often recommended that the children live with nonaggressive models and learn to build empathy for others; the reason for this is to check the chances of them modeling their behaviors

<sup>16</sup> Bandura, A., Ross, D., & Ross S. A. "Imitation of film-mediated aggressive models". *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*: 1963: p. 66.

<sup>17</sup> Morris, *An Introduction to Psychology*. p.530.

after negative influences. This argument is based on the glaring fact that children who are always exposed to violent, quarrelsome, competitive adults (these may be their parents) always see the world as an aggressive place and may fashion themselves in that manner. However, if they are thought to cultivate feelings of empathy towards others, they are more likely to be less aggressive in later life. This is because, says Aronson:

The more empathy and understanding we have for people, the less likely we are to resort to cruel, aggressive and violent behavior (against them).<sup>18</sup>

Some sociologists disagree with the notion of control and rechanneling of this latent potential of man and have held on to the idea of the aggressive and belligerent, nature of man. Hobbes (1588-1679) was adamant that without an external power to impose laws (norms, constitutions, precepts), the state of nature would be one of immanent warfare. According to him:

During the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called Warre (state of nature); and such a warre, as is of every man, against every man.<sup>19</sup>

Hobbes's construction is a useful starting point for discussions on man's natural inclinations to aggression. Some great philosophers, who shared his views directly or indirectly include: Locke, Rousseau, and Kant. The veracity of this view is evident especially when we reflect on what would become of our modern cities if there were no norms and their enforcement agents like the police, soldiers, judiciaries and other law enforcement entities of the society. Even though John Locke would

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<sup>18</sup> Aronson, E. *The Social Animal*. (San Francisco: Freeman, 1980). As Quoted by Morris, C. G. (1982)p.531.

<sup>19</sup> Thomas Hobbes: *Leviathan*. [ed] C.B. MacPherson (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968) p.1.13

disagree on the "total anarchic state" of affairs, he accepted that there will always be people who will take advantage of the lack of legislation and enforcement.

However, it will be too much of a reductionism to diminish man to a mere *aggressor*, he is not just a beast condemned to his instincts, according to Vincent V. Herr (1966):

Flowing from the deep inner striving and need for fulfillment is a need for security, for freedom from disturbing threats to his existence and well-being; included in his striving for total well-being is a state of mind that we call, the wish or craving for peace and contentment, for happiness which is the natural destiny of human beings.<sup>20</sup>

Herr was actually highlighting the fact that, though humans are *bundles of possibilities*, they are also peace loving beings, craving for a happy and peacefully co-existence with each other as a necessary goal in their lives. For him, man is an embodiment of many facets making up his nature. Buttressing the same point on the dynamism of human nature, Louis Janssens (1967) adds that man is also a moral subject or being, according to him:

Man is a dynamic totality and tends toward his proper fulfillment. In the course of his development, the dynamism of his being differentiates into a multiple of particular tendencies. But his multiplicity and diversity do not condemn him to an incoherent existence, abandoned to the whims of disordered desires. In fact, he is also provided with a moral tendency – the dynamism of the totality as such – which makes him qualified to integrate particular tendencies according to the place and the role which comes to the development of his personal totality. The capacity of realizing this integration he owes to the fact that he is in the state of having an awareness of the global sense of his existence, of putting freely his acts in the service of the fulfillment of this sense and, moreover, of assuming the responsibility of the satisfaction or of the sacrifice of his particular tendencies according to the demands of his total destiny. It is precisely this way of being conscious, free and responsible that confers on him the dignity of moral subject"<sup>21</sup>.

Following the line of thought put forth by Janssens, man is not only rational but is a choice-making being; his reactions are not always the same in all situations. His

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<sup>20</sup> Herr Vincent, *Religious Psychology*: (- New York: Alba House: Staten Island, 1966) p. 32.

<sup>21</sup> Louis Janssens, *Freedom of Conscience and Religious Freedom*. Trans. Brother Lorenzo. (Staten Island, New York : Alba House, 1967) p. 55

reactions fluctuate and may depend on other factors that determine his behavior. In other words, he can decide to be aggressive in one situation and may find aggression unnecessary in another situation. A further implication of Jensen's point is that humans are constantly conscious of what they do and have reasons for their actions. An integral part of this reason is the moral quality of those actions and their utility and functionality. So at this juncture one could as well say that war is not really a choice man wants to make normally but often he is lured into it by circumstances, especially when he is considered from the point of view of his survival instinct. It is, therefore, obvious that war has never been bait for humans at any time and place in spite of the false claims that conflict and aggression are part of us. So, if conflict or aggression is not innate in man and can be controlled then the ineluctability of war, as a basic conflict in man, is surmountable. The implication is therefore, that war is *an intentional choice* of man, an option for which he is responsible and takes the blame for its consequences. Under these conditions God is not responsible when man misuses his divine gift of freedom of choice to act irrationally, or engage in acts of aggression like wars, when he could have chosen peace. God's involvement in the act of human war is therefore for the sake of peace. He gets involved to restore peace and harmony and more so, to protect the innocent and the defenseless from the evils of this human choice. One may then ask why then did God command war in the Hebrew Scriptures? This question forms the major motif of this work and will be given an elaborate treatment in the subsequent chapters.

### I:3. Semantic Articulation of the term “WAR”

Having understood the concept of human conflict which usually degenerate into intense aggressive war, let us survey history briefly to see how the thinkers of various epochs have defined and applied these concept in their attempts to articulate the phenomenon in question(war). Cicero(106-43BC) defined war broadly as: “ *contention by force*”; Hugo Grotius(1583-1645) added that: “*war is the state of contending parties, considered as such*”; Thomas Hobbes(1588-1679) noted that war is also an attitude: “*By War is meant a state of affairs, which may exist even while its operations are not continued*”; Denis Diderot(1713-84) commented that war is: “*a convulsive and violent disease of the body politic;*” for Karl von Clausewitz(1780-1831):

War is nothing but a duel on a larger scale. . . Each tries through physical force to compel the other to do his will . . . war is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will...*war is the continuation of politics by other means*<sup>22</sup>

*By those words*, he implied that war is in some manner or form, a reflection of political activity and as such can only involve body polities or states against each other. Clausewitz’s definition tallies with the Webster’s Dictionary’s definition which states that: *war is a state of open and, declared hostile armed conflict between states or nations, or a period of such conflict.*

Both Karl Von Clausewitz and the Webster Dictionary definitions capture a particularly political-rationalistic account of war and warfare, i.e., *that war needs to*

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<sup>22</sup> Karl von Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege: On War*. Ed. and Intro. Rapoport (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968). Originally published in 1832.

*be explicitly declared and must be between states, to be a war (a kind of normative conflict as we already noted above). We find Rousseau (1712-78) arguing the same position when he insisted that: "War is constituted by a relation between things, and not between persons ... War then is a relationship not between man and man, but between State and State".*

Furthermore, in a more comprehensive manner, the American military historian, John Keegan (1993) offers a useful characterization of this political-rationalistic concept of War. He opines that there should be decorum even within the anarchic atmosphere of war. According to him, it is assumed to be an orderly affair in which states are involved and usually there should be declared beginnings and expected ends, easily identifiable combatants, and high levels of obedience by subordinates. This form of war is narrowly defined and distinguished, by the expectation of sieges, pitched battles, skirmishes, raids, and reconnaissance, patrol and outpost duties, with each possessing its own conventions.<sup>23</sup>

A cursory look at these political rationalistic concepts immediately reveals their deficiencies; they are certainly parochial because they seem to narrow war specifically to a state's affair. They barely took into account the ugly interface that often takes place among the nomadic groups and the displaced, non-State groups against a state e.g. the guerrilla warfare; terrorist attacks, Columbian drug wars in

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<sup>23</sup> John Keegan, *A History of Warfare*: (Vintage Books, 1993).

South America and European Mafia organizations which virtually observe no decorum and rules.

This lack of lucidity therefore makes it imperative for us to consider the Heraclitus/Hegelian school of thought, where wars are considered as an *all-pervasive phenomenon* of the universe and mere symptoms of the underlying belligerent nature of the universe. According to this school of thought, *opposing forces act on each other to generate change. Change (which include: physical, social, political and economic factors) can only arise out of war or violent conflict. War is therefore a product of such a metaphysical process.*

Heraclitus (c.500BC) declared therefore that "*war is the father of all things,*" and Hegel (1770-1831) echoed his sentiments. Interestingly, even Voltaire (1694-1778), the embodiment of the enlightenment, followed this line, for him:

Animals Famine, plague, and war are the three most famous ingredients of this wretched world...All are perpetually at war with each other...Air, earth and water are arenas of destruction.<sup>24</sup>

As a kind of "addendum" The Oxford English Dictionary expands the definition to include; "*any active hostility or struggle between living beings; a conflict between opposing forces or principles.*"<sup>25</sup>

One positive score this school of thought has against political-rationalist approaches is that it avoids their narrowness and admits the possibility of

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<sup>24</sup> *Voltaire's Pocket Philosophical Dictionary*: Trans. Peter Gay (New York: Basic Books 1962). Note: The Dictionnaire philosophique is an encyclopedic dictionary published by Voltaire in 1764.

<sup>25</sup> Oxford English Dictionary.

*metaphorical concepts of war*, especially as advanced by systems of thought, such as religious doctrines, whereby the friction between opposing forces (*light and darkness, spiritual and temporal, etc.*) are often referred to as wars. It reminds us of the War between the sons of the light ( בני אור ) and the sons of the darkness/evil- ( בני חושך ) the Qumran scroll of the Essenes<sup>26</sup>. This indicates that there are certainly different kinds of warring activities rather than just physical combats. From all indications this Heraclitus/Hegelian school of thought provides the common denominators or elements that are common to all wars, and provides a useful definition of the concept. We will therefore, have recourse to it since it provides us with a comprehensive and holistic concept for this work. It permits the commensurate flexibility that accommodates the amorphous nature of the conflicting situations that instigate wars. Such situations as culturally evolved crises, ritualistic wars and guerrilla uprisings<sup>27</sup> are not left out of their definition. This will then lead to a holistic conception of the topic which ranges from physical armed clashes of opposing body polities to metaphorical clashes of values between humanity and forces that be.

#### **1:4. Causes of War**

War has always been ubiquitous and a constant occurrence in the history of man. It is far from being a spontaneous phenomenon. As we have seen above, it doesn't just

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<sup>26</sup> Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*: (Revised Ed. 2004. Penguin Books) p. 159-186.

<sup>27</sup> These categories of war usually have no centrally controlling body and may perhaps be described as "emerging spontaneously".

suffice to say that it is inherent in man, therefore he fights. Many other social, economic, political, and ecological factors constitute its constant occurrences. An instance of this is explained by the term: *exaggerated nationalism* which Paul Hanley Furfey defined as *placing loyalty to the country above loyalty to God*. Furfey argued that people deaden their consciences and insist on dealing cruelly and deviously against their fellow humans in pretence of being patriotic to their so-called beloved country. Furfey opined that, under the influence of such a distorted patriotism, people tend to overlook critical evaluation of their actions or roles in war. For him, such a misguided priority or misplacement of values is one of the major causes of war in modern times.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to the dormant-conflicts arising from economic and political tensions, wars are often insinuated on the psychological level by collective stereotyped images rooted in the traditions, culture, and history of peoples. This point is particularly evident in most wars with *ethnic-cleansing* as their target.

Another factor that tends to encourage war is *group stability and sense of identity*. The more stable and surer the identity of a person or a group is, the less likely they are to be warlike, and of course the less rigid and totalistic their war ideologies are likely to be. This point is especially an important factor to keep in mind in exploring the spectrum of war ideologies in the Hebrew Scriptures. For instance one would expect to find the *ban ideology* in the war concept of the Israelites, since they consider themselves beset, as those in a situation of political transition or economic

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<sup>28</sup> Paul Hanley Furfey, *The Mystery of Iniquity*. (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1944) p. 152.

deprivation. In other words, paradoxically, war is often used to establish a new stability that ensures *group solidarity* among those who unite against a common enemy. This happens for instance, during elections, when the factions behind the various primary candidates unite and work together to elect the candidate who has been nominated<sup>29</sup>. It is meant to actually ameliorate the situation of anomie that may have contributed to the social conflicts.<sup>30</sup>

Recently Brian Ferguson postulated an anthropological approach to the causes of war which he articulated as *ecological materialism*. With this, Ferguson provided a balanced and succinct definition of ecological materialist cause of war; according to him:

The occurrence and form of warfare are intimately related to processes of material production and other exigencies (essentials) of survival. The study of war requires attention to human interaction with the natural environment, economic organization, and to the social, political, environment and military correlates of both.<sup>31</sup>

A Marxian appraisal of the above opinion is that the root cause of war has to do with basic needs for survival. This is evident in the insistence of Maurice R. Davie (1929) who put it thus:

It is ... the competition of life which makes war...competition for land, food, for the means to survive and prosper.<sup>32</sup>

As a follow up to the above, Irenius Eibl Eibesfeldt's commentary on Napoleon Chagnon's study of the Yanomamo people of the Amazon,<sup>33</sup> explained the constant

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<sup>29</sup>Charles Morris *Introduction To Psychology*. p.521.

<sup>30</sup> Niditch Susan, *War in the Hebrew Bible? Study in the Ethics of Violence*: (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) p.22

<sup>31</sup> Brian Ferguson, *Warfare, Culture, and Environment*: (Academic Press, Orlando, 1984). See also Niditch Susan, *War in the Hebrew Bible? Study in the Ethics of Violence*: (p.22

<sup>32</sup> Maurice R. Davie, *The Evolution of War: A Study of Its Role in the Early Societies*. (New Haven: Yale University, 1929) p.12

state of conflict among the Yanomamo as: “*War to take land*”. This may sound somewhat simplistically materialistic but it becomes even more serious and complicated when Eibl-Eibesfeldt insisted that sometimes these materialistic motifs are mystified and shrouded under religious or divine claims and convictions. In fact, he even interpreted Deut 20: 16-17 and Josh 6:21 in the context of these materialist aims of hunting for pasture and arable land. For him:

The Biblical Lawgiver realizes that “his people needed their neighbors’ land as a (rich and viable) settlement area... Since men normally have strong inhibitions against aggression directed at women and children, this massacre dictated by cold utilitarian considerations had to be represented as divine command.<sup>34</sup>

This view of Eibesfeldt’s is deficient especially when one considers the Israelite claim that they were fighting to reclaim the land promised to the patriarchs (after their enslavement in Egypt, Gen 13:14-17). But even if we set aside Eibl-Eibesfeldt’s naïve assumptions regarding the historicity of biblical texts, one is still intrigued by the simplistic quality of his approach. Yet one should not be utterly dismissive to such an attention that he drew to the human factor or traits even though they may be shrouded by the religious outlook. Such ulterior motifs or ecological materialistic undertones perhaps may have been the reason for the *herem* (חרם) or *ban* (total extermination at war) and sparing of livestock or sometimes taking women captives and enslaving males and children as seen in Deuteronomy 20:15 and Numbers 31:16-17. Making her point on this issue Niditch Susan wrote:

Ecological perspectives may also be revealing in assessing the differences in the ideology of war reflected in war portrayals. How does one explain, for example, the requirement of the

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<sup>33</sup> Chagnon is a professor emeritus at the University of California at Santa Barbara. He is best known for his long-term ethnographic field work among the Yanomamö, as his contributions to evolutionary theory in cultural anthropology, and to the study of warfare. The Yanomamo are a society of indigenous tribal Amazonians that live in the border area between Venezuela and Brazil. )

<sup>34</sup> Irenius, Eibl-Eibesfeldt. *The Biology of Peace and War: Men, Animals and Aggression*. (New York: Viking, 1979)p.182-85

ban or herem -that all conquered human beings be killed, contrasted with the taking of young virgin girls in Numbers 31, and with the seemingly more pragmatic taking of male and female war captives elsewhere in the Hebrew Scriptures?<sup>35</sup>

However, the explanation of the *herem ideology*, its merits and demerits, compared and analyzed in the contest of other ideologies will be given an elaborate consideration later. Along the same line of thought, the so much emphasis on “*global Islamization*” by modern terrorist maneuvers may not be unconnected to these utilitarian motivations.

Though so many important things have been said about wars, the question remains; of what use is this phenomenon to man? Is it a way forward for man or a way to perdition or doom for him? Let us therefore digress to consider the woes of war in the history of mankind especially in the most recent times- the 20th century.

### **1:5. Woes of Human Warfare on our Society**

The 20<sup>th</sup> century has no doubt been bejeweled with an unprecedented development in automation, an era when mankind’s ability to discover, invent and produce many things, sky-rocketed. In his description of this era Witold Rybczynski, remarked:

It was one of those rare instances that define an era, like Johann Gutenberg’s first printing of a book using movable type in the middle of the fifteenth century, or James Watt’s development of a practicable high-pressure condensing steam engine, which he patented in 1769. Just as these events were followed by what people came to refer to as the Age of Print and the Age of Steam, after 1913 one can speak of the Age of Mass Production.<sup>36</sup>

Tremendous growth of different forms of transportation, such as automotive and air travel; new forms of communication; radio, telephone, television, and satellite, these

<sup>35</sup> Susan, Niditch. *War in the Hebrew Bible? Study in the Ethics of Violence*. p. 23

<sup>36</sup> Witold, Rybczynski. “The Ceaseless Machine: The Coming of Mass Production”. *Our Times: The Illustrated History of the 20th Century*. Ed.Lorrain Glennon, (Turner Publishing Inc: Atlanta: 1990) p.76

are profound achievements of mankind in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Unfortunately, in the words of Rybczynski, "*mass production vastly accelerated and enlarged other consequences; it is the scale of technology's impact on human life that set the age of mass production apart*".<sup>37</sup>

So no matter how good these developments may sound, other aspects of the century sadden the critical mind. It has been a century of wars, a hundred years of many cold and hot wars and altercations. It saw World War I (1914-18), which led inevitably to World War II (1939-45). It was the era of the Korean War (1950), and the Vietnam War (1964-75). It also witnessed the jihads of various kinds and many smaller conflicts in between. It is an era when the so called World Powers began to spend more of their national budgets preparing for war at the expense or to the detriment of the welfare of the masses. This development initiated the *culture of war* that subsequently perpetrated abject poverty and hardships among the less-privileged of the recent human society; hence Robert Stone commented:

For nearly half a century after World War II, the two superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States, remained poised for a reprise of total war-their economies geared to weapons production, their propaganda machines working at full throttle, their armies ready for Armageddon... the after-math of the Cold War ... drove both nations into near-insuperable debt.<sup>38</sup>

The truth of these facts is that mankind's glory was reached especially in technological advancement, but still mankind's oldest plague, *war*, could not be done away with. Instead, and ironically, too, that same technology has been used to

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid. p.80

<sup>38</sup> Robert Stone, "Total War Global: Conflict as a way of Life" *Our Times: The Illustrated History of the 20th Century*; Ed. Lorrain Glennon, (Atlanta: Turner Publishing Inc. 1990) p.292

improve the latent destructive capabilities of man and nations. While bringing much good, technology has also brought us the ultimate weapon like nuclear arms, which can stamp out life in seconds without discrimination. We now stand within the shadow of a nuclear threat that could plunge us into a holocaust in which the losers would be the survivors. In this regards, Pope John Paul II in his World Day of Peace speech (1<sup>st</sup> January 1980), remarked:

I have recently received from some scientists a concise forecast of the immediate and terrible consequences of a nuclear war. Here are the principal ones:

--Death, by direct or delayed action of the explosions, of a population that might range from 50 to 200 million persons; -A drastic reduction of food resources, caused by residual radioactivity over a wide extent of arable land;

-Dangerous genetic mutations occurring in human beings, fauna and flora;

-Considerable changes in the ozone layer in the atmosphere, which would expose man to major risks, harmful for his life;

-In a city stricken by a nuclear explosion the destruction of all urban services and the terror caused by the disaster would make it impossible to offer the inhabitants the slightest aid, creating a nightmarish apocalypse.

Just two hundred of the fifty thousand nuclear bombs, which, it is estimated already exist, would be enough to destroy most of the large cities in the world. It is urgent, those scientists say, that the peoples should not close their eyes to what an atomic war can represent for mankind.<sup>39</sup>

This whole craze of humanity therefore leaves an unanswered question on a reflective mind: "If war is this evil and ultimately leads to these ends, then what use is it anyway? What glory could there be in conquering a radioactive wasteland?"

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<sup>39</sup> Pope John Paul II, "World Day of Peace speech" (1st January 1980). *Words of Conscience-Religious Statements on Conscientious Objection*: Ed. Beth Ellen Boyle, (Tenth Edition) (New York: June 1983: p.33-34.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century was scourged by pathology of violence. No country or culture was immune from its rampant reach. It ravaged the home front as well as the battle-front. Behind closed doors in too many homes, hundreds of thousands of women and children were sexually, physically, and emotionally abused. Under open skies in too many countries, and within sight of the international community, millions of men, women, and children were sent to extermination camps or targeted for ethnic cleansings, genocides, terrorist attacks, or assaults aimed at purging or punishing racial or religious differences. Commenting on the gruesomeness and overt craze of the major characters that came to play during this period, R. Stone adds:

Adolf Hitler did not single-handedly cause World War II, but its strategic contours and of dimensions were shaped by his obsessions. He was the embodiment of Yeats' line "the worst are full of passionate intensity." A marginal man cast up from the chaos of the old ruined empires, he was the demonic second coming of Napoleon, a conscienceless worshipper of possibility. To a militarily humiliated and economically depressed nation, Hitler offered a cheap elitism based on crank notions of race (an exaggeration of theories that were, in fact, widely held even among academics), and a vision of life itself as war: a Darwinian struggle between the superior "Aryans" and their genetic inferiors (particularly Jews and Slavs). Invoking a pseudo-historical image of the Germans as Nordic berserkers, the Fuhrer transformed his orderly, sober countrymen into dedicated agents of genocide.<sup>40</sup>

Many millions more were slaughtered in two world wars and the hundreds of "small" wars that riddled the century. Did this gruesome effect minimize or stop war or production of deadly weapons? No way! Humans seem defiant as ever as more and more of nuclear warheads and their production continue to proliferate. Today, most governments who are not even able to take care of their *poverty-stricken masses* mischievously wish to be remembered by their possession of nuclear,

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<sup>40</sup> Robert Stone, "Total War Global: Conflict as a way of Life" *Our Times: The Illustrated History of the 20th Century*, p. 288.

chemical, biological, and other weapons with which to threaten the world with mass annihilation.

The culture of war and violence also pervaded global economic structures. The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw unprecedented growth in capital and international money flows, but this new wealth and its benefits accrued primarily to elites and a few powerful countries, while vast numbers of men, women, and children remained mired in abject poverty without power of decision- making to effect changes in their socio-economic structures.<sup>41</sup>

The pathology of violence was also turned against the Earth, as human beings on every continent wreaked an uncalculated damage on ecosystems, as thousands of plants and animal species are exterminated without any idea of the consequences of these actions on the ecosphere. Sustaining this point, a 1991 publication of the International Social Science Council, produced for UNESCO, on "*Human dimensions of global environmental change*", identifies three major categories of global environmental insults:

- The relentless rise in atmospheric carbon dioxide, with the possibility of a resulting *greenhouse effect* and global warming.
- The depletion of the earth's protective ozone layer, probably caused by release into the atmosphere of fluorocarbons and other halocarbons widely used in air-conditioning refrigeration, and aerosol propulsion.
- Acid rain, which carries high levels of oxides of nitrogen and sulfur dioxide from industrial emissions, constitutes a third worldwide environmental problem, slowly devastating rivers and lakes as well as art and architecture.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Witold Rybczynski, "The Ceaseless Machine: The Coming of Mass Production". *Our Times: The Illustrated History of the 20th Century*: p.80

<sup>42</sup> Stephen Jay Gould, "A Wolf at the Door: Environmentalism Becomes an Imperative". *Our Times: The Illustrated History of the 20th Century*: p.513.

These abuses on our planet are capable of mass extinction of species, including humans. It may even remotely spark off antagonisms and strife within and between countries, as the growing earth populations migrate in search for *greener pastures* since the depleted soil, diminishing supplies of clean water, and other vital resources can no longer sustain them. Unfortunately this glaring reality doesn't seem to make any sense to humans as they insist on introducing into the biosphere new technologies and other products that are capable of undermining the earth's capacity to sustain future generations. All these are modern man's excesses in their bid to boost their totalitarian exuberance. At the face of all these, one is perplexed at the kind of *violent legacy* this generation is leaving for future generations.

### **1:6. Morality of War**

Judging from the precarious state of our present day international political scene, one is forced to ask: Is humanity doomed? Are we born for the battlefield? Is there no alternative to this bullet-riddled trapdoor, encaging humanity? What moral merit sustains all this unbridled militarism that has become the modern man's ambition? Why war? Why is man always choosing war instead of the opposite- Peace and harmony of life?

Well, so far it is becoming clearer that War is purely a human reality that sometimes is within man's control and some other times beyond his control. Positively considered, among the strongest (and most common) arguments used to justify particular wars are those which assert that the war is necessary to preserve or achieve "moral justice." According to this position, a terrible situation that is fundamentally offensive to human decency may ensue so precariously that it becomes absolutely necessary that one or more nations act forcefully to end it. Such situations which might provide a rationale for war include:

- Unjust attack by another nation.
- Genocide, indiscriminate homicide, and extreme tyranny.
- Forced mass migrations of the defenseless or the oppressed, just to mention but a few.

Though there are a variety of measures that are not necessarily warlike, which may be utilized to achieve moral justice and end such events, situations may still accrue when nothing is working and only the most extreme steps are left - and that means war. The strength of this argument is in its altruism. Altruism here is associated with defensive wars in which war is tolerated in the light of its intended goal to defend the innocent and establish justice. There is nothing particularly selfish or evil in the desire to fight and die in the effort to protect or save defenseless people who are suffering. In fact, it is from this point of view that the biblical "Commandment war" concept took its root and meaning. The full meaning and implication of

defensive, offensive and other forms of war will be elaborated in the course of this work. Indeed, many of the nations which have used this argument emphasize the value of defending the innocent. As a result, appealing to moral justice as a cause for war also means appealing to some of the most important values in society itself. This argument is sustained only when war is the last resort and when all precautions are taken to keep moral justice genuine. This is because genuine pursuit of moral justice can only be accomplished through moral and just means, and that entails measures other than war or anything else which would result in the death of innocents.

So if war is justly ineluctable in one situation and unjust and unnecessary in another, the question becomes how much of the blame can be attributed to man and how much can be apportioned to the other forces that are not under his control?

One underlying attitude or disposition to war is the concept of *might is power* which flows from the *survival of the fittest instinct*, which is further, attributed to the aggressive human nature. But the question is, is it actually true that man is a slave to his instincts or pre-dispositions? To grapple with a comprehensive handling of this issue, it is imperative that we delve into a deeper philosophical meaning of this *subtle determinism* which has denied humanity its serenity for a long time now. The theory of determinism is actually the view that all human actions are the effects of earlier events; in other words, all human actions tend to a determined end. In the case of human actions, for instance, many causes may be at work, such as heredity,

environment, psychology or chemistry of the body.<sup>43</sup> In the strict sense of it, this view has some merits to it because from the moment of birth or before every human life begins, it is already largely determined by factors which the person in question has not chosen, yet is already predisposed in one way or another. Yet, such a theory seems to contradict common sense, since basically we are conscious of our volitional abilities. At least we are convinced that our decisions are truly ours especially after prolonged deliberations over alternatives. On the other hand, common sense also makes us look for causal connections in the world around us, so why should there be an exception in the case of human actions? So if we are talking about people and not just puppets (*robots*) or highly complex machines, we must also suppose that there is room for a measure of self-determination in which the people concerned have a share in shaping the raw material of their personalities and of deciding between the alternatives open to them. It follows then that if this theory is strongly adhered to, the implication will be that man is not free to choose his actions (strong determinism) then war becomes a fated fact of the universe, one that humanity has no power to challenge neither can they shirk it. The implication is that man is not responsible for his actions and hence not responsible for war, because he has been predisposed to fight.

There are various opinions under this banner; they include: those who, while accepting war's inevitability, claim that man has the power to minimize its ravages; they consist of sociologists who believe that, though man is a product of his

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<sup>43</sup> William H. Gentz, *The Dictionary of Bible and Religion*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press: 1986) p. 265.

environment, but he also possesses the power to change that environment. Others, who emphasize human volition, claim that war is a product of human choice and hence man is completely responsible for its consequences. But thinkers here spread out into various schools of thought on the nature of choice and responsibility. Considering its nature therefore, war cannot be discussed in isolation of its political implications which involve both the individual citizen and government responsibilities. Such concerns obviously trip into moral obligations (to what extent is the citizen morally responsible for war?), but with regards war's causation, if man is responsible for the actual initiation of war it must be asked on whose authority is war enacted? A further critical question may then arise: Who is the legal authority to declare war? Does that authority have legitimacy? Do those authorities reflect what *'the people'* want or should want? Does the authority inform them of what they want (or should want)? Are the masses easily swayed by the ideas of the élite, or do the élite ultimately pursue what the majority seek? Here, some blame aristocracies for war and others blame the masses for inciting a reluctant aristocracy to fight. Those who thus emphasize war as a product of man's choice bring to the fore his political and ethical nature. These may be divided into three main groupings: those who seek war's causation in man's biology, those that seek it in his culture, and those who seek it in his faculty of reason.

Some believe that war is psychologically instinctual in man, belonging to this segment are those who claim that man is naturally aggressive. Still, some within this school of thought interpret this aggression as a neutral *genetic potentiality* that may

not necessarily be expressed violently but used moderately to keep alert in response to the survival instinct of the person. In any case, this school of thought has recently been critiqued by a team of scientists who have been working on issues of human nature and violent aggression in relation to modern war (for UNESCO). They concluded that:

It is scientifically incorrect to say that war is caused by 'instinct' or any single motivation . . . Modern war involves institutional use of personal characteristics such as obedience, suggestibility, and idealism . . . We conclude that biology does not condemn humanity to war.<sup>44</sup>

Their conclusion not only rejects biological determinism but seem to substantiate the *culturalist's* views which seek to explain war's causation in terms of particular cultural institutions. The proponents of this claim like Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679),<sup>45</sup> believe that war is solely a product of man's culture or societal peculiarity of opinions.

Rationalists (e.g. Plato and Descartes) emphasize the efficacy of man's reasoning,<sup>46</sup> and accordingly believe war to be a product of reason or lack of it. To some this is a lament; if man did not possess reason, he might not seek the advantages he does at war and he would be a more peaceful beast. To others, reason is the means to transcend cultural relative differences and concomitant sources of friction, and its abandonment is the primary cause of war.<sup>47</sup> Proponents of the mutual benefits of universal reason have a long and distinguished lineage reaching back to the Stoics

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<sup>44</sup> "Seville Statement on Violence, Spain, (1986), (in English) (HTML). EDUCATION- Non-Violence Education. UNESCO. [http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=3247&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=3247&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html). Retrieved 2007-03-04.

<sup>45</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651) Chapters 17-31.

<sup>46</sup> E. Anscombe & P. T Geach, *Meditation on first philosophy in Descartes philosophical writings*. (London: Nelson's University paperback: 1975) p. 70

<sup>47</sup> John Locke, *Second Treatise*, (sect. 172).

and echoing throughout the Natural Law philosophies of the medieval and later scholars and jurists. It finds its best advocate in Immanuel Kant and his famous pamphlet on "Perpetual Peace".<sup>48</sup>

Many who explain war's origins in man's abandonment of reason also derive their thoughts from Plato, who argued that "wars and revolutions and battles are due simply and solely to the body and its desires." That is, man's appetite sometimes or perpetually overwhelms his reasoning capacity, which results in moral and political degeneration. Echoes of Plato's theories abound in Western thought, as they made their journey through Platonism to Neo-Platonism, influencing Christian theology through St Augustine and resurfacing in German Idealism. This trend is exemplified in Freud's cogitation on war ("Why War") in which he sees war's origins in the death instinct. Though it may sound as exaggeration to say that, Western thoughts (philosophy) are series of footnotes to Plato, however, no other thinker has been more informative as he.<sup>49</sup>

The problem with focusing on one single aspect of man's nature is that while the explanation of war's causation may be simplified, the simplification ignores cogent explanations put forward by competing theories. For example, an emphasis on man's rationality as the cause of war is bound to ignore deep cultural structures that may perpetuate war in the face of the universal appeal to peace, and similarly may ignore inherited pugnacity in some individuals or even in some groups. In the same

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<sup>48</sup> Immanuel Kant: *Perpetual Peace*. Trans. Mary Campbell Smith. Cf. *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History (Rethinking the Western Tradition)*: (Author), Professor Pauline Kleingeld, Ed.: David L. Colclasure, Trans. (New York, Nov.2006).

<sup>49</sup> Gentz, *The Dictionary of Bible and Religion*. p.823.

way, an emphasis on the biological etiology of war can ignore man's intellectual capacity to control, or his will to go against, his predispositions. In other words, human biology can affect thinking (*what is thought, how, for what duration and intensity*), and can accordingly affect cultural developments, and in turn cultural institutions can affect biological and rational developments (e.g., how strangers are welcomed affects a group's isolation or integration and hence its reproductive gene pool). So no one theory (in actual sense) has the whole answer. The fact remains that we are dealing with a very complex being here. Man is a *microcosm* who unites two worlds (*the spiritual and the material*) to himself. Man is a unitary, integral organism in which the physical, sensory, and rational activities are fused into a single harmonious whole.

The term "person" is unique to Man alone (used in the generic sense). This is not because of his "materiality," because chemicals, plants, and brute animals are material. It is not "life," because plants and brute animals are living. It is not "sentiency," because brute animals are sentient. It is rather because of that attribute of his, which distinguishes him from all these other types of being, and those attributes are "rationality," "intellectuality" and "intentionality".

Boethius (480-524) has given us the following definition of a "person": *naturae rationalis individua substantia -- an individual substance of a rational nature*.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*. (Second and Revised Edition, 1920) Literally translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province. (Online Edition Copyright © 2008) by Kevin Knight.

A "person" is, therefore, an individual, complete, subsistent, rational (intellectual) substance. Consequently, the human Ego, or man in his totality, is a "person." We must make an exact distinction between "personality" in its metaphysical sense and "personality" in a psychological sense. Psychologists, when they use the term, mean the sum-total of human functions and capacities, behavioral traits and attitudes, and this concept is akin to "character." The unity of personality in this psychological sense is a *functional unity*.<sup>51</sup>

Personality in the philosophical or metaphysical sense is the essential mark of man's nature as a rational animal and is never subject to change, because the essential constitution of man's being from the moment of conception to the moment of death remains the same. In other words, man is and remains at all times a *person*, namely, an individual, complete, subsistent, rational substance, irrespective of what happens to the functional unity of his mental states and operations. As a person, man is a substance consisting of two really distinct substantial co-principles, soul and matter. The soul is the *vital principle or substantial form or entelechy* of matter. It is the animating principle and therefore the primary principle (in conjunction with matter) of the vital attributes and activities of vegetancy and sentiency. The soul, however, is spiritual (nonmaterial) in essence and as such the *sole agent of the spiritual activities of intellect and will*. Matter is the principle (in conjunction with the soul) which accounts for all the physical attributes and activities in man's nature. He is therefore, a unique being, *the fusion of spirit and matter compounded*

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<sup>51</sup> Morris, *The Dictionary of Bible and Religion* . p.345

*into a single substance and organism.* He is in all truth a *microcosm*, uniting within his person the essential realities of chemical elements, living plants, sentient animals, and spiritual intelligences.

Man synthesizes the sense data, imagines, remembers, and performs instinctive actions. Man strives for sensuous good, avoids sensuous evil, and experiences various emotions. Man makes judgments, plans and possesses reasoning faculties to execute his will. Man exercises free will and desires spiritual values. It is this rationality and intentionality that qualifies him as a moral being, responsible for the moral quality of his actions as Janssens already pointed out above.<sup>52</sup> So when some rationalists re-echo Plato, by arguing that war and revolutions and battles are due to man's abandonment of reason and overstressing of his selfish desires,<sup>53</sup> they are actually making a vital point. When this occurs, and there is a need to right the wrong consequences resulting from these moral lapses, the following set of questions emerges:

How does he defend himself from an unjust aggressor who has abandoned reason and is bent on inflicting unjust injuries or endangering other people's lives?

Is there any reason to justify this defensive response and must it be done through war?

Is it ever right to wage war and to what extent? Should certain acts of war be permissible?

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<sup>52</sup> Janssens, *Freedom of Conscience and Religious Freedom*, p.55

<sup>53</sup> That is, man's appetite sometimes overwhelms his reasoning capacity, which results in moral degeneration (and consequently war).

Who should be the legitimate authority to declare war? What are the ethical and political implications of war? What are the moral, social and political obligations of every individual to others?

The compelling structure of these moral questions certainly makes it imperative for us to realize that, as pervasive as war may be, it is sometimes a necessary evil that man must deal with, to maintain equilibrium within his existential exigencies. These moral questions therefore make it imperative for us to seek the answers within the auspices of human religion. We will therefore proceed to seek the answer to these questions as we progress in our study of the three Abrahamic faiths as a paradigm.

## CHAPTER II

### HOLY WAR

#### **2:1. Concept of God in the Three Abrahamic Faiths and their Attitude to War**

God and the reality of his ultimate influence on the humanity are practically undeniable. In affirmation to this, William Gentz rightly noted that God (*as an ultimate reality and uncaused cause*) is the object of religious worship for most of the earth's population and is taken to be the supreme reality on which all else depends.<sup>54</sup> Under this conviction, the Hebrew Scripture (OT) made no attempt to prove the existence of God, it considered the reality of God presupposed. For them Gentz says:

God is not so much one who exists as one who confers existence, not so much "He who is" as later theologians were to call God, as "He who lets be," which implies that God is a reality of a different order from all existing things. God is not an existent, but the presupposition of all existence. God transcends the world and may not be included among the beings that make up the world.<sup>55</sup>

Implicit in the above words of Gentz is the fact that God is mysterious and is a transcendent reality that contrasts sharply with the humans and other beings on

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<sup>54</sup> Gentz, *The Dictionary of Bible and Religion*: p. 397.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* p. 398

earth. He is *a numinous reality inspiring awe* and so the prophet Isaiah presents him as saying:

My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways . . . For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways, higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts (Isa. 55:8-9).

God is therefore ineffable. In the words of Lawrence Cunningham, the Hebrew Scriptures presented a *biblical monotheism* with its central conviction that: *there is one God, that this God is good, and (most crucially) that this God is involved in the arena of human history.*<sup>56</sup> Biblical Monotheism therefore is distinguished from henotheism and polytheism.<sup>57</sup> According to him the creation story, (Gen. 1:1-2:4a) provides us with a rather complete vision of what the Bible believes about God. It made three assertions:

- I. God existed before the world and called it into existence by the simple act of utterance. It distinguished the Biblical God from other gods and goddesses of the neighbors of the Hebrews. God is not born out of the chaos, He is not to be confused with the world, nor did God have to struggle with the forces of chaos to create.
- II. God pronounced creation and all creatures as implicitly “good.” Thus the book of Genesis does not present the material universe as evil as certain Oriental myths did, for example, Enuma elish and Ugaritic myths. Genesis portrays the material universe as intrinsically good as opposed to the illusory

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<sup>56</sup> Lawrence Cunningham and John Reich, *Culture and values: a survey of the Western Humanities. (Volume 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.)* (Chicago: Winston Inc., 1990) p.176.

<sup>57</sup> Henotheism is the belief that there may be other gods, although only one is singled out for worship and polytheism is the belief that there are many gods.

world that conceals the true nature of reality thought by religions of Israel's neighbors.

III. Finally, God created human beings as the apex and crown of creation. The material world is a gift from God and they are obliged to care for it and be grateful for it.

IV. There are also the concepts of life-after death, eternity and soteriology.

Cunningham therefore is of the opinion that God among the Hebrews is basically a participatory and a concerned originator and creator of all things. He concluded that:

The precise character of biblical monotheism is its conviction that God creates and sustains the world in general and chose a particular people to be both vehicle and sign of divine presence in the world. The precise character of that relationship can be found in the biblical notion of covenant.<sup>58</sup>

This concept of the Covenant basically distinguished them from the ancient world of idolatry. It defined the relationship between God and his chosen people; it is basically summed up in the biblical passage:

Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation.<sup>59</sup>

As a bilateral pact, this notion of the Covenant makes a demand on both God and the human covenanters. God undertakes to be their God and protector and for Israelites – they are unconditionally bound by the socio-political and religious implications of the *berit* (Covenant) stipulations. It is this notion of Covenant religion and its

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Exod. 19:5-6. Other related passages include: Lev.26:12, Jer. 31:33, Ezek.36:28.

profound impact that gave form to the Hebrew religion and shaped the Judeo-Christian world view.<sup>60</sup>

Even though the Islamic religion emphasizes Mecca and its questionable spiritual backdrop, but when exegetically considered, it is not left out in this Covenant notion of religion since they also trace their origins to the Abrahamic Covenant as well. The Islamic religion may not have been so interested in emphasizing this notion of the Covenant but they share a great number of other values with the Judeo-Christian world view. While defining the cultural background of various religions, Barry B. Powell maintains that:

Christians, Jews, and Muslims believe that there is one God who made the world. He stands outside it, yet dwells in the human heart. His nature is love, and he works for good in the world... God demands of his followers love, faith, and adherence to a strict code of moral behavior, including sexual behavior.<sup>61</sup>

However, a critical reader of the Hebrew Scriptures will be a bit uneasy with the frequent occurrence of the Hebrew word *milḥamah* (מלחמה -war). Observing that the word *milḥamah*-מלחמה occurred more than three hundred times in the Old Testament, Peter Craigie is disturbed about the preponderance of such a phenomenon<sup>62</sup> in such a library which is not primarily a history source but is believed to be a part of God's revelation to mankind. Succinctly stated, the problem lies in the fact that one of the dominant representations of God in the Old Testament is that of a *warrior*. According to him this is not easily reconcilable with the conventional concept of God as *loving and self giving*. Peter Craigie therefore

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<sup>60</sup> Lawrence Cunningham and John Reich, *Culture and values: a survey of the Western Humanities*: (Volume 1. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) p.176.

<sup>61</sup> Powell, Barry B., *Classical Myth*: (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) Trans. Herbert M. Howe: (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc: 1998) p.46.

<sup>62</sup> *Milhamah* is a Hebrew word that is often used in association with the various facets of War in Hebrew language.

identified the presence of warfare in the Old Testament as a problem that has constituted a source of criticism to Hebrew Scriptures as well as to its Christian offshoot, the New Testament.<sup>63</sup>

Indeed, Craigie is not alone as regards this critique, especially in our time when many wars, altercations, acts of injustice, bloodshed and many horrendous and heinous occurrences like war crimes and other such wicked acts are committed and often backed up with the name of God. With the escalation of all these actions, the name "God" is increasingly becoming questionable in our secular modern society, as already pointed out in his *Eclipse of God*, by Martin Buber.<sup>64</sup>

This unhealthy *desacralization* of the divine by modern man, therefore, necessitates a better understanding of the actual meaning of divine involvement or intervention in human affairs, especially in act of warfare. This quest to comprehend or grasp better is what motivated this study, especially with a particular focus on the three Abrahamic faiths which claim that their attitudes to war are basically in response to God's commands and will.

For the sake of clarity, as we investigate the complexities of these attitudes, it will be worthwhile to classify them under two basic categories:

**Holy War Theory:** The conviction that God wants, or commands his followers to make war with those who do not believe in the religion and those who pose a threat

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<sup>63</sup> Peter Craigie, *The problem of war in the Old Testament*. (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1978) p. 9-11.

<sup>64</sup> Martin Buber, *The Eclipse of God: Studies in the Relation between Religion and Philosophy*. (Intro.) Robert M. Seltzer (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1988)p.7.

to adherents of such faith. Strictly speaking Islamic religion is classified under this theory. One major characteristic of this theory is the uncompromising ethical values of certain Muslim sects and their unwavering commitment to their convictions. These people see the holy war as a battle of good against evil that requires total commitment, even in the face of certain defeat, in which case death is counted as a sign of faithfulness. Judaism and Christianity could be enlisted under this category; since they have all evolved from one stage to another in their bid to articulate the biblical message to mankind. This is made evident in history through the Israelite encounter with their neighbors in the ancient near East where God is portrayed as *Warrior God* and the European Christian encounter with the Middle Eastern Muslim during the middle ages in a battle for the Holy Land (the Crusades). In terms of killing, this theory is the pacifist's polar opposite.

**Just War Theory:** Proposes that some wars are necessary because they are perceived to be in the interest of common good; peace and justice therefore must be attained according to the just rules. It sometimes allows the use of force as morally acceptable, but only in rare situations that meet strict requirements which will be succinctly explained within the course of this work. Traditional Christianity is the proponent of this theory.

## 2:2. Holy War Theory

The simple term *Holy War* designates and includes any war fought by divine command or for primarily religious purpose. A religious war is a war caused by religious differences; this ensues when two rival, religiously motivated groups clash violently. The major motif for this altercation is usually to establish supremacy, primacy or simply just to spread the faith in question. This concept is variously found in the Bible and has played a role in many religions. The Crusades and Reconquista during the middle ages and Renaissance are Europe's best-known examples. Saint Augustine is credited as being the first to detail a *Just War* theory within Christianity, whereby war is justifiable on religious grounds. Saint Thomas Aquinas elaborated on these criteria and his writings influenced the Roman Catholic Church's stance on the issue at stake. The Muslim concept of *jihad* stems from the Arabic root word J-H-D, which means "strive." Other words derived from this root include "effort," "labor," and "fatigue." Essentially jihad is an effort to strive, commit and adhere to one's faith even though experientially, it has acquired the nature of a "*struggle*" and have become combative in the recent times. It was set down in the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> century by Muhammad's lieutenants as a way of perpetuating the legacy of the Islamic religion as founded by Muhammad.

It is a reality that religion has achieved a great deal of harmony, spiritual guidance and peace among men but misuse of its principles has also been responsible for some of the worst known human belligerency. However, it must be noted that not

all wars fought in the name of religion are called religious wars. Sometimes human aggression and political aspirations disguised under a misconstrued view of divine revelation are made manifest in the form of fanaticism that causes the so-called religious wars. As a result of this, organized religion has sometimes been a tool of the state, used to manipulate people toward blind obedience to arbitrary power mongering.

This was one of the reasons why thinkers who followed Karl Marx, Stalin and other fathers of communism, were conspicuously anti-religion (in the 20<sup>th</sup> century). One of the most frequently quoted statements of Karl Marx is that: "Religion is the sign of the oppressed creatures, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions...It is the *opium of the people*". The most striking phrase "*religion is the opiate of the masses*", is translated from its German original, *Die religion ... ist das Opium des Volkes* and is often referred to as: *religion is the opium of the people*.<sup>65</sup>

This statement is intended towards a call for the abolition of religion which he (Marx) conceived as: *illusory happiness of the people*. It was his call on the people to give up illusions and a call to action and real happiness which comes to fulfillment through human work. The criticism of religion is, therefore, for him the beginning of man's self-emancipation from the illusory.

Sometimes also unbridled political ambitions are neatly shrouded in religious language by clever politicians, in order to achieve their ulterior gains. Some

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65 The Collected Works of Karl Marx: vol. 3. "Introduction to A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right" (New York: 1976). Opium was an important medicine. It was used as a painkiller or sedative, but also for a wide range of ailments. These quotes originate from Karl Marx's 1843 work "Contribution to Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right" and released in his journal, *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher in 1844*. See also: McKinnon, Andrew. M., *Reading 'Opium of the People' Expression, Protest and the Dialectics of Religion*" in *Critical Sociology*, vol. 31, no. 1-2.

examples of these ugly situations abound in most Muslim states as well as Christian states. To mention but an instance: The “troubles” in Northern Ireland are frequently seen as a conflict between Catholics and Protestants, but the more fundamental cause is the attachment or the political affiliations of the citizens of Northern Ireland to either the Republic of Ireland or the United Kingdom. As the native Irish were mostly Catholics, and the later English-sponsored immigrants were mainly Protestant, their different orientations and colonialist intents, perhaps, might have been part of the reason they have different views but religious differences were not the overriding cause of the conflict. The truth is that these religious affiliations unfortunately became an identifying emblem for the two political groups especially as the situation degenerated to the use of the churches as the organizing grounds for the various groups.

### **2:3. Holy War in Judaism-(God: The Divine Warrior)**

As a religion Judaism was born in a slave rebellion and was established through a gradual process of the conquest of the people who occupied what was to become the ancient nation of Israel. Thus, one dimension of Judaism especially reflected in many of its Scriptures, justified war and various battles as a way of fulfilling the mandate that Yahweh had given them to establish their own land. In many of these passages God is defined as a warrior and as one who directs battles and insures victory. Yet there is another strand in Judaism in which the ideal of peace is presented. Many of these passages are found in the writings of prophets in which there is a looking forward to the messianic age when all of God's promises will be fulfilled and an age of peace will be established.<sup>66</sup>

With this seeming conclusive statement by Thomas A. Shannon, a reflection on a comprehensive appraisal of old Israelite attitude to war and peace could be

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<sup>66</sup> Thomas A. Shannon, What Are They Saying About Peace and War? (New York/Ramsey: Paulist Press) p.6.

approached to meet the objective of this work. As we have already mentioned briefly, to understand the mindset of the Israelites at this period, one needs to bear in mind that their goal was to reclaim a land promised to patriarchs (which for them) was occupied illegally by the Canaanites and other nations while they were still under enslavement in Egypt. The meaning of this way of conceiving God's involvement in their history, the source of the terms in use and their implications will be our preoccupation in this section of the work. But just before this analysis, let us consider a more explanatory contribution to these issues. A phenomenological view of Xavier Léon Dufour probed into the socio-political and religious background that produced the above -mentioned attitude of Israelites. According to him:

Israel has the experience of a life of combats in which their national dynamism is placed at the service of religious causes. They had offensive wars with Sihon and Og ,(Num. 21, 21 -35, Deut 2,26-3,17) then the conquest of Canaan by Joshua(Josh. 6-12) defensive wars against Midian(Num. 31) and against the oppressors of the period of Judges (Judg 3-12) the war of national liberation with Saul and David (1 Sam 11-17;28-30, 2 Sam 5; 8;10). In this totality of events, Israel appears as the heralds of God on earth; its king is God's lieutenant in history. The ardor of (their) faith required military prowess which sustained the certitude of divine help and hope of a victory.<sup>67</sup>

Léon Dufour refers to the concept or the expression *Milhemet Mitzvah* (Hebrew: *מלחמת מצווה* "commandment war") which refers to a war that is both obligatory for all Jews and limited within the borders of the land of Israel. The geographical limits of Israel, and therefore of this religious war, are detailed in the *Tanakh* (the Hebrew Bible), especially Numbers 34:1-15 and Ezekiel 47:13-20. In other words, violence and war were limited to that particular point in the history of the people of God,

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<sup>67</sup>Xavier Léon, Dufour. *Dictionary Biblical Theology*: (San Francisco: Harper)p. 640.

particularly from the Exodus period to the monarchy<sup>68</sup>. God is often seen as the one who leads the Hebrews in battle, protects them from their enemies, and makes them victorious over other armies.<sup>69</sup> The metaphor of warrior carried multifaceted connotations for a people who knew they were smaller and weaker than the nations which surrounded them. It also enabled them to express their conviction about God's involvement in their lives and his desire for their growth and development. This metaphor provided the people with a sense of security; they had a God who would protect them even in the face of overwhelming obstacles. It was also a call to faith and to trust in the mighty God who must be obeyed and worshiped. The warrior God-concept was highly significant during long periods of Israel's understanding of its faith.<sup>70</sup>

Substantiating the above view, Peter Craigie observed that:

While war was not the only method used to settle (in) the Promised Land, it is evident that without the use of force the state of Israel would not have come into existence.<sup>71</sup>

John A. Wood explained Craigie's observation to be due to this fact that:

Their location in the strategic Syro-Palestinian corridor guaranteed that they would be engaged in constant warfare to secure the land and to protect themselves from the hegemony of the Egyptians and Mesopotamian kingdoms.<sup>72</sup>

This affirmation of Wood's implies that Israel was the *buffer zone*, a small but very significant nation in between the then world-powers. While observing how warfare

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<sup>68</sup> Asher, Finkel. Oral Communications (Class Note, 2009). Rabbi Asher Finkel is currently a professor attached to the Department of Jewish-Christian Studies at Seton Hall University South Orange, New Jersey.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Deut. 1:30; 20:4; Josh. 2:24; Judg. 3:28.

<sup>70</sup> The U.S.A National Conference of Catholic Bishops: *The Challenge of peace: God's Promise and Our Response (A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace) May 1983*, p.10.

<sup>71</sup> Peter C. Craigie, "War, Idea of," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia IV*, (ed.) G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988)p. 1019.

<sup>72</sup> John A Wood, *Perspectives on War in the Bible*: (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1998) p.9

was central to Israel's identity, John L. McKenzie Observed that not only that war was endemic and a plundering event in the Ancient Near East, but it "*was a normal state in the ancient world of the Near East*".<sup>73</sup> So then, inserted in this framework and milieu, Israel's history couldn't have been different as they transferred and translated these experiences into their religious "domain" or realities. The sources of this religious acculturation will be discussed below. It is not therefore surprising that there are elements of cruelty (*herem*), and edifying events making up their history.<sup>74</sup>

Israel's beginning, as becoming a nation people was actually consolidated by their encounter with Pharaoh, in Egypt and at the Sea of Reeds, where YHWH is declared to be *a man of war* (איש מלחמה -Ex. 15:3). In other words, this was the beginning of their consciousness of the Lord as a liberating God who is worthy enough to be entrusted with their life and affairs of the nation.<sup>75</sup> That event was only a preamble that prepared the stage for the greater encounter; the Sinaitic event of Exodus 19:5ff, where God made a more consolidated pact with them (*the berit*). This *berit*(ברית) is therefore the most crucial event of their history.<sup>76</sup> The peculiarity of this encounter is that, it was not just a treaty but is a founding event. It distinguished the people of Israel as a special possession (אם סגולה *am segullah*) a kingdom of

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<sup>73</sup> Gentz. *Dictionary of the Bible*. p.919.

<sup>74</sup> Dufour, *A Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. p.640.

<sup>75</sup> The U.S.A National Conference of Catholic Bishops: *The Challenge of peace: God's Promise and Our Response (A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace) May 1983*, p.10.

<sup>76</sup> Covenant, means a solemn contract, oath, or bond, is the customary word used to translate the Hebrew word *berit* (ברית), as it is used in the Hebrew Bible, "berit" is very important for us to understand Israelite history properly. In theology and Biblical studies, the word "berit-covenant" principally refers to solemn agreements made between God and the Israelites in the Hebrew Bible, as well as to the New Covenant, which Christians consider to be the final fulfillment of the "*berit olam*". The phrase "*berit olam*" refers to the primordial covenant between God and Abraham that perpetuated its effect on all his descendants (Jews Christians and Muslims).

priests (Exod. 19:5-6), a chosen race, a people set apart for the Lord, a holy nation (גוי קדוש). Commenting on the profundity of this single event, Marc Angel wrote: *"The eternal nature of God's covenant with Israel and its irreversibility is a fundamental aspect of Judaism."*<sup>77</sup>

Angel refers to the fact that God and his people the Israelites, are bound by a relationship of mutuality that is perhaps the most profound and far-reaching revelation ever known in human history. Obedience to the stipulations of the Sinai Covenant was perceived by the prophets as necessary for the continued existence of Israel on its land. Cunningham testified to this while stressing on the specific functions of the Israelite prophets. He puts it thus:

In Hebrew religion the prophet was not primarily concerned with the future (prophet and seer are thus not the same thing) even though the prophets do speak of a coming of peace and justice. The main prophetic task was to call people back to the observance of the covenant and to warn them about the ways in which they failed that covenant.<sup>78</sup>

The prophets actually enlivened and accentuated the relationship with emotional overtones such as:

Israel is the flock and God is the shepherd, Israel is the vine and Yahweh the vinedresser, Israel is the son and Yahweh is the father, Israel is the spouse and Yahweh is the bridegroom.<sup>79</sup>

These images made Sinaitic covenant more comprehensive, as Israel's encounter with God's loving -kindness *hesed*-חסד, naturally demands and implies a reciprocation thereby giving the word its human dimensional meaning. This relationship between the people and God was grounded in and expressed by a

<sup>77</sup> Marc Angel, "Covenant" A Dictionary of the Jewish-Christian dialogue [expanded edition] Ed. Leon klenicki and Geoffrey Wigoder (Mahwah :Paulist Press, 1995)p. 34.

<sup>78</sup> Cunningham, Culture And Value. p.17.

<sup>79</sup> Dufour, Dictionary of Biblical Theology: p.95

covenantal union. The covenant bound the people to God in fidelity and obedience; God was also committed in the covenant, to be present with the people, to save them, to lead them to freedom. Peace (wholesomeness) is therefore, a special characteristic, result and goal of this covenant. The covenant therefore, serves as a prevalent image of this loving relationship. So with this came confidence in God's acts of loving kindness (*G'milut Chasadim* גמלורת חסדים ) and his liberating activities especially his *impressive* involvement in the act of settling his chosen race in an already tumultuous environment of the Ancient Near East. This quality of God spurred Israelites into distinguishing their God from other deities around them. This process of discernment resulted in their use of superlative terms which may not have been strange to their environment but evoked a deep sense of reverence for God among them. The following passages expressed these facts more profoundly:

The LORD goes forth like a soldier, like a warrior he stirs up his fury; he cries out, he shouts aloud, he shows himself mighty against his foes [Isa. 42:13].

The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing [Zeph. 3:17].

Who is the King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle [Ps. 24:8].

While utilizing Richard Nysse's view point, Wood, observed that:

The theme of God as a warrior is evident in the early events of Israel's history, particularly during the exodus and post-exodus traditions. It is also used in creation texts in hymnal material, especially regarding the fighting against mythological creatures. More, it is even present in the traditions of the exile and restoration, and eventually in apocalyptic texts.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>John Wood was repeating Richard Nysse's view on God as a divine warrior as he wrote in his essay "Yahweh Is a Warrior" (1987)p. 193.

The question is why are such names like, *warrior God*, so pervasive and ubiquitous in Israelite history?<sup>81</sup> The answer rests on the fact that within those words one finds the meaning and the propelling force that generated the Israelite history; such words portrays profoundly Israel's belief in God's immanent transcendence. For them he is a being that is available to everyone in a free and personal way yet far away, by the virtue of his nature as *the other*, or his "concealment".<sup>82</sup>

However as time passed by, the word *Sabaoth* (צבאות-first used in 1Samuel 1, 3) began to be frequently associated with YHWH. The meaning of *Sabaoth* perhaps refers to the armies of Israel; but more likely to the world of the heavens and of the stars. For the ancient, this was a world of living beings and for the pagan religions; a world of gods. For Israel, the one God has control and command over all the powers of the universe and the Israelites emphasized the causative sense of the name YHWH which they understood as he who gives them existence. Another view point holds that it is also possible that *Sabaoth* is a singular title, with an ending analogous to that of Accadian words in *atu* which depicts a "function" thus: *YHWH*. So it was to emphasize the glory and majesty (*kabod* כבוד ) which God commands that made the Jews ceased to pronounce the name *YHWH* frequently, it was out of a more formalistic respect that they use *Adonai* (אֲדֹנָי -*the Lord*) instead. However, it must be noted that the more remote reason for this semantic transformation was to avoid pagan profanations and abuse on the use of the name, even though they continued

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<sup>81</sup> P. C. Craigie, "Yahweh is a Man of War," *Scottish Journal of Theology*: Vol. 22: (1969) p.183-188.

<sup>82</sup> The Transcendent & Immanent nature of God: God is both far and near, self effacing yet participates fully actively in human activities out of love. See also, Peter Craigie, *Problem of War in the Old Testament*: p.39

to write the four consonants of the sacred tetragram *YHWH*. As part of this respect, and the fact that *YHWH* represents 72 variants in Hebrew pronunciations, אֲדֹנָי (Adonai-*the Lord*) is pronounced instead of *YHWH*<sup>83</sup>.

The most striking thing is that, often times the rendering of this word “*YHWH*” along with its associate “*Sabaoth*” often comes with a military under-tone. Moses refers to *YHWH* as “*YHWH is my banner (of war –Exod. 17:15)*. More common is the title *YHWH Sabaoth-Lord of Hosts*. Whether it is rendered *YHWH, the Great Soldier* or *YHWH of the Armies*, its military impact is graphic. *YHWH* is therefore designated as commander of both the heavenly armies and Israel’s earthly armies. This is made explicit and concretized in the biblical passage:

And Moses built an altar and named it Adonai-nissi. He said, “It means, ‘Hand upon the throne of the Lord!’ The Lord will be at war with Amalek throughout the ages.”<sup>84</sup>

This not only reveals the mind-set of Moses and his kinsmen but also is a declaration of a war where *YHWH* is directly involved. This belief that God was actively involved in warfare (Num. 21:14; 1 Sam. 17:47; 18:17; 25:28.13), is what categorizes Israel’s attitude to warfare as holy war. It played a fundamental role not only in their religious mind-set but also in their military experience and lies in the very center of their theological convictions. In fact, God’s name *YHWH*- (conventionally vocalized Yahweh) initially formed part of the formula that identified the deity as he who creates the heavenly armies. Thus the hymn of Moses (Exod. 15:3), refer to God as: אֲדֹנָי אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה (The Lord is a man of war).

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<sup>83</sup> Dufour, *Dictionary of Biblical Theology*: p. 690.

<sup>84</sup> See Exod.17:15.

However, at the center of these statements and beliefs concerning God as Warrior, is the conviction that God does indeed reveal himself through the process of human history and the natural phenomena visible in that history. It is in the context of this affirmation that the Hebrew writers saw God at work also when His people Israel were at war.<sup>85</sup> From this point of view Israel's military history was also a recollection of one aspect of God's activity within the realm of human history, as it bears witness to numerous divine-human encounters. However, it was their conviction that God was fighting alongside with them; to that effect Israel's wars were God's wars.

#### **a) The divine warrior**

This section will explore the divine participation in what seems to be purely human warfare and the role of mortal soldiers in Holy War. We will also investigate specific issues that arise when the concept of God as the *Divine Warrior* is applied to activities and attitudes of human history, in both Biblical and post-Biblical periods. It will also differentiate between holy war and other types of combats; the role of human armies in holy war and the role of the "military hero" in such battles. In other words, our goal here is to achieve maximum comprehension of the Israelite attitude regarding warfare.

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<sup>85</sup> Peter Craigie: Problem Of War in Old Testament: p.39

Since these events were mainly pre-historical, it will also lead us into exploring the ways in which biblical concepts (like Divine Warrior) were carried over from their original mythical patterns and further developed and used in the faith communities of the Hebrews and retained in the Biblical faith or tradition.

Perhaps an appeal to the critical insights of scholars like Mircea Eliade and Paul Ricoeur may be of great help for us to understand the origins and the source of some terms the Israelites employed to express God's involvement in their history. Describing the crucial role of myth or mythical patterns, Eliade maintains that:

It is always the recital of a creation; it tells how something was accomplished and began to be. It is for this reason that myth is bound up with ontology; it speaks only of realities, of what really happened, of what was fully manifested.<sup>86</sup>

Eliade's synthesis of the myth as a story that transcends reasoning tends to capture living reality as it started in the primordial times. This point is expressed in more philosophical terms by Paul Ricoeur when he said that "*behind speculation and beneath gnosis and anti-Gnostic construction, we find myths.*"<sup>87</sup>

Both thinkers imply one clear fact about myths; they demonstrate the truth of life of a people. Myths play a critical role in how a culture constructs its sense of time. It contrasts history (which concerns recent, well-documented events) with its preoccupation with poetic epics and narrative legends. A myth, however, is generally about a story that took place in an imagined, remote period; stories of timeless past which is often concerned with the origins of humans, animals, and the

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<sup>86</sup> Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religions*. Trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: A Harvest/HBI Book, 1959) p. 95.

<sup>87</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969) p. 5.

supernatural. With these definitions in mind, let us now, focus on a mythic pattern that appears to underlie the numerous references to the figure of a *divine warrior* in the Biblical literature, as a way forward. The mythic quality of this pattern should give us a better understanding of the issue at stake, especially when we consider the contentions of scholars like Ben Ollenburger,<sup>88</sup> who maintains that the use of the term "*YHWH as Warrior*" is not limited to Israel alone. This opinion suggests that the use of the term might have evolved as a kind of religious acculturation to Israel. In her very crucial contribution to this view, Susan Niditch wrote:

The motif of the "post-victory banquet" is a common one in the ancient Near East and indeed in much epic literature that deals with warriors, battle, and the heroes' victory. After the ritual preparation for war, the fashioning and bestowing of special weapons, the battle, and the victory, comes a procession, often to a palace- or house-building, which in ancient Near Eastern creation texts is synonymous with the defeat; of chaos and the creation of the world, and then a celebration banquet in the palace.<sup>89</sup>

According to her, Exodus 14 and 15 provide images of God's battle with Egypt, the victory, and the people's enthronement; chapters 20-23 outline the law that shapes a world-order; and 24:9-14 briefly alludes to a banquet held in *YHWH's* heavenly palace for Moses and the elders of the people. She further substantiated her view by drawing more analogies from the Mesopotamian *Enuma elish* where the young god *Marduk* defeats and kills *Tiamat*, the mother of the gods perceived as the watery chaos of Sea; he constructs the world from her carcass, ordering it and building Babylon, the dwelling of the gods, and then:

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<sup>88</sup> Ben Ollenburger: *Zion the City of the Great King: A Theological Symbol of the Jerusalem Cult*. (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987) p. 101.

<sup>89</sup> Susan Niditch, *War in the Hebrew Bible: a study in the ethics of violence*. p.38.

He had the gods, his fathers, sit down to a banquet. "Here is Babylon, your favorite dwelling place. Make music in [its] place (and) be seated on its square." When the great gods had sat down, the beer jug they set on, while they were seated at the banquet.<sup>90</sup>

Niditch also noted a similar post-victory motif in the Canaanite Ugaritic epic of Baal and Anat, where Baal's victory over Yam (Prince River, a male personification of watery chaos) was heavily celebrated with a feast.<sup>91</sup> At a glance, Niditch may be criticized as doing more of a comparative study between these myths and the biblical literature. But since no language and culture is completely indifferent to each other (eclectics), it is possible that such *acculturation* might have taken place. Moreover to buttress this point more profoundly, many scholars have noted some other striking parallels of the Old Testament understanding of war found in the texts from Ugarit, Mari, Egypt, Assyria, Moab and the vicinities of Israel. In the more recent times, some of these works include the findings of the Harvard University professor, Frank Moore Cross and a number of his students. From the backdrop of contemporary scholars, Cross discerned a mythic pattern that underlies both Canaanite and Biblical texts dealing with the figure of the Divine Warrior. Few examples of his work as expounded by Leonard Greenspoon include<sup>92</sup>:

Canaanite Ugarit Texts	Biblical Transmutations
Behold, thy enemy, O Baal, Behold, thy enemy thou shall smite Behold, thou shall smite thy foes.	There is none like the God O Jeshurun, who rides the heavens mightily, who gloriously rides the clouds. Before you he smashed the foe (Deuteronomy 33:26f).
Baal gives forth his holy voice, Baal repeats the utterance of his lips; his holy voice shatters the earth. At his roar the mountains quake, the high places	The God of the Glory thunders, The voice of Yahweh is on the Waters, Yahweh is upon the deep Waters. The voice of Yahweh is mighty, the voice of

<sup>90</sup> Heidel Alexander, *The Babylonian Genesis*. Trans. A. Heidel (Chicago/London: University of Chicago) p.71-75.

<sup>91</sup> cf. Coogan Michael David. 1978. *Stories from Ancient Canaan*. Philadelphia: Westminster. p.104.

<sup>92</sup> Leonard Greenspoon, "The Warrior God, or God, the Divine Warrior?" *Westminster Theological Journal* 44 (1982) p 290-307. See also: Frank M. Cross, "The Divine Warrior," in *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973: p.91ff.

of the earth shake.	Yahweh is majestic, The voice of Yahweh splinters the cedars; Yahweh splinters the cedars of Lebanon. (Psalm 29: 2ff).
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*Diagram 1 of 1*

*This diagram displays Leonard Greenspoons' supposed original sources of the biblical passages on quote.*

It was therefore Greenspoon's conviction that, even in comparism like these, one could observe not only similarities but also use of common concepts even though they may carry different imports for various groups. So such usages of shared motifs, epithets, and so forth, may have been the source of concepts like *Divine Warrior* which Israelites adapted to their description of God. In other words, the various hagiographers of the Hebrew Bible may have carefully appropriated and diffused some supercharged language and phrases of their Canaanite neighbors in portrayals of their monotheistic God. Barry B. Powell substantiated this point in his study of the classical myths and so he concluded;

From different sources Hebrew scholars have created a text suitable to the doctrinal needs of a monotheistic religion. The Hebrew account differs from the Mesopotamian in its notion of a single transcendent God, with no rivals, who stands before and beyond the creation, but is similar to the Mesopotamian myth in its picture of a universe beginning in a watery mass that is split into an "above" and a "below," heaven and earth.<sup>93</sup>

So in this way, the Hebrew writers drew real differences to distinguish God from the so-called deities with whom he seemed to share a number of attributes and characteristics. However, in spite of all these similarities there are still other stunning ideological differences in the motif of the biblical hagiographers that must

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<sup>93</sup> Barry, B. Powell. *Classical Myth*: Translations of ancient texts by Herbert M. Howe – 2nd : Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.p.105.

not be ignored. E. A. Speiser noted, to that effect that, biblical writers remained generally monotheistic while the Ancient Near Eastern epic are generally *mythopoetic* and polytheistic.<sup>94</sup>

Having probed into the possible sources and origin of the use of this term *warrior God* (Ex 15:3), let us turn to the questions that bothered us at the beginning of this section. That is the issue of the preponderance of this term-*Warrior God*-in the Hebrew Scriptures and the implication of God's involvement in human acts of war.

First, it must be pointed out that it is a kind of reductionism to limit the reality of the being of God to a mere *man of war or a fighting being*. To avoid misunderstanding of the term as such, Craigie insisted that to call God a *warrior* is to use anthropomorphic language, a language of his immanence. It is like the Talmud puts it: "*We describe God by terms borrowed from his creation, in order to make him intelligible to the human ear.*"<sup>95</sup> Literarily understood, it is so impoverished and limited but theologically it points to a truth and insight about God which is greater than just comparing God with human warriors. It is a language portraying the immanence of God. The Israelites used it to portray the fact that God's participation in their mundane matters was his self-revelation to them. Peter Craigie expressed this in a unique way:

The primary affirmation concerning God in the Old Testament is that although he is transcendent, the living experience of the immanent God is to be found within the fabric of

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<sup>94</sup> E. A. Speiser, *The Anchor Bible: Genesis* (Doubleday, New York, 1994) p.10. See also Isaiah 51; 9-10 .

<sup>95</sup> Isador Epstein, *Judaism: A Historical Presentation* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1959), p. 137.

human history. The experience of God in human existence can only be expressed in human terms, for otherwise God (who is ultimately transcendent) could not be known at all.<sup>96</sup>

Craigie further explained the meaning of this self-revelation to be understood not necessarily as miraculous but that “God determined in some sense, the outcome of human events by participating through the *normal forms* of human activity.”<sup>97</sup> A critical look on this statement recalls the fulfillment of the Sinaitic covenant on God’s part. God fulfills his promise to be their God, which implies his ever presence, concern and involvement even in their very human activities. However God’s self-revelation or his participation in human history has a lot of implications that keeps one wondering whether war is among the activities of man with which God should get involved.

According to Craigie, the primary aim or purpose for which God participates in human history is man’s salvation. Though he described war as “*a sinful human activity, revealing man’s inhumanity to his fellow man*”, he still maintained that to describe God as a *warrior*, is to say that God participates in human history, through sinful human beings, and through what have become the “normal” form of human activities. In other words, his active participation in human history is through employing human agents through whom he wishes to accomplish his aim of bringing salvation to man. In his very words, Craigie wrote: “*God employs, for his*

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<sup>96</sup> Peter Craigie, *Problem Of War in Old Testament*: p.39.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.* p.40.

*purpose of bringing salvation to the world, the very human beings who need salvation.*<sup>98</sup>

So far Craigie's argument sounds as if God was using an evil means to achieve a good end. Actually his point is that the conception of God as Warrior does not legitimize warfare, nor does it mean that a noble end has somehow justified war as a means to that end. It rather portrayed God as the absolute authority who participates actively in human *normal* activities for the purposes of both redemption and judgment. This positive aim of his involvement is made evident on some occasions when he exercised his sovereignty in war by using Israel to punish evil men and nations or when he metes out punishment on Israel through the use of the forces of other foreign nations, which we will discuss in detail below.

### **b) Distinctiveness of the Israelite war motifs from their neighbors**

A cursory look at the Israelite history reveals that the evidence of eclecticism is glaring and the cultural similarities with its neighbors abound; however some scholars still insist that the Israelite war mind-set or mentality exhibited some distinctiveness that cannot be ignored. Israel, for instance, differed from their neighbors especially when it comes to unnecessary glorifying of military exploits. J. Carter Swann observed that:

The Hebrew calendar contains no memory of men of war, and that whereas foreign kings set up monuments to celebrate their victories, the monuments of the Old Testament do not

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid. p.40

mark the places where battles were fought; they do not show generals astride prancing steeds; they do not represent beaten enemies bowing in submission.<sup>99</sup>

In the same line of thought Walter Zimmerli, states that: “*The Old Testament, whose stories are full of men of war, never developed any kind of hero worship.*”<sup>100</sup> Such is also the opinion of Edward Ryan; while reflecting on the rejection of military options by the early Christians, he opined that the Jews never formed a militaristic nation as those of the Greek/Spartan model nor did they give undue prominence to military training. They did not maintain large standing armies for the purpose of conquest, although their political leaders clearly believed that military force was necessary for resistance.<sup>101</sup> In other words, the major difference lies in their concept of war as *YHWH war*: they and their kings are simply at the service of *YHWH, the man of war and the Warrior*. Millard Lind presented this point clearly when he asserts that *YHWH* fought for Israel and not through them or through their instrumentality.<sup>102</sup> For him, this conviction (that Israel was passive and a total observer of *YHWH*’s deeds at war) is evident throughout the Bible, he insisted on a denial of the efficacy of human strength in the combats of Israel against insurgents.

Closely connected to the above difference is the glaring contrast in the Israelite war methods which was designed to be far more merciful as compared with their neighbors. Walter Eichrodt points this out especially in reference to the brutality and abuse of the opponents by their neighbors, to this effect he wrote:

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<sup>99</sup> J. Carter Swaim, *War, Peace, and the Bible*: (New York: Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1983) p.15.

<sup>100</sup> Walter Zimmerli, *Old Testament Theology in Outline*, Trans. David E. Green (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1978)p.61.

<sup>101</sup> Edward A. Ryan, S. J., “The Rejection of Military Service by the Early Christians”: *Theological Studies* 13 (1952)p. 3.

<sup>102</sup> Millard Lind, “Perspectives on War and Peace in the Hebrew Scriptures, Monotheism, Power, Justice”: *Collected Old Testament Essays* (Elkhart, IN: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1990) p. 171.

Slaughter(ing) out of sheer lust for blood, which often features so repulsively in the Assyrian inscriptions, is unknown. Similarly there is nowhere any mention of the raping of women by Israelite warriors, and fruit trees were protected by the laws of war (Deut. 20:19f.)<sup>103</sup>

Another point of contrast is the phenomenon of God's strict justice as far as holy war options are concerned. God punished Israel with the same punishment he used to punish others especially when they deviated, neglected and sinned against him. Evidence of this abounds in the Hebrew Scriptures; for instance, in 2 Kings 8:7-13, Elisha prophesied that the Syrian warrior Hazael will defeat Israel as God's gruesome instrument because of Israel's sinfulness. Similarly, Isaiah saw brutal Assyria as YHWH's chosen instrument to judge the wickedness of Israel (Isa. 10:5-7). Jeremiah in particular uses this imagery with stunning force:

Then Jeremiah said to them: Thus you shall say to Zedekiah: Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I am going to turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands and with which you are fighting against the king of Babylon and against the Chaldeans who are besieging you outside the walls; and I will bring them together into the center of this city. I myself will fight against you with outstretched hand and mighty arm, in anger, in fury, and in great wrath. And I will strike down the inhabitants of this city, both human beings and animals; they shall die of a great pestilence ...: For I have set my face against this city for evil and not for good, says the LORD: it shall be given into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.<sup>104</sup>

Explaining this phenomenon, J. Alberto Soggin asserted that by these prophecies the prophets of Israel were well aware that the choice of holy war was of a dialectical nature. They were convinced that YHWH's war was rather redemptive and it is for the good of all mankind, not just for Israel alone.<sup>105</sup> God's favor to Israel was just a privilege not a right and so they could not abuse this favor at will without experiencing God's wrath.

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<sup>103</sup> Walter Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, Trans. J. A. Baker (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961)p. 140.

<sup>104</sup> Jer. 21:3-10; see also 6:1-6.

<sup>105</sup> J. Alberto Soggin, *Old Testament and Oriental Studies* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1975) p.67f.

It was in reference to this universal salvation for all mankind that Isaiah and Micah envisioned, when they postulated a day when all nations will come to recognize the God of Israel as the only true God (Isa. 2:2-4; 11:1-9; 19:24, Mic. 4:1-4).

Furthermore the peculiarity of the Israelite type of Holy War was conspicuously proven by the fact that they never fought for imperialistic expansion and never engaged in wars to spread their religion.<sup>106</sup> According to Rabbi Finkel, one more crucial reason why the Israel engaged in battles was their conviction that the only justifying reason for war(killing) is to eliminate the one who comes to kill you (self defense) because he is violating God's sixth commandment and intends to deny you of your dignity as an image of God<sup>107</sup>. Finally, they fought with a striking obedience and humility to YHWH to the extent that they hardly believed that they deserved the conquests accomplished on their behalf, thanks to the guiding principles underscored by Deuteronomy.

Take care that you do not forget the LORD your God, by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today. When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God..., Do not say to yourself, "My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth." But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today (8:11-18).

Israel never parted with these injunctions with their parallels (Gen. 34.29; Job 5.5; Prov. 13.22; Ezek 28.4-5) which stipulated that prosperity must always be

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<sup>106</sup> This is also a sharp contrast between Judaism and Islam.

<sup>107</sup> Asher, Finkel. Oral Communications (Class Note, 2009). Rabbi Asher Finkel is currently a professor attached to the Department of Jewish-Christian Studies at Seton Hall University South Orange, Newark, New Jersey.

acknowledged as a divine gift and never claimed it as a personal right.<sup>108</sup> Finally, Gerhard Von Rad drew a systematic conclusion to the distinctiveness of Israelite attitude to warfare in his well articulated statement:

That holy war was not only a tradition in Israel, but it was a religious (or cultic) institution and consequently contained a highly stylized pattern.<sup>109</sup>

Substantiating this conviction Von Rad enumerated this “*highly stylized pattern*” or basic characteristic of Israelite warfare as follows;

1. The call to YHWH’s war comes through the blast of the trumpet (Judg. 6:34f; 3:27; 1 Sam. 13:3).
2. The Israelites maintained ritual purity throughout the camp through severe sacral regulations (Josh. 3:5; 1 Sam. 21:5; 2 Sam. 11:11f. Deut. 23:9-14; 2 Sam. 1:21).
3. Sacrifices are made to YHWH or he is consulted all times (1 Sam. 7:9; 13:9-10, 12; Judg. 20:13, 18).
4. The leader proclaims to the army: “YHWH has given the enemy into your hand” (Josh. 6:2 plus 19 (this element is one of the most important factors).
5. The army marches out with certainty that YHWH is with them and that the enemies of Israel are the enemies of YHWH (Judg. 4:14; 5:31; Deut. 20:4; 2 Sam. 5:24). The ark accompanies them (Josh. 3:11).
6. Leaders admonish the people not to be afraid (Ex. 14:13f.; Deut 20:3; Josh. 8:1; 10:8, 25; 11:6; Judg. 7:3; 1 Sam. 23:16-17; 30:6; 2 Sam. 10:12).
7. The enemy loses courage (Ex. 15:14-16; 23:27f.; Deut. 2:25; 11:25; Josh. 2:9, 24; 5:1; 10:2; 11:20; 24:12; 1 Sam. 4:7f.).
8. The battle cry is sounded (Judg. 7:20; Josh. 6:5; 1 Sam. 17:20, 52).
9. The enemy is terrified and incapable of real opposition and sometimes turn their swords on each other (Ex. 23:27; Deut. 7:23; Josh. 10:10; 24:7; Judg. 4:15; 7:22; 1 Sam. 5:11; 7:10; 14:15, 20).<sup>33</sup>
10. The highpoint and the conclusion of the war culminate in the *herem*, the consecration of the booty to YHWH (Josh. 6:18f.).
11. Leaders dismiss the militia with the cry, “To your tents, O Israel” (2 Sam. 20:1; 1 Kgs. 12:16) or it is simply stated that they went (or fled) to their tents (1 Sam. 4:10; 2 Sam. 18:17; 19:8; 20:22; 2 Kgs. 8:21; 14:12).<sup>110</sup>

<sup>108</sup> Harper Collins, *Study Bible Commentary* RSV) p.282.

<sup>109</sup> Gerhard Von Rad; *Holy War in Ancient Israel*, Trans. and ed. Marva Dawn (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991) p. 41-51.

<sup>110</sup> Von Rad (as cited by) J. A. Wood, *Perspectives on War: in the Bible*. (Georgia. Mercer University Press, Macon, 1998) p.19. See also Von Rad, *Holy War in Ancient Israel*, p.41- 5.

### c) Herem (חרם)

At a glance, the Israelite warfare scene may be classified as the earliest example of just war ideology, especially when we consider its defensive and motifs of justice. More so, scholars like Bernhard Anderson eulogize the Israelite holy war concept with a view like this: *“The strategy of holy war was not so much to fight pitched battles as to frighten the enemy with the ‘terror of God’ so that they would flee in panic and confusion.”*<sup>111</sup>

However, a critical mind may question the morality and justice behind the concept of *herem* which is conspicuously present in the history of Israelite warfare. In attempt to answer this, some have advocated for Israelites, by supposing that they were acting strictly on God’s orders<sup>112</sup> and others explained it out as a ritual offering to the *warrior God* and still others, maintained that being judgmental on the Israelites with modern values is rash and lacks proper consideration of the ethics and the political situation of that age and place.<sup>113</sup> Eugene H. Merrill is one example of the proponents of the last mentioned view, he insisted that:

The genocide sanctioned by (the biblical) Scripture was unique to its time, place, and circumstances. It is not to be carried over to the age of the Church...<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Bernhard Anderson, Understanding the Old Testament, 4th edition. (Englewood Cliffs, Nj: Prentice Hall, 1986) p. 217.

<sup>112</sup> This point belittles God and portrays an impression of him as an unjust and wicked and even as a partial God. It contradicts concept of universal fatherhood of God.

<sup>113</sup> Wood, Perspectives on War in the Bible. p.9.

<sup>114</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, “The Case for Moderate Discontinuity”, Show Them No Mercy (Ed) Stanley N. Gundry, (Zondervan, Grand Rapids Michigan. 2003) p.94.

In other words, his explanation of this *bizarre phenomenon* was that it was a unique event at a point in history of the Israel. Israel actually got involved in chaotic political scene of the Ancient Near East (at that point in their history) in their bid to reclaim a land promised them by God through the Patriarchs (Gen 13:14-17) after their liberation from slavery in Egypt. But however we may try to explain this phenomenon, its presence in the Holy Scriptures of Jews and the Christians is still disturbing to the modern mind as far as issue of justice and co-existence is concerned. Perhaps the best approach to a solution will be to probe into its semantic imports. The concept of *herem* is a crucial but difficult one. The word *חרם* in both its verb and noun forms appeared 84 times in the Hebrew Scripture, but often wrongly translated as *ban (in English)*. The books of Leviticus (27:28-29) and Deuteronomy (7:26) use it in the sense of something which has been removed from the sphere of the profane and set apart for *YHWH* or things like idols, which God has condemned and consequently, cannot be set apart for *YHWH*.<sup>115</sup> Roland de Vaux, a well-known French Old Testament scholar, explains it this way:

The herem, the anathema [is] carried out on the vanquished enemy and his goods. The meaning of the root and the usage of the cognate verb show that the word herem denotes the fact of 'separating' something, of taking it out of profane use and reserving it for a sacred use; alternatively, it may stand for the thing which is 'separated' in this way, forbidden to man and consecrated to God.<sup>116</sup>

The word is closely related to *harem (from Arabic harim)* which refers to a secluded area of a house allotted to women. In Arabic the word literally means *sanctuary, a forbidden area*, since the women in *harem* are exclusively the property of the

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<sup>115</sup> Norbert Lohfink, "herem," *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck & Helmer Ringgren, trans. By David R. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986) p. 181-184.

<sup>116</sup> Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, Vol. 1, Part III, ch. 5, p. 260

husband and out of bound to all others. The Hebrew word *herem* therefore, refers to something set aside, cut off, "*the exclusion of an object from the use or abuse of man and its irrevocable surrender to God.*"<sup>117</sup> It implies consecration of the person or thing to God (Lev 27:28-29, Num 21; 2-4; Deut 20:16) in war. The most prominent and concrete usage of the word, is depicted in the passage below. It often, revolves around the practice of extermination (*nkh-Smiting*) of entire population (including non combatants) in warfare like this passage commands:

All the spoil of these towns, and the livestock, the Israelites took for their booty; but all the people they struck down with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, and they did not leave any who breathed.<sup>118</sup>

Roland H. Bainton described it as "*the destruction of everything among the enemy which the victor might have retained and enjoyed.*"<sup>119</sup> Walter Zimmerli simply saw it as "*renunciation of private enrichment;*" the implication of this view is that in a culture where slaves and booty constituted a major reason for entering battle, the Israelites saw themselves in God's service and refused to profit from such an unjust benefits of the war situation. For them, no ulterior motive should mar their dedication to God (cf. Jos·7:2-26), even though the shadow side of such devotion is indiscriminate slaughter.<sup>120</sup> A critical look at these definitions reveals deep religious convictions which seem to connote repudiation and a sacrificial attitude rather than just mere massacre or total extermination. There are some speculations that this practice had its basis in the idea that persons or things contaminated by idolatry carried with

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<sup>117</sup> Leon J. Wood, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. (1:324).

<sup>118</sup> Jos. 11:14. See, Jos. 8:1-29.

<sup>119</sup> Roland H. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes toward War and Peace*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990)p. 48.

<sup>120</sup> Walter Zimmerli, *Old Testament Theology in Outline*: Trans. David E. Green (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1978): p.58.

them a dangerous force which was to be avoided. Johannes Pedersen believed that one source of this understanding lay in the belief that an *alien spiritual power* permeated the persons and possessions of the enemy and could only be made harmless by consecration to *YHWH*.<sup>121</sup> But this explanation becomes inadequate when we consider the fact that there were circumstances where the Israelites were allowed to take the spoils and when they were not allowed to, for instance:

At that time we captured all his towns, and in each town we utterly destroyed men, women, and children. We left not a single survivor. Only the livestock we kept as spoil for ourselves, as well as the plunder of the towns that we had captured (Deut. 2:34-35).

So to understand this phenomenon a wider spectrum must be explored; although there is no precision as regards the origin of this practice, yet from every indication *herem* was not unique to Israel but was a cultural practice she shared with her neighbors.

According to Lohfink, "*there was in Israel and Moab, and perhaps also among other neighboring peoples, a common practice of herem.*"<sup>122</sup> However, the predominant reason for this phenomenon of warfare seems to be more concretely rooted in solemn devotional or ritualistic obligations. In other words, it may have been a cultural phenomenon, employed to appease their deities (sacrificially) in appreciation for success at war. Max Weber pointed out that this practice was universal and especially seen in Egypt, where the king, by virtue of ritualistic duty, slaughtered the captives. The enemy was assumed basically as godless.<sup>123</sup> W. F.

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<sup>121</sup> Johannes Pedersen, *Israel, Its Life and Culture III, IV* (London: Oxford, 1940) p.27-31.

<sup>122</sup> Lohfink, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, p. 190.

<sup>123</sup> Han Gerth and Don Martindale, (translators) *Ancient Judaism*, (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1952) p.93.

Albright agreed with this view and added that “the practice of devoting a recalcitrant foe to destruction as a kind of gigantic holocaust to the national deity was apparently universal among the early Semites.”<sup>124</sup> However, there are other reasons which may have been more pertinent to Israelite participation in it; for instance, Israel conceived *herem* as a judgment against God’s enemies (nations that oppose the God of Israel). This is evident in the attack on the Canaanites (Gen. 15:16; Lev. 18:25, 28) and especially the cruel Amalekites (1 Sam. 15: 2, 33).

God’s favor on Israel in these battles therefore must not be considered as YHWH’s partiality to Israel but, that Israel was the means whereby YHWH punished wickedness. Commenting on this, Eugene H. Merrill, maintains that:

Yahweh war is, in one sense then, a struggle against the realms of evil on a massive, transcendent level, an engagement that commences with the first creaturely hubris and that will end only when Satan and his minions are fully eradicated from God’s kingdom...Pharaoh and Egypt become ciphers for Satan and his kingdom, and the Canaanite nations symbolize the kingdoms of evil yet to be defeated and dispossessed such foes cannot be pacified, nor can one reach accommodation with them. They are hopelessly in rebellion and must be held to account firmly and with finality.<sup>125</sup>

However, the choice of Israel(as God’s armies against evil nations) is not due to antecedent righteousness of theirs ( Deut. 9:4-2), but so that people may understand that the fidelity to God in the covenant will allow no compromise or commingling with the earlier groups dwelling in this land (Deut. 7: 1-26). The warning of Deuteronomy 9:4-28 indicates that Israel tended to forget this truth and, of course as already indicated above; even Israel received signs of God’s impartial justice whenever they misbehaved and deviated from his precepts. It was in this context

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<sup>124</sup> W. F. Albright, *From The Stone Age to Christianity* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1940) p.213.

<sup>125</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, “The Case for Moderate Discontinuity”, *Show Them No Mercy* (Ed) Stanley N. Gundry, (Zondervan, Grand Rapids Michigan. 2003) p.82

that the prophet Amos first employed the term “*Yom YHWH*,” the day of the Lord- to depict the time of darkness and judgment against Israel or simply a day of the Lord’s just vengeance against deviants from the Lord’s precepts. In other words, that term was first employed in relation to the holy war ideology even though the later prophets ( Isa. 13,34, Ezek .7, Joel 2) used the term to mean *a day of salvation* Thus, the “*the day of the Lord-yom YHWH*” had both positive and negative dimensions in Israel’s prophetic traditions. In some context it expresses a day of judgment on rebellious Israel while in some other situations it portrays a day of salvation and deliverance from enemies.

One other reason for the Israelite engagement in the *herem* may have been the fear of idolatrous contamination (Duet. 7:1-6). In other words, they were actually eliminating every source of temptation and possible avenues of distraction, so (Duet. 20:18ff.) states it thus:

So that they may not teach you to do according to all their detestable things which they have done for their gods, so that you would sin against the LORD your God.<sup>126</sup>

Whatever may be the reason for this command to exterminate enemies including non-combatants and to destroy their animals and other possessions, it cannot be “explained” to satisfy modern sensibilities, especially when we consider its harshness and insensitivity towards the dignity and respect to human life. In fact, modern thinkers like C.S. Cowless have even pushed these herem discussions to

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<sup>126</sup> Duet. 20:18ff.

another level. He referred to it as *Canaanite Genocide*, his evaluation of the herem is that it was an *unbridle carnage and even a failure*, according to him:

The herem campaign utterly failed. The Canaanites were decimated but not destroyed, idolatry was not eradicated, and the Israelites were not preserved from moral and spiritual pollution. What could be more morally bankrupting and spiritually corrupting than slaughtering men, women, and children? The Canaanite holocaust stands in judgment on all attempts to attain, maintain, and enforce holiness by coercive means.<sup>127</sup>

So for him, herem was entirely a human ordinance, precisely Moses and his companions' choice of achieving the divine promise for Israel. He therefore recommended and advocated a *discontinuity* from such concepts (rejection of herem mentality) that abounds in the Old Testament for all Christians if they should remain relevant in the modern world<sup>128</sup>. Even when translated into spiritual terms, to describe the victory of those committed to God, Peter Craigie adds:

I do not want to dispute such spiritual meaning, but I simply want to stress that read at face value the chapter describes the literal slaughter of men and women, young and old, all in the name of obedience to God (Josh. 6), a similar event in Vietnam was followed by a war crimes trial.<sup>129</sup>

The presence of such a phenomenon in the Holy Scriptures remains an embarrassment to many in our generation but will form the bed-rock on which later generation users of the same Scriptures, will further their speculations on this pervasive reality of man that is war. This seems to be the intention of Craigie especially when he concluded with what should have been the fate of the Israelites if it were these days as exemplified in the *My Lai* massacre incident of Vietnamese war

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<sup>127</sup> C.S. Cowless, "A Response To Eugene H. Merrill", *Show Them No Mercy*. p. 98.

<sup>128</sup> C.S. Cowless, "The Case for Radical Discontinuity", *Show Them No Mercy*. p.13-44.

<sup>129</sup> Peter Craigie, *The problem of war in the Old Testament*. (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1978) p. 10.

(March 1968).<sup>130</sup> This view of Craigie's point here actually could be considered an introduction to the views of modern thinkers who consider all attempts to humanize חרם as a kind of fatalism especially when it is attributed to God whose attributes are directly opposite to such lethal commands . In fact, it is this sort of fatalistic approach to divine revelation among some religions of the world, which has plunged the world to this chronic belligerency. This is almost the same mind-set of the terrorist who feels nothing about the number of lives he *snuffs* out of innocent souls because he feels he is fulfilling God's command or even cleansing the world of sinners or God's enemies. However, thank God that it's been explained as *circumstantial event* that will never happen again (Merrill, 2003).

At this juncture, let us consider one other interesting point in the history of Israelite warfare which may have set the stage for Christian and later Rabbinic (Jewish) concepts of just war theory as we shall see in the coming chapters.

Herem was only circumstantial in the warfare history of the ancient Israelites; the book of Deuteronomy (20:10-12) contains a very pertinent issue that is very different regarding the herem attitude:

When you draw near to a town to fight against it, offer it terms of peace. If it accepts your terms of peace and surrenders to you, then all the people in it shall serve you at forced labor. If it does not submit to you peacefully, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it

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Even though the vassalage that must follow surrendering of a rival nation is still not decent, the offer of a chance for amicable and peaceful settlement was one sign of

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<sup>130</sup> Lt. William Calley was convicted in 1971 of premeditated murder (of 22 civilians) and for his role in the My Lai massacre and sentenced to life in prison.

<sup>131</sup> Deut. 20:10-12 (R.S.V).

the development of justness of action at war in early history of Israelite warfare. However, an overall survey of the Israelite attitude to warfare shows that there is no specific passage in the Hebrew Scriptures that attempted a classification of wars according to the degree of their "holiness or ungodliness", but from a close reading of the text, it is apparent that not all wars fought by Israel were identical in every respect. In the passage above, a distinction is drawn according to the identity of the foe. In the case of the seven nations that occupied Canaan before its conquest, victory consisted in their complete destruction. Thus the injunction stated clearly:

In the cities of these peoples that the Lord your God gives you for your inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes, but you shall utterly destroy them . . . that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices which they have done in the service of their gods, and so to sin against the Lord your God." (Deut. 20:15-18)

Total destruction is also ordained against the Amalekites, a desert tribe that had been the first outside power to attack the Hebrews after their escape from Egypt and especially killing their weaklings (Exod. 17): *"You shall blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; you shall not forget"* (Deut. 25:19).

There are certainly varying opinions as far as classification of types of Israelite war is concerned. R. Judah in the Palestinian Talmud (Sotah 8:10): puts it thus: "an optional war is one in which we attacked them; an obligatory war *is the* one in which they attacked us". Rashi unambiguously distinguished it thus:

Every war is considered optional-(מלחמת רשות) and not obligatory(מלחמת מצוה) except Joshua's war which was to capture the Land of Israel<sup>132</sup>.

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<sup>132</sup> Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki-1040-1105 C.E, (to Bavli Sanhedrin 2a).

Commenting on this same Mishnah (Sanhedrin 1:5) Maimonides (1135-1204) wrote:

An optional war (מלחמת רשות) is the war against Amon or Moab or Ishmael and the like (war for territorial expansion). A commanded war (מלחמת מצוה) is only the war against Amalek and the seven nations.

However in his Mishneh Torah, Maimonides adds that a commanded or obligatory war can include a war to assist Israel from an enemy that has come upon them.<sup>133</sup>

This contradiction between Maimonides' (thirteenth century) commentary on the Mishnah and his legal code Mishneh Torah, actually reflects a dispute in (the third century) Mishnah Sotah as understood by the fourth century sage Raba in the Babylonian Talmud (Sotah 44b). However, there is a seeming consensus on the fact that, the wars of Joshua to capture [the Land of Israel] are obligatory wars, and those of the House of David (for territorial expansion) were optional. But summarily Maimonides codified war as a means of fighting off the idolaters and a way of subduing enemies that came upon them. The reason for wars then was self-defense. The practical halachic difference between a milḥemet mitzvah (*commanded war*) and a milḥemet r'shut (*optional war*) is that one is commanded by God and is obligatory on Israel (milḥemet mitzvah) but the other was basically authorized by the authority of the kings for either security or expansion purposes (milḥemet r'shut). In the later, war was declared by the Great Sanhedrin of seventy one judges. Accordingly: "*They are only permitted to go to an optional war by authority of a court of seventy one judges*" (Mishnah Sanhedrin 1:5).

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<sup>133</sup> This last phrase is missing from at least one early fourteenth century Spanish manuscript of the Mishneh Torah, catalogued at the Jewish National and University Library as Heb 4° 1193.

It is interesting to note that it was these jussive or obligatory wars (מלח מצוה) that specifically exhibit the holy war and *herem* characteristics with emphasis on total extermination. The hinted reasons for these not only border around sacrificial motifs but are mainly for the security, preservation of purity and for the survival of the chosen people of God. At this juncture, one can then begin to give a fair consideration to Irenius Eibl-Eibesfeldt's contention that the *herem attitude* might also have been motivated either directly or indirectly by economic and other secular reasons not just as obedience to God's commandment. But as pointed out before, this remains extremely difficult for the modern mind to comprehend especially when one subjects its implications to the integrity of such a "god" who commands it.

In the same way, Greenspoon defined *optional wars* (מלחמת רשות) as war against neighboring nations to extend the borders of Israel and to enhance the king's greatness and prestige. However, under these auspices, a further issue arises over what could be called *preventive wars*, especially when resilient and unpredictable enemies and neighbors like those of the Israelite's are concerned. Put simply, preventive, voluntary or optional wars of Israel are classified as those wars which, though they may not have been commanded specifically by God but are deemed necessary for survival (self defense/defense of the nation) or even for the firmness of a fragile and threatened Israel in the midst of ferocious neighbors. Perhaps this accounted for the reason why Maimonides equivocated over a specified definition or classification of the Israelite wars.

By a cursory look at the passage on the laws of war (Deut. 20), one could readily observe elements of “justness of action”. It was actually this type of war (optional war) that met with seeming condemnation in the Hebrew Scripture. For instance, the Talmudic tractate Sotah (44b)<sup>134</sup> classified or declared that “the wars waged by the House of David for territorial expansion were voluntary in the opinion of all.” Voluntary/ optional wars were not condemned as such, but they were clearly placed in a different-and inferior-category to those of the obligatory category. In this connection, we should note that within the Hebrew Bible, prophetic opposition to such wars (optional war) was not usually a condemnation of war but rather an attack against the presumption of kings, whose efforts to obligate all to take part in combat resulted in enormous social unrest of the type that caused the house of David to lose control over a formerly united Israel. It was from this perspective that the prophets declared that, henceforth, God would fight not against his people, but against those very Hebrew leaders who sought to twist the ideology of holy warfare to their own advantage. However, one thing to be appreciated about this aspect of Israelite war is that it introduced some elements of fairness and justice which became fundamental to the later generations of Israelites and the Christian community.

By the foregoing investigations, one could observe and summarize that the concept of war in Israelite history took a transitional turn as it gradually moved from what is purely Holy war, where God as the warrior was commanding and executing

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<sup>134</sup> Rev. A. Cohen, Sotah: Trans. by Rabbi Dr. I. Epstein .

metaphorically and almost physically, to a just war theory with the more involvement of people and their consequent moral responsibility to God and their fellow humans.

#### **2:4. Islamic Appraisal of Holy War: The Jihads**

Islamic jihad perhaps offers the perfect example of the “Holy War theory”. Jihad is best known for its implication of violent struggle to bring about a Muslim society throughout the world. Technically speaking, jihad is supposed to be a *holy war* waged to subjugate the enemies of the faith of Islam. The ideology of jihad was formulated by the leading Muslim theologians and scholars from the eighth century onwards and is implicitly commanded by the preponderance of the Qur’anic testimonies and basically by *Sura 9:29- Tauba (Repentance)*. Hence the Muslim is obliged to wage a perpetual war against the infidels who refuse to submit to Islam, this is the ultimate motivation of the jihad mentality. Jihad literally means *an effort or striving*. It includes a religious war against unbelievers with the objective of converting them to Islam or subduing all who are in opposition to Islam and Islamic control.<sup>135</sup> It is the sacred duty of the Muslim nation to ensure that Islam triumphs over all religions. It is considered a general duty of the nation as a whole, not of

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<sup>135</sup> Suras 9:5; 4:76; 2:214; 8:39.

individuals. And so, it is clearly an injunction and obligation on the Muslim to fight the *infidel*. The Qur'an commanded this in the passage that states:

Prescribed for you is fighting, though it be hateful to you. Yet it may happen that you will hate a thing which is better for you; and it may happen that you will love a thing which is worse for you; God knows, and you know not. They will question thee concerning the holy month, and fighting in it. Say: Fighting in it is a heinous thing, but to bar from God's way, and disbelief in Him, and the Holy Mosque and to expel its people from it--that is more heinous in God's sight; and persecution is more heinous than slaying. They will not cease to fight with you.<sup>136</sup>

This jihad ideology separates the world into two hostile blocs: the *dar al-Islam* (house of peace)-or the community of Islam solely under the Muslim control, and regions not yet subjected under Islamic control- *dar al-Harb* (the house of the sword). Between these two is warfare there should be no peace until a complete or at least partial submission to Islamic faith is achieved. Practical considerations may induce the Muslim leaders to accept a truce or armistice, but the obligation to conquer and enforce Islamic religion on the vanquished never lapses. Legal theory has gone so far as to define *dar al-Harb* to be any area where the Islamic custom is not observed. The Moslem is required to subdue the infidel, and he who dies in the path of war of *Allah* is considered a martyr and assured of paradise and of unique privileges therein. This perhaps may have been the convictions motivating the so called modern *suicide bombers* of our terrorist experiences. This is explicitly commanded in these Qur'anic verses:

Allah hath purchased of the believers their persons and their goods; for theirs (in return) is the garden (of Paradise): they fight in His cause, and slay and are slain: a promise binding on Him in truth, through the Law, the Gospel, and the Quran.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Sura 2:216.

<sup>137</sup> Sura 9:111

An addition, or rather a strong support and explanation to the verse: Sura9:111 could be seen in Sura 4:74:

Let those who fight in the cause of Allah Who sell the life of this world for the hereafter. To him who fighteth in the cause of Allah,- whether he is slain or gets victory (i.e. killed or be killed) - Soon shall We give him a reward of great (value)."<sup>138</sup>

Jihad therefore, presupposes the inequality between the Muslim community of Allah and the infidels. The *Dar al Islam* is considered superior to *Dar al Harb* and therefore the former must rule while the latter must submit. The implication is that the infidel or all people outside and even the uncompromising within *dar al Islam*, have practically no rights of their own and must be ready to face *dhimmitude*.<sup>139</sup> The *dhimmi*s are required to pay tribute *jizya* in perpetuity to the Muslim community *umma* and to assume a position of humble servitude to Umma. According to Robert Spencer:

The infidel without treaty has no right at all and can be deported, reduced to slavery, abducted for ransom or killed. Women and children can be taken into slavery. Infidels can be spared by temporary treaty, which must not go beyond ten years. The treaty must conform to Islamic rule and serve Islamic interest..."<sup>140</sup>

Jihad ideology works in two ways: as a functional mentality or attitude, or it will manifest itself in military combat and sometimes both. It is even more subtle as a functional mentality or attitude, when it is camouflaged under political policies making it look like fighting for a just course. In our recent experiences this mentality has been given names like terrorism, Al-Qaeda operations against U.S.A unjust foreign policies, religious riots (like in Nigeria) etc., but fundamentally these are

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<sup>138</sup>Sura 4:74

<sup>139</sup> Dhimmitude is an Islamic phenomenon which defines the condition of submissive surrender to Islamic rule without conversion to Islamic faith.

<sup>140</sup> Robert Spencer, *The Myth of Islamic Tolerance*: (New York: Prometheus Books.) p. 273

calculated, systematized and funded efforts to achieve a *jihadist self-styled Islamization* of the whole world. It is self-styled because jihadist/terrorist mentality is not even universally accepted by all Muslim sects.

However, the institution of jihad belongs to the Islamic religious domain. Its place is within the domain of faith and is considered a fundamental element of the Islamic Law (*the Sharia*), and so is in contrast to the secular law that can be changed, abrogated or ameliorated; it is believed to express the divine will and commandments.

Nevertheless, there have been *mujtahid* (Islamic scholars) who have argued that jihad is not supposed to include aggressive warfare; for them, it has a wider meaning in Islamic literature. It is striving to lead a good Muslim life, praying and fasting regularly, being an attentive and faithful spouse and parent or working hard to spread the message of Islam. But that notwithstanding, there are some well known verses of the Qur'an which not only enforce but continue to fuel the military spirit of jihad even till our days. Even though the modern western Muslims always deny the implication of these passages indicting the Jews and Christians, it is even made more specific in Suras like 5:51. This basically forbids even friendly co-existence/relationship between Muslims and the People of the Book (Jews). Then Sura 9 (Repentance) explicitly enjoined the Muslims to wage war against the *people of the Book* (Jews) until they either convert to Islam or are subdued as second class citizens (*dhimmis*). Thus it says;

Fight those who do not believe in neither Allah nor the last day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and his messenger nor acknowledge the religion of truth, (even if they are) of the people of the book until they pay Jizya {a special tax on non Muslim} with willing submission, and are utterly subdued.<sup>141</sup>

A critical assessment of these Suras reveals the subtle warring spirit that pervades the entire Qur'an, a spirit that tantamount to declaration of war on other religions (indeed on the whole humanity), to lead them to submit to Islam, which Allah wills, as the religion which must prevail and sway over all religions (*Sura. 9:33*). This is the mind-set of the Muslim; this is the Qur'an that the religious Muslim memorizes in its entirety, from which he forms his moral, socio-cultural and political guiding principles. In our time, this spirit is made manifest and vibrant in the views of some theorists like Egyptian Sayyid Qutb. In line with *Sura 9:29*. Qutb explains that:

As the only religion of truth that exists on earth today, Islam takes appropriate actions to remove all physical and material obstacles that try to impede its efforts to liberate mankind from submission to anyone except God...The practical way to ensure the removal of these physical obstacles while not forcing any one to adopt Islam ( *Sura 2:256*) is to smash the power of those authorities based on false beliefs until they declare their submission and demonstrate this by paying taxes (Jizya).<sup>142</sup>

This "Islamic Supremacism" is substantiated even more by the view of Indian Sayyid Abdul Ala Maududi who similarly holds that Muslims must fight all infidels (non Muslims):

Not as one might think to compel unbelievers to embracing Islam. Rather, their purpose is to put an end to sovereignty and supremacy of the unbelievers so that the latter are unable to rule over men. The authority to rule should be vested in those who follow the true faith; unbelievers who do not follow the true faith should live in state of subordination... To pay jizyah of their hands humbled"<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Cf. *Sura 9:29*.

<sup>142</sup> Sayyid Qutb, *In the Shade of the Qur'an*, Trans. Adil Salahi, Vol.8 (Leicester, UK: Islamic Foundation and Islamonline.net2003)p.123.

<sup>143</sup> 39 Sayyid Abdul Ala Maududi; *Toward Understanding the Qur'an*, trns. ZafarIshaq Ansari, Vol. 3 (Leicester, UK: Islamic Foundations, 1990) p.202.

So for Qutb, the implication of this view is that “supremacy, suppression and dihimmitude” are the only options of the jihadists, while dialogue or any such compromising options are not Islamic. In other words, democracy, socialism, nationalism, communism, etc. with their foundations on human rights, are anti Islamic.

The implication of this for Muslims is that it is almost absolute and cannot be discussed or scrutinized by human beings since that amounts to apostasy.

Substantiating and situating this jihadist mentality in our modern time, Professor Efraim Karsh articulated and analyzed the issue thus:

Bin Laden's proclamation of jihad was no novelty in and of itself: declaring a holy war against the infidel has been a standard practice of countless imperial rulers and aspirants since the rise of Islam. Nor does bin Laden's perception of jihad as a predominantly military effort to facilitate the creation of the worldwide Islamic umma differ in any way from traditional Islamic thinking, let alone from that of the Muslim Brothers and their Islamist offshoots. But; then, bin Laden's historic significance lies not in the novelty of his religious thinking but in his distinct translation of Islam's millenarian imperialist vision into concrete action at the dawn of the twenty-first century. For he is the first Islamist to have not only proclaimed a jihad against the United States but to have actually unleashed such a war—something that even America's sworn enemies, such as Ayatollah Khomeini, refrained from doing.<sup>144</sup>

Within Karsh's thoughtful excerpt one finds a summary of the “merits” of the aforementioned concept and of course, how much the *jihadist's God* has upheld peace and justice of the world so far. In line with Karsh's view (declaring a holy war against the infidel has been a standard practice of countless imperial rulers and aspirants since the rise of Islam), Eugene H. Merrill opines that:

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<sup>144</sup> Efraim Karsh, Islamic Imperialism – a history. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press 2007) p.230.

The term holy war has found fresh currency with the rise of militant Islam and its claims in some quarters that terrorist activities in its name fall under the rubric jihad.<sup>145</sup>

Merrill's point here is very crucial because it actually decries the eccentricity of the jihadist maneuvers and warns against its disguises.

Perhaps a contrast between jihadist ideology and that of Geneva Human Rights Declaration of 1945 will facilitate a comprehensive knowledge of the intricacies of the issues under discussion. The Human Rights Declaration is like the newest version of Jean Jacques Rousseau's "*social contract*". He opined that it is a peaceful pact, whereby realizing the impeding futility facing human society, if the *state of nature* is allowed to prevail: men entered into agreement to respect each other's inalienable rights and to protect each other's interests.

In the context of the Judeo- Christian societies, the concept of human rights is based on the biblical interdiction against killing. It repudiates and abhors blood-shed and aims at upholding equality of all human beings. However, even though it has this religious root, the notion of human rights evolved mainly in the nineteenth century secular period of Enlightenment in a Euro- American framework. It actually acquired its universal character of proclaiming the equality of all human beings and the inviolability of their natural rights after World War II. It became the core of the international legal system as a tool to prevent political abuses and to protect the civil society from *draconian policies* that are directly contrary to human rights. In

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<sup>145</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, "The Case for Moderate Discontinuity", *Show Them No Mercy*, p.93.

other words, it re-echoes the Just War theories in its basic injunction of the justness of action and its emphasis on self defense.

Unfortunately human right declarations and the concept of jihad are two incompatible ideologies. They are like two parallel worlds. The reason is because jihad takes its inspiration from a totally different world view. The jihad mentality is propelled by the counter declaration by the fifty-nine Muslim Countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (O.I.C) of 1990 in Cairo, Egypt. In articles 24 and 25 of this document, it states that all its provisions stem from and are in conformity with the *Sharia*.<sup>146</sup> It also proclaims that God has made the Islamic Community *umma or dar-al Salam* the best of nations and that its role on earth is to guide humanity. The major difference between the Geneva declaration and the Cairo declaration is based on the fact that, while the Universal Human Right Declaration stresses freedom, equality and the inalienable rights of all human beings, the Cairo declaration emphasizes religion and the superiority of Muslims over non Muslims. This implies that, one has to be a Muslim in order to be fully human; otherwise, the person must buy his freedom by paying *jizya* and living like a second class individual (*dhimmi*) with no rights. Such a mentality has made it very difficult to deal with Islam. So the Islamic religion creates its own idyllic world and operates with its principles and morality that are fundamentally different from the Judeo-Christian idyllic perfect world. This stark incompatibility between these

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<sup>146</sup> The formation of the OIC happened in the backdrop of the loss of Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem. It was established on September 25, 1969 at Rabat. On August 5, 1990, 45 foreign ministers of the OIC adopted the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam (not to be confused with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) to serve as a guidance for the member states in the matters of "human rights" in as much as they are compatible with the Sharia, or Qu'ranic Law. Cf:<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/cairodeclaration.html>.

orientations constitutes the major problem regarding the modern concept of warfare and the situation of peaceful co-existence. The immediate consequence of the above problem is our recent ugly experiences of terrorism and other war crimes. However, the presentation so far doesn't imply that the Islamic religion has no merits.

I must emphasize that I am not against a peaceful and humane Islam. This work is not about Islam but about Islamic Jihad mentality which fits into a pattern of global problem of terrorists whose claims and style of Islamization and political domination poses a global danger to co-existence and right of all humans. The real and worst enemies of Islam are the Islamic terrorists and their supporters who give Islam a bad name by portraying it as barbaric, violent, inhumane and backwards. Fundamentally Islam is not as bad as it is portrayed sometimes, it meant good intrinsically. Islam is built on *Iman (religious belief)* and *Din (religion or practice)*. Imam involves six major principles, i.e. to belief :

- (a) In one God.
- (b) In his angels.
- (c) In his "scriptures.
- (d) In the prophets.
- (e) In the Last Day.
- (f) In predetermination of good and evil.

The religious duties of the Moslem center upon five canonical obligations: *The shahddah* or the affirmation that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is his messenger; the observance of prayer; the payment of *zakah* (legal alms); the

pilgrimage to Mecca; and fasting in Ramadan. It actually started as Muhammad's intent to give his kinsmen (the Arabs) an identity in the Abrahamic faith. Comparing Muslims to the Jews, Philip Hitti opines that like the Jews, the Muslims believe that each individual is to follow a righteous path and secure atonement by improving his conduct and by sincere repentance<sup>147</sup>. According to Abraham I.

Katsh:

It was Muhammad's contention that God could not have omitted the Arabs from the revelations with which He had favored the Jews and the Christians. Though he denied the divinity of Jesus...<sup>148</sup>.

Islam was established as an attempt to exterminate paganism and in order to spread a monotheistic faith in the almighty God who deserves all people's unreserved allegiance. This is evident in Sura 9:29:

Fight those who believe neither in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth (Islam), even if they are of the People of the Book, until they pay the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued(Sura 9:29).

However the problem is not so much regarding revelation but its mode of operation and the ambitions of the human agents propagating it. Though the prophet Muhammad could be said to have initiated its *forceful* evangelization policies, yet the blame for its *violent culture* goes to his lieutenants of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries and the more recent leadership of Islamic religion. The reason for this indictment is that they chose to perpetrate the *jihad mentality* (which remains a threat to peace) even to this modern time when the use of such a *primitive forceful evangelizing mentality* has become unnecessary. This is because of the increasing religious plurality and

<sup>147</sup> Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*. (7th ed., London, 1960) p. 125.

<sup>148</sup> Abraham I. Katsh, *Judaism in Islam*: (New York: Sepher Herman Press, 1978)

consciousness of the dignity of life and inalienable rights of all humans. A further reason for this indictment is that they seem not to be concerned and susceptible to the ineluctable globalizing factors of the modern world.

Conclusively, I think that the good intention of the prophet Mohammad (at the initial stage of Islamic religion) is yet to be translated positively for the modern world to benefit. These remain a challenge for the modern *Imams* and *Mujtahids*. Down the ages, crisis of identity, interpretation and exegetical modifications have underlined the history of many other religions, helping them to evolve and keep abreast with modern realities, perhaps a little positive exegesis and open-minded dialogue with other religions will do this great job. The world yearns for it; humanity deserves it and peaceful co-existence of all requires it as a prerequisite to establishing a peaceful world.

## CHAPTER III

### JUST WAR THEORY

#### 3:1. Just War Ethic (A Historical Perspective)

Historically Christianity developed out of Jewish foundations. In fact Christians maintained strong ties with Judaism and participated actively in it during its early stage, but as Shannon puts it:

Only after the growing realization of the significance of the claim that Jesus was {and is still} the Son of God did the split between the Christian and Jewish community begin to grow.<sup>149</sup>

Put differently, over the course of several decades of the first Christian century, differences in theology, worship and doctrines necessitated their autonomy and distinctiveness from Judaism. Unlike many other religions, the Christians developed positions on war reflecting the gradual development in their realization of the implications of the redeeming mission of the Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. The early Christians assumed that Jesus would return, if not within their lifetime, at least within the lifetime of their children. The first Christian community lived its life in the expectation of imminent coming of God's kingdom, when God would vindicate righteousness and punish evil. As a result of this, Christians tended not to become involved in the affairs/life and structures of the larger community around them. More importantly, they perceived no religious or social mandate to change the obvious inequities of the society around them. The extent of this withdrawal from the world (*fuga mundi*) can be seen from Paul's Second Letter to the Thessalonians

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<sup>149</sup> Shannon, What Are They Saying About Peace And War? (Paulist Press: New York/Ramsey: 1983) p. 9

(3:6-12) in which he chided the Christian community at Thessalonica and requests that they return to work instead of sitting around, waiting for the world to end.

The fact that the world did not end with the first generation after the founding of Christianity, constituted the first major crisis of faith within early community. This delay meant that if Christians were to survive personally and socially, they could no longer remain exclusively within the confines of their community. And indeed Christians, once they realized that the world was not going to end, began to participate more and more in the affairs of the community around them. As opposed to AD 170 – 180 when there was no evidence of Christian participation in the army, it became a growing practice for Christians to serve in the army.<sup>150</sup>In the words of Shannon:

For some reasons, the year 173 marks the turning point for participation of Christians in the military. Christians were in one of Marcus Aurelius' legions. Tertullian provides indirect evidence of the presence of Christians in the palace, the senate, the forum, and the army. During the persecution of Decius in 250 there is a reference to soldier martyrs. In 303, Galerius tried to eliminate Christians from his army. Christians seemed more likely to participate in war the closer they were to the frontiers of the empire. Finally, service in the army was legitimated because it also served as a type of police force".<sup>151</sup>

However, the tilt of Christian adherence from pacifism and non-violence was necessitated by the unification of Roman Empire by Constantine {306-337} and its consequent elevation of Christianity to an official national religion of the Roman Empire. So now in addition to having one faith, one Lord, and one baptism there was one empire and one emperor. Such a situation allowed a significant assimilation of Christians into all dimensions of the life of the empire and gave Christianity a

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<sup>150</sup> Roland Bainton, *Christian Attitudes towards War and Peace*. (New York: Abingdon, 1960) p.67-68.

<sup>151</sup> Shannon, *What are they Saying about Peace and War?* p.11.

privileged position insofar as it became the national religion for the empire. This development became tantamount to a logical assumption that since Christianity was now the religion of the empire, its survival {especially from the surging invasions of the so-called Barbarians} was intimately bound up with the fate of the empire. The assumption was that if Christianity were to survive, so must the empire. Therefore when the fate of the empire was in jeopardy, it was appropriate to defend the empire so that Christianity might survive.

But even though this development accrued, there was recognition that killing is incompatible with Christianity, at least it was very difficult to justify. The argument was that if love were the supreme value for Christians, then fighting and killing are contradictory to that value. This brought about pressures for the Church to develop an ethic that would take this changed social situation into account. So it became apparent that the faithful had to take into account the conditions in which they lived to determine how one might live as a Christian in the world. One important area of this development of a new Christian social ethic had to do with examining the reality of war. The first major ethic of war came from St. Ambrose (340-397). From two major sources he made up the first Christian Just War theory. These sources were mainly from the laws governing Israelite war campaigns already stated above in Deuteronomy 20. His other source was Cicero's work *De Officiis*. In that work Cicero argued that the only reason to declare war should be for the sake of peace but when victory is obtained, mercy should be shown to the losers. Cicero also opined that no war should be entered unless there had been an official demand for satisfaction

given or a formal declaration made, following an appropriate warning. War could be entered to preserve the safety of a city, to protect the innocent, to avenge wrongs, and to honor pledges made to allies. St Ambrose adopted these elements but insisted on the incompatibility of the cleric image and vocation with warfare; for him the clergy should restrict themselves to ministry of saving souls.

The major thrust for the full development of a Christian ethic of war came from St. Augustine (354-430), one of the most influential of all Catholic theologians. He was a Christian realist. He believed that sin was real and that violence was a sign of a depraved world. He argued that force can be a form of "love of neighbor" (Matt 22:36-40 and Luke 10:25-37), but only if used to thwart a greater evil and without any desire for revenge or pleasure. Punishing sinners and preventing the spread of evil is a form of neighbor-love. For Augustine, Christians have a duty to protect the vulnerable and innocent and sometimes must use force to do so. Augustine's just war theory admitted the perversity and sinfulness of war (act of killing). For him, even though the use of force may be inappropriate; we may sometimes engage in it (out of necessity of cause) to thwart greater evils.<sup>152</sup> Augustine therefore is convinced that what actually justifies a war is the injustice of the unjust attacker; it was to that effect that he wrote:

A just war, moreover, is justified only by the injustice of an aggressor, and that injustice ought to be a source of grief to any good man, because it is human injustice."<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Allman, Mark J., Who would Jesus kill? : War, peace, and the Christian tradition. (Winona, MN, Saint Mary's Press, 2008) p. 166.

<sup>153</sup> St. Augustine, The City of God, Book 19, Chapter 17.

While justifying the declaration of war and the participation in it, Augustine added a new dimension to the developing just war theory. In other words, he provided the basic rationale for other just-war theorists, by utilizing a moral argument which legitimized the use of force as a means of implementing the gospel command of love in the political order. Augustine's conviction emerged from his critical assessment of the requirements of order in the political community (Russell 1977). He recognized that injustice and war were part of the reality of life in his age and so, he felt that Christianity should try as much as possible to humanize war. He regarded peace as an ideal and tried to make the rules of war subservient to this end. In trying to restrain war, Augustine hoped that justice could be restored and that love could continue to be the dominant disposition that would rule the relationship between individuals. For Augustine, however, love was an interior attitude or disposition compatible with various actions, including killing an enemy out of the motive of love.<sup>154</sup> It was through Augustine that this attitude of Realism entered Christianity.

Commenting on this J. Bryan Hehir wrote:

Augustine combined an ethic of intention with a powerful sense of the needs of public order in constructing a position which prohibited killing in self-defense, but acknowledged its possibility in social relations.<sup>155</sup>

These views of St Augustine were further clarified by St Thomas Aquinas as summarized in his *Summa Theologica*:

There are three conditions of a just war. First, the authority of the sovereign by whose command the war is to be waged. For it is not the business of the private individual to declare war or to summon the nation. The second condition is that hostility should begin

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<sup>154</sup> F. H. Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1977) p.16-39.

<sup>155</sup> J. Bryan Hehir Director, Department of International Justice and Peace, United States Catholic Conference. Published in his article-"The Just-War Ethic and Catholic Theology Dynamics of Change and-Continuity"-p.90).

because of some crime on the part of the enemy. Wherefore Augustine observes that a just war is wont to be described as one that avenges wrongs, when a nation or state has to be punished for refusing to make amends for the injuries done by its people or to restore what has been seized unjustly. The third condition is a rightful intention, the advancement of good or the avoidance of evil. It may happen that a war declared by a legitimate authority for a just cause may yet be rendered unlawful through a wicked intention. And Augustine declares that the passion of inflicting harm, the cruel thirst for vengeance, a plundering and implacable spirit, the fever of turmoil, the lust for power and suchlike, all these are justly condemned in war.<sup>156</sup>

He not only reinforced Augustine's position but he definitely clarified that the purpose of the just war ethic was not to rationalize violence but to limit its scope in a world where force was a tragic but necessary instrument of political process. In other words, Thomas's view tallies with that of Augustine especially on the issue of the ambivalence of legitimizing (to an extent) the use of force within an evangelical ethic. However, he conformed to it as long as it occurs within a situation of double effect. The implication of this, for him was that force or arms can only be chosen as a lesser evil where all options are evil or at least deficient. According to him:

Nothing hinders a single act from having two effects, only one of which is intended, while the other is beside the intention. Now moral acts get their character in accordance with what is intended, but not from what is beside the intention since the later is incidental.... Accordingly, the act of self-defense may have a double effect: the saving of one's life, on the one hand, and the slaying of the attacker, on the other. Since saving one's life is what is intended, such an act is not therefore illicit, seeing that it is natural to everything to keep itself in existence as far as possible.<sup>157</sup>

His major contribution was systematizing the JWT views of his predecessors and gave it credibility and recognition by the Church. He also stressed that clerics must not engage in the physical warfare since they must rely not on worldly weapons but on the infinite power of God for their defense. Hehir explained this point thus:

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<sup>156</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, "Summa Theologica II-II, question 11 article 1" Philosophical Texts, edited by Thomas Gilby. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960) p. 348.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid*, question 64, article 7, p190.

The taking of human life remained a major moral problem for those committed to the message and life of Jesus. It could be justified only by referring it to the defense of the common good.<sup>158</sup>

However, this emphasis of the normative teaching shifted from Aquinas' strong stress on just cause toward a focus on the means used in warfare. Two major factors accounted for this shift;

- I. The emergence of autonomy of secular nation states with their qualitatively new center of secular political authority which challenged both the idea of a wider Christian commonwealth and the binding power of Christian moral authority.
- II. The impact of the sixteenth century reformation eroded the spiritual and moral bonds of the Christian community which Augustine and Aquinas had taken for granted.

It was in answer to this new political and religious context, that two Spanish Scholastics Francisco de Suárez, sj (1548-1617) and Tomás Luis de Vitoria (circa. 1485-1546), labored to update the substance of the just-war ethic. They did this by revising its structure and categories to accommodate the new challenges.<sup>159</sup> So without losing focus on the main objectives of the just war ethic, they modified its categories to allow the secular nation states to act with justness in matters concerning war. The Protestant theologian Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) was also one of those who made a very important contribution and whose combined efforts with

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<sup>158</sup> J. Bryan Hehir, *The Just-War Ethic and Catholic Theology: Dynamics of Change and Continuity* p.91

<sup>159</sup> For the changing context in which Vitoria and Suarez wrote see: J. T. Delos, "The sociology of Modern War and the Theory of Just War," *Cross Currents*, 8 (1958) p.248-265.

For internal changes wrought in the ethical argument, see: Walters, *Five Just-War Theories*, p.201-409.

Vitoria and Suarez provided a foundational articulation of the just war ethic which gained a universal and international recognition today.

### **3:2. Major Content of Just War Ethics**

For the sake of precision and better understanding of the enormity of this discussion, it's worthwhile to articulate the basic points of this theory. They include:

- (1) Just cause (defensive wars only must be waged).
- (2) Just intention (To secure a just peace).
- (3) Last resort (when all negotiations have failed).
- (4) Formal declaration (Legitimate governments only).
- (5) Limited objectives or reasonable hope of success.
- (6) Proportionate means (use only what is necessary to repel aggression and secure a just peace).
- (7) Right intention

#### **Second set of principles:**

Noncombatant immunity (civilians and POW's casualties are prohibited).

Proportionality (specific tactics)

The basic thing to bear in mind before the detailed explication of the above points is that even from the very beginning of the formulation of this theory, war is basically problematic morally. However Just War ethic is not the same as pacifism, which condemns war out rightly. The Just-War ethic, with its stringent tests and structured moral vocabulary is designed not to legitimize war as an acceptable

activity in society, but to limit war to those cases where supremely important values are at stake. In such an instance, the obligation to defend such a value overrides the presumption not to use force. Far from rationalizing violence, it has always sought to limit the scope and methods of violence in a world where “force” is tragic but a necessary instrument of the political process.<sup>160</sup> In his critical analysis of War phenomenon, Mark J Allman concludes that:

The JWT is best understood, however, as teleological theory tempered by realism. It defines peace as the desired end or goal (telos) of war and considers the intentions of those involved. It also takes circumstances or context into account. The greatest strength of the JWT is that it provides a vocabulary....It gives us a framework around which we can conduct our debate about war.<sup>161</sup>

JWT is therefore a doctrine which maintains that a state may justly go to war for some restricted reasons, which are centrally those of self-defense and justness of action even when dealing with the aggressor.

JWT generally rules out gratuitous violence, assassinations, war against civilians, etc. It basically seeks to advocate a meticulous discrimination between the combatants and noncombatants and protects the immunity of the civilians in the process of war.

It establishes the fact that in some instances a war is justified not on the basis of a perceived direct command of God but on the basis of a universal sense of justice. This constitutes the major distinguishing factor between the just war and the holy wars.

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<sup>160</sup> In the Name of Peace: Collective Statements of the US Catholic Bishops On War and Peace. U S Catholic Conference 1983. (Washington. ) p. 98.

<sup>161</sup> Allman, Mark J., Who would Jesus kill? : War, peace, and the Christian tradition. (Winona, MN, Saint Mary's Press, 2008) p. 204.

Just war theorists combine both repugnance of war with a readiness to accept that war may sometimes be necessary. The criteria of the just war tradition is to act as an aid to determining whether resorting to arms is morally permissible. Just War ethic with its premises are attempts to distinguish between justifiable and unjustifiable uses of organized armed forces; they envision how the use of arms might be restrained, made more humane, and ultimately directed towards the aim of establishing lasting peace and justice. JWT (*justum bellum*) is one sustained attempt by Christian theology to deal with this perennial problem of war among men.

However, its problems include deciding whether self-defense may be broadened from defense against actual attack to defense against threats, or against perceived threats, and whether it is permissible to make pre-emptive strikes. Recent developments on this self defense matters will be clarified in another section of this work. However, in addition to theorizing about when it is just to go to war (*jus ad bellum*), JWT also embraces principles about the way war may be conducted (*jus in bello*). The Latin root “*jus*” designates “law” and is used in connection to *justitia* (justice). They all convey a sense of giving each one his/her due (fair-play). However the use of this term (JWT) by the Christians introduced a little semantic shift in its understanding. Jus ad bellum doesn’t mean a justified war but recognition that war is intrinsically evil but could be fought under necessity, to restore justice, peace and order for the common good.

The *jus ad bellum* category concerns the conditions under which the use of military force is justified or when it is right to resort to armed force. It addresses situations when it is acceptable, permissible, or even required to go to war. It also includes several criteria as those already hinted above: a war must be waged for a just cause and with right intention; it must be declared by a legitimate authority; it must be waged only after all attempts at peaceful conflict resolution have failed. The *jus in bello* category centers around what is acceptable in the use of force or how to conduct a war in an ethical manner. Its concerns are mainly the behaviors in battle-array itself and traditionally includes only two criteria: militaries must make every reasonable effort to distinguish between civilians and soldiers (noncombatant immunity), and the use of force cannot be disproportionate (militaries must exercise restraint in the amount of firepower they use).

However, In more recent years, a third category — *jus post bellum* — has been added, which governs the justice of war termination and peace agreements, as well as the trying of war criminals.

These three conditions therefore, constitute the major criteria of JWT; let us therefore proceed to expound these terms in order to facilitate a better grasp of the issues at hand.

### **3:3. Jus ad bellum {just cause for waging war}**

Justness of action is the major premise upon which just war ethic is built. The reason for going to war needs to be just and cannot therefore be solely selfish or for

punishing people who have done wrong; innocent lives must be in imminent danger and intervention must be to protect life or at least to minimize greater evil. Even though every party of the conflicting opponents may make claims of suffering wrongdoings more than the other, to override the presumption against the use of force, the injustice suffered by one party must significantly outweigh that suffered by the other. The clearest example of a just cause is *self-defense* against an aggressor. *Self defense* is actually Augustine's point of departure. St. Augustine's concept of just war is basically *a retaliation or revenge of a wrong done on an innocent nation by an unrepentant aggressor*. Augustine emphasized "nation" because he frowned at personal self defense since he believed that it may degenerate into acting out of malice. His opinion on personal self defense is more or less pacifist. Thomas Aquinas insistently conceived it (self defense) as "*a right of a public authority*" to defend itself against insurgence.<sup>162</sup> The major reason for this is that this legitimate authority by virtue of its legitimacy must supposedly act in the interest of the common good.

The Vatican II Council Fathers, borrowing a leaf from Thomas, further insisted that it is not only a right but also a duty for a country/individual to defend itself/himself even though it need not always be violently as in war but it also may be expressed in a non violent manner.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> J. Bryan Hehir, *The Just-War Ethic and Catholic Theology: Dynamics of Change and-Continuity*. p.91.

<sup>163</sup>James J. Noris, "International Order" *Vatican 11: An Interfaith Appraisal*. Ed. John H. Miller, (Notre Dame & London, 1966) p.500.

## Self Defense! Is this Ambiguous?

JWT, in its normative terms coupled with its good principles of self defense is not without some major problems especially when war strategies recently referred to as "*anticipatory- defense*" is called to mind. This actually has provoked heated discussions among theologians, when it comes to deciding whether self-defense may be broadened from defense against actual attack (as in Augustine) to defense against threats, or against perceived threats, and whether it is permissible to make pre-emptive strikes. In the classical approach and even in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, self-defense is restricted to a response to an armed attack and strongly insists that all members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means.<sup>164</sup> However, following the abuse of this right (undue threats emanating from a neighboring state or disturbances by enemy forces and unconventional groups like terrorists and other insurgents), some modern scholars are of the opinion that preemptive strikes may sometimes be necessary and even imperative. M. Allman distinguished two types of anticipatory *defense*. They are; preemptive and preventive anticipatory self defense. According to him:

Preemptive wars are waged in the face of an imminent act of aggression (typically measured in days, weeks, or possibly months). Preventative wars are waged to eliminate or mitigate potential or hypothetical threats in the more distant future (for example, destroying nuclear reactors in another Country that could be used to create nuclear weapons).

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<sup>164</sup>Edmond Wright, *The Desk Encyclopedia of World History*, ( New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) p.658-660 Note: The United Nations Charter is the treaty that formed and established the international organization called the United Nations. It came into force on October 24, 1945. As a charter, it is a constituent treaty, and all members are bound by its stipulations. Furthermore, the Charter states that obligations to the United Nations prevail over all other treaty obligations. Most countries in the world have now ratified the Charter. One notable exception is the Holy See, which has chosen to remain a permanent observer state and therefore is not a full signatory to the Charter. Article 51 clearly permits self defense.

The imminence of wars that come under preemptive category must typically be measured in days, weeks, or possibly months to be able to qualify as preemption, while preventive self defense, basically mitigates or tends to squash long term or near-future potential threatening enemy or offensive targets. Hugo Grotius accepted the-legitimacy of preemptive military strikes, but only under restrictive conditions. For him, the threat must be imminent, the malicious or aggressive intent must be certain, and fear cannot be the motivating force. It is very important to note here that while preemptive wars enjoy traditional standing or tolerance in international law, preventative wars have long been considered nothing more than wars of aggression. A concrete incident of preemptive strike and its impact on the modern times was the Caroline affair of 1837. It occurred when British forces in Canada crossed the United States border and killed several Canadian rebels and one American citizen who were preparing an offensive against the British in Canada. The United States rejected the legal ground of the Caroline case but this incident has been used to establish the principle of *anticipatory self-defense* in international politics, which holds that it may be justified only in cases in which the "necessity of that self-defense is instant, overwhelming, and leaving no choice of means, and no moment for deliberation". The Carolina Affair (Case) is also now quoted in similar disputes concerning preemptive strikes (or preemption doctrine).<sup>165</sup>Theologians are still indecisive about this but it has pushed the discussion of war to another level. Some scholars, like Abraham D. Sofaer, further, argue that some of these

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<sup>165</sup> Howard Jones; *Ashburton Treaty: A Study in Anglo-American Relations, 1783-1843*. (University of North Carolina Press, 1977) p. 2. Cf. "Caroline affair"-Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

circumstances justify preemption of attack. He identifies four key elements for justification of pre-emption as:

- I. The nature and magnitude of the threat involved, the gravity and urgency of the imminent evil must be imperative (as in Grotius).
- II. The likelihood that the threat will remain eminent unless preemptive action is taken.
- III. The availability and exhaustion of alternatives to using force; this point refers to conformity of these reasons with the U.N. Charter (article 51) and other applicable international agreements.<sup>166</sup> There are some questions about the legality of this doctrine under international law. Article 2, Section 4 of the U.N. Charter is generally considered to be *jus cogens*, or a peremptory norm which cannot be violated. It bars the threat or use of force against any state in the absence of an acute and imminent actual threat. At the same time, however, Article 51 clearly permits self defense. The tension between these two principles is evident in the doctrine of preemptive war, which claims to be defensive, yet does not come in response to an attack.

### **Legitimacy of authority**

Legitimacy of authority is actually one of the greatest factors that authenticates or justifies a war in the minds of the traditional just war theorists. It was one of the greatest contributions of Thomas Aquinas who insisted that only the power of the public authority can wage war legitimately. For him, public authority is:

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<sup>166</sup> Abraham D. Sofaer. "On the Necessity of Pre-emption". European Journal of International Law, Vol. 14, No. 2, 2003, p.220.

The rule (over) a free people...the co-ordination of willing subjects by law which, by its fully public character (promulgation), its clarity, generality, stability and practicability, treats them as partners in public reason.<sup>167</sup>

Aquinas' view point is focused on the trust invested in a *sovereign* to care for the community, principally in respect to peace and justice, in his/her control. Secondly the deliberative structure of the public authority gives it the benefit of the doubt that it may not act in error when compared with a private individual, especially in matters concerning taking of human life. He, therefore, concluded that the lack of these qualities in the private individual renders him deficiently illicit to take life (kill) or to wage war.<sup>168</sup> However, this traditional concept of legitimacy of authority is being gravely challenged in the modern international dispensation, but the recent contribution of contemporary thinkers like T.Brian Mooney still keeps us linked to this early fundamental concept. In his reaction to the contemporary problems like *terrorism* and issues bordering around private "*self defense of self acclaimed*" leaders and international groups, he opines that:

Given the nature of contemporary society, proper public authority should be thought of in terms of international bodies such as the United Nations and international law and conventions. Globalization and technology are two powerful factors highlighting the international and transnational interdependence of contemporary states. In this context and despite ethnic, ideological, cultural and religious differences, when nations go to war the effects are often enough global, and so it may be thought that the prospect of investing proper public authority in a transnational body such as the United Nations is an ideal well worth pursuing".<sup>169</sup>

Mooney's conviction is that, considering the imposing consequences of globalization especially as regards interdependence of international interests, it is worthwhile to entrust such delicate decisions as killing and waging war, or at least its moderation,

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<sup>167</sup> J. Finnis, *Aquinas: Moral, Political and Legal Theory* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998) p.257  
Cf. *Summa Theologica* 1-11, q. 90; q. 95; q. 96 & 97.

<sup>168</sup> T Brian Mooney, "Aquinas and Terrorism". *Pacifica* 20. June 2007. p.207.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.* p.208.

to those legitimately constituted international bodies. The rationale behind this is that due the deliberative structures of these international bodies, they stand the better chance of delivering justice than a private individual or nation who might act in error due to uncritical and prejudiced constraints.

### **Right intention**

An authority may fully be legitimate yet wage a war that is not just. A question that is often asked is, if a government behaves in a way that is arbitrary and unjust does its "*lawful*" authority have the necessary ethical force for it to be entitled to wage a just war? In fact, any war initiated with wrong intentions, even if those intentions were developed during the course of the war, it is still an unjust war. Thus wars engaged in, out of hatred, desire for revenge, profit or for some similar ulterior motives, will be unjust wars. A war may also still remain unjust even if the authority is legitimate and the intention is equally right but is not realistic. T. Brian Mooney used the phrase "*does not fit the fact*" to designate an unrealistic intention, a kind of *day dreaming* which may render an ostensible good intention of a polity, at war to be unjust. He further illumined the point thus:

Right intention then is practically oriented towards specific and realizable goals which are reasonably believed to be achievable and which further the just cause by restoring or creating a more just peace.<sup>170</sup>

Put simply, the reliability of an intention and its qualitative possibilities to advance or procure better justice is what makes an intention just. What that means is that there must be a reasonable chance of success in an intended war. This is because

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<sup>170</sup>Mooney, "Aquinas and Terrorism". Pacifica 20 p.213.

war is evil in itself and arms may not be used in a futile cause or in a case where disproportionate measures are required to achieve success. In other words, only *winnable* wars are just. So going to war for a hopeless reason may be noble but fatal, unethical and unacceptable. It is atrocious to cause pain, suffering and death without chance of success. It is therefore not justified for a small country to go to war against one of the *so called world powers* because she is bound to suffer casualties that could be prevented through diplomacy.

Force may be used only in a truly just cause and solely for that purpose. This implies that the intention of the war must be good. Some of these good intentions include:

- a) Creating or restoring and keeping a just peace.
- b) Righting a wrong done to a country punitively (as in Augustine's concept of just war).
- c) Assisting the unjustly attacked or assisting the small/weak country from a *bully aggressor*. But this assistance must not be for an ulterior motif, kind of soliciting for colonization, grabbing land, *oil or other minerals from a helpless country*.

### **Last resort**

The pervasive, precariousness and of course, the deadly repercussions that a war can cause, demand that force may not be used until after all peaceful and viable alternatives have been "*seriously*" exhausted . Some of these alternatives are: diplomacy, economic sanctions and other political pressures from other nations.

Sometimes negotiations and delaying tactics are employed in particular cases, until reasonable compromise is achieved. Above all, intervention of the United Nations Organization may also be sought.

These efforts/alternatives are crucial in order to achieve maximum tranquility. Peace and justice are at the very core of the just war ethic and must be intended even when war is the only alternative. In affirmation of this view Mooney stated that:

War, as a "last resort", must, to be a just war, seek to engender the conditions of justice and peace (these goals legitimize a just war) including the conditions that caused the original breach. These are unlikely to be capable of being achieved by war itself but nonetheless will be crucially tied to the notion of right intention and bolstered by the just war tradition of thinking on *ius post bellum*<sup>171</sup>

By those words, Mooney stressed the necessity of the fact that even if war becomes inevitable as a last resort, a polity engaging in war must always abide by the traditional stipulations of just war ethic in order that the war be morally just. Justice and peace therefore remain the ultimate goal of the just war ethic for him.

## **Proportionality**

Proportionality is a principle in law which conveys the idea that the punishment of an offender should fit the crime. It seeks to achieve a proportional justice whereby the punishment of a certain crime should be in proportion to the severity of the crime itself. In the context of war, it presupposes that belligerents should consider

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<sup>171</sup> Mooney, "Aquinas and Terrorism". *Pacifica* 20 p. 214.

whether the incidental harm on the civilians or their properties is proportional and not excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated by an attack. In other words, the anticipated benefits of waging a war must be proportionate to its expected evils or harms. This principle is also known as the principle of *macro-proportionality*, so as to distinguish it from the *jus in bello* principle of proportionality which we will discuss in detail later. In other words, the violence inflicted at war by the one who seeks redress must be proportionate to the injury suffered. States must be prohibited from using force that is not necessary to attain the limited objective of redressing the injury suffered. For instance the use of biological and other chemical and dangerous warheads on a nation, merely to seek redress for an injury caused by a turbulent faction of the victim nation, is not justified.

### **3:4. Jus in Bello (Justice during/within war)**

Once war has begun, just war theory also directs how combatants are to act or how to conduct a war in an ethical manner. Just war conduct should be governed by the principle of distinction, or simply the principle of discrimination, which is solely concerned with the question of who are legitimate targets in war.<sup>172</sup> Under international humanitarian law governing the legal military use of force in an armed conflict, proportionality and distinction are important factors in assessing military

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<sup>172</sup> Distinction is a principle under international humanitarian law governing the legal use of force in an armed conflict. Belligerents must distinguish between combatants and civilians. Distinction and proportionality are important factors in assessing the necessity of the use of force or military act in a particular situation. It is aimed at balancing and evaluating the harm suffered by the civilians or civilian properties, with military advantage anticipated.

necessity. While proportionality refers to the commensurate or balances of action and punishment, the principle of distinction pertains to the principles requiring belligerents to distinguish between combatants and civilians. Distinction and proportionality are important factors in assessing military necessity whereby the harm caused to civilians or civilian property must be proportional and not excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated by an attack on a military objective. For a war to remain just (even when other just war demands have been fulfilled) therefore, the acts of war should be directed towards *enemy combatants*, and not towards non-combatants caught in circumstances they did not create. Some of the prohibited acts include:

- Bombing civilian residential areas that include no military target.
- Committing acts of terrorism or reprisal against ordinary civilians.
- The use of chemical and biological weapons.

These concerns of *jus in bello* have become a matter of urgency since the last century because of the weapons of mass destruction. This is equally why terrorism and other guerrilla warfare are variously condemned because they unconventionally neglect these principles. In the beginning of the twentieth century only 10%-15% of those who died in war were civilians. In Second World War, more than 50% of those who died were civilians. By the end of the century over 75% of those killed in war were civilians. In conformity to the assessment of the Second Vatican Council's evaluation of this "*slaughter culture*" of our time, the American Conference of Catholic Bishops stated that:

The crisis of the moment is embodied in the threat which nuclear weapons pose for the world and much that we hold dear in the world. We have seen and felt the effects of the crisis of the nuclear age in the lives of people we serve. Nuclear weaponry has drastically changed the nature of warfare, and the arms race poses a threat to human life and human civilization which is without precedent".<sup>173</sup>

Unfortunately, belligerents of our time attempt out-smarting or outwitting the stipulations of the United Nations' Charter by basing their defense on the principle of double effect.<sup>174</sup> This set of criteria states that, even having foreseen harmful effects of an action which is practically inseparable from the good effect; it is justifiable upon the satisfaction of the following:

- The nature of the act is itself good, or at least morally neutral.
- The agent intends the good effect and not the bad either as a means to the good or as an end itself.
- The good effect outweighs the bad effect in circumstances sufficiently grave to justify causing the bad effect even when the agent exercises due diligence to minimize the harm.<sup>175</sup> An example that explains the above line of thought is as follows: If an army base in the middle of a city is bombed and a few civilians living nearby are killed as well, nothing unethical has been done, because the army base was a legitimate target and the death of civilians were not the intention or target of bombing (even though their death could be predicted but is considered as a lesser evil).

A critical assessment of the discussions so far reveals the deficiency of these suggested solutions of the modern man. So far, these possible solutions are tilted

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<sup>173</sup> United States National Conference of Catholic Bishops: The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and our Response (A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace), (May 3, 1983) p.1.

<sup>174</sup> The principle of double effect or rule of double effect is a set of ethical criteria for evaluating the permissibility of acting when one's legitimate action will also cause an effect which one would normally be obliged to avoid.

<sup>175</sup> As expressed in the thought of Thomas Aquinas (in his treatment of homicidal self-defense found in his *Summa Theologiae*, Ila-IIae Q. 64, art. 7).

towards deterrence and nothing is said about a total disarmament.<sup>176</sup> According to Michael Walzer:

Supreme emergency has become a permanent condition. Deterrence is a way of coping with that condition, and though it is a bad way, there may well be no other that is practical in a world of sovereign and suspicious States. We threaten evil in order not to do it, and the doing of it would be so terrible that the threat seems in comparison to be morally defensible.<sup>177</sup>

Walzer's analysis of the modern superiority complex or craze for supremacy among nations is apt but the most crucial observation he made is that "*it is the bad way*". Deterrence is not really an adequate strategy to peace but rather the remote cause of the malady of the arms race that has plunged the international politics into a spree of perpetual bloodshed. The arms race is one of the greatest curses on human race; it is to be condemned as a danger, an act of aggression against the poor, and a folly which does not provide the security it promises.<sup>178</sup> The logic that upholds deterrence is the knowledge of the fact that, nation *A* possesses as much destructive weaponry capability as nation *B* eventually tranquilizes virulent actions of the two. This may be possible, but such an imposed quietude is deficient and lacks the full attributes of peace as *shalom* (as we will see later). It recalls our rationalist's definition of war as "*lacking proper reason*". It is a lacuna in human logic that takes for granted that man is a bundle of *possibilities*. It plunges humanity into perpetual fear of each other and is devoid of mutual trust that engenders real peaceful co-

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<sup>176</sup> See details of these terms below on deterrence and disarmament.

<sup>177</sup> Michael Walzer, Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical illustrations (New York: Basic Books, 1977), p. 274.

<sup>178</sup> Vatican II Document, "Pastoral Constitution (Gaudium et spes)" #81. See also, Statement of the Holy See to the United Nations, 1976.

existence. It was in this frame of mind that the pontiff, Pope John XXIII, totally disagreed with the theory of deterrence when he wrote:

The fundamental principle on which our present peace depends must be replaced by another which declares that the true and solid peace of nations consists not in equality of arms but in mutual trust alone."<sup>179</sup>

The pontiff was right because the path to genuine peace is far from the kind of value that *fear and trembling for a superior enemy* can achieve. Peace is not found in a "*pacified*" situation but in a situation of mutual trust among men, as the pontiff suggested.

### **Proportionality**

Furthermore, just war conduct should be governed by the principle of proportionality which decreed that only appropriate force should be used at war. This principle of proportionality concerns how much force is morally appropriate. The implication of this is that the force used must be proportional to the wrong endured, and to the possible good that may come with victory. So even when the intention is justified and the other conditions are legitimate, the means used (to right the wrong suffered) must be in proportion to the wrong to be righted. For instance, destroying an enemy city with a nuclear weapon in retaliation for the invasion of an uninhabited island would make that war unethical, even though the cause of the war was just. War must prevent more evil and human suffering than it causes. To this effect, the Geneva Convention protocol on use of weaponry (1925) banned the use of weapons that are intrinsically evil (*mala in se- evil in themselves*)

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<sup>179</sup> Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris-Peace on Earth* (1963): #113.

which kill indiscriminately once they are used, especially chemical and biological weapons. Other essential prohibitions towards sanitizing warfare in the recent times include those of the Hague Conventions.<sup>180</sup> These are:

- The use of poison or poisoned weapons.
- Killing or wounding treacherously or even inappropriately e.g. Beheading, maiming or any kind of dismembering human body in a disgraceful way. The recent example of this war crime took place in the Sierra Leonean Civil war. An international court modeled after the Nuremberg tribunal convicted three top Sierra Leonean rebel leaders of crimes against humanity committed during Sierra Leone's 11-year civil war, in which about a half-million people were victims of killings, systematic mutilation and other atrocities .The war ended in 2002.<sup>181</sup>
- Killing or wounding an enemy who, surrenders at his discretion and laid down his arms.
- The use of arms, projectiles, or material calculated to cause unnecessary suffering.

Just war conduct is poised to minimize the use of *force* as much as possible in both international and internal political scenes. Any attack or action in use must be an attack on a military objective, and the harm caused to civilians or civilian property must be proportional and not excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated. This principle is meant to limit excessive and unnecessary death and destruction. However, Esther Hamutal Shamash has this to

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<sup>180</sup> Cf. Hague Convention (IV) of 1907, with particular reference to articles 22 and 23. These stipulated the limited powers of belligerents on the use of unconventional weapons and established a total ban on the use of poison and other cruel method of death at war.

<sup>181</sup> Clarence Roy-Macaulay, Bookmarks Prints: Associated Press Writers . Wed. Feb 25, 2009. (Yahoo.com World News).

say about the flaws of the principle of proportionality, especially as regards its applications by the United Nations:

The Principle of Proportionality, codified in Protocol I, additional to the Geneva Conventions, defines as disproportionate any attack in which the incidental damage to civilians is excessive in relation to the military advantage anticipated from the attack. However, it is close to impossible to pinpoint exactly what is meant by "excessive."...this vagueness is not a coincidence, but rather a tool, serving the purposes of attacking states. It is argued that international legal discourse blurs this definition, and this is demonstrated with reference to NATO's operations in Kosovo. It is submitted that, despite this, it would be beneficial to define this requirement more clearly, and a way in which this could be accomplished is suggested.<sup>182</sup>

Even though this excerpt sounds like an allegation against the U.N.O. (which is not within the scope of this study), it still illuminates the fact that if not well spelt out in definite terms and executed accordingly, this principle will become obsolete; regarded as mere legalism and shirked with flimsy claims and arguments from the indicted nations.

### **3:5. Jus post bellum**

Having discussed the rules of just conduct under the two broad principles (distinction or discrimination and proportionality) one strong observable implication upon analysis of these principles is that a nation fighting an unjust cause may still fight justly, or vice versa. A third principle however, has been added to those traditional two already discussed, namely the principle of *responsibility*, which demands an examination of where responsibility lies after the war.

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<sup>182</sup> Esther Hamutal Shamash, "How Much is Too Much? An Examination of the Principle of Jus in Bello Proportionality" Israel Defense Forces Law Review, Vol. 2, 2005-2006 Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=908369>. Date posted: June 15, 2006 ; Last revised: September 20, 2007.

In recent years, some theorists, such as Gary Bass and Louis Iasiello, have proposed a third category within just war theory which concerns justice after the war.

In his recent stunning contribution to this aspect (*jus post bellum*) of just war ethic, Brian Orend<sup>183</sup> explored the ethics of war and peace from a Kantian perspective of how lasting peace might be established among states with prevention of recurrence of war. In his work, Kant's just war doctrine came to life again as Orend emphasized human rights protection, the role of international law (he emphasized the role of NATO and the UN and humanitarian interventions) and a global concept of justice. He called for a new perspective on international relations especially emphasizing responsibility and the need for the "victor" states to take responsibility of revamping both the economy and infrastructural welfare of the loser state.<sup>184</sup>

The *jus post bellum* principle also stipulated that a state may terminate a war if there has been a reasonable vindication of the rights that were violated in the first place, and if the aggressor is willing to negotiate the terms of surrender. These terms of surrender include:

- A formal apology.
- Compensations.
- War crimes trials and perhaps rehabilitation.

Alternatively a state may end a war if it becomes clear that any just goals of the war cannot be reached at all or cannot be reached without using excessive force.

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<sup>183</sup> Brian Orend is a professor of Ethics at the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario. His works focus on just war theory and human rights. He is most well-known for his discussions of *jus post bellum* (justice after war), which regards the moral obligations on victors once the major fighting of a war is complete.

<sup>184</sup> Brian Orend, War and international justice: A Kantian perspective: (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, June 2000).

A state should only terminate a war under the conditions agreed upon according to the above criteria. Revenge is not permitted. The victor state must also be willing to apply the same level of objectivity and investigation into any war crimes that its armed forces may have committed as that regarding the vanquished state. The terms of peace must be made by a legitimate authority, and the terms must be accepted by a legitimate authority. In other words, only legitimate authorities are entitled to make legally binding decisions towards a peaceful settlement.

Punitive measures must not be universal. It must be directed to those directly responsible for the war crimes (the culprits) alone. Restoring the inalienable right to freedom/peace and respect for the noncombatants are the primary objectives in *jus post bellum*. Truth and reconciliation may sometimes be more important than punishing war crimes.

One of the best, recent and successful implementation of this goal of *jus post bellum* is the formation of The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was a court-like body commissioned in South Africa after the abolition of apartheid. The TRC was set up in terms of the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, No. 34 of 1995, and was based in Cape Town. The mandate of the commission was to bear witness, record, rehabilitate war victims and in some cases grant amnesty to the war crime perpetrators (who deserve the privilege). As a crucial component of the transition to full and free democracy in South Africa, it was designed to provide opportunity

for the victims of apartheid violence to be heard publicly. It was not strictly punitive but also gave the perpetrators of violence the same opportunity to give testimony and request amnesty from prosecution. In reference to this, William Kentridge wrote:

A full confession can bring amnesty and immunity from prosecution or civil procedures for the crimes committed. Therein lays the central irony of the Commission. As people give more and more evidence of the things they have done they get closer and closer to amnesty and it gets more and more intolerable that these people should be given amnesty."<sup>185</sup>

The work of the TRC was accomplished through three committees:

- The Human Rights Violations, Committee investigated human rights abuses that occurred between 1960 and 1994.
- The Reparation and Rehabilitation Committee was charged with restoring victims' dignity and formulating proposals to assist them with rehabilitation.
- The Amnesty Committee considered applications from individuals who applied for amnesty in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

So a critical look at the structure of the above described commission (which is a model of all its kind all over the world), already gives us a glimpse of what the task of *jus post bellum* is all about. It tends to offer protection from draconian measures and attempts of denying the surrendered country (or loser party) the right to participate in the world community. *Jus post bellum*, therefore, like other traditionally known aspects of just war ethic, is focused at establishing true justice and promoting peaceful co-existence among people.

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<sup>185</sup> Jane Taylor, Kentridge William. "Director's Note". Ubu and the Truth Commission: (Cape Town South Africa: University of Cape Town Press, 2007)p. viii-xv.

### 3:6. Critique of Just War Theory

The basic starting point of just war theory is that while war may be terrible, it is nevertheless sometimes a necessary aspect of politics. A major commendable merit of the just war theory is that, unlike “holy wars,” where claims and counter claims of divine designations are posited, it never affirmed that war was something morally good. It rather assumed that war is evil and participation in it is morally questionable. The theory’s meritorious qualities lie in its efforts to identify the conditions under which war could be tolerated in the effort to avoid some greater injustice and bloodshed. One of the most remarkable features of the JWT has been its flexibility and longevity. It has been adapted and changed throughout the centuries in response to the technologies and methodologies of combat. In fact, due to its objectivity and relevance to human realities; it’s been able to stand the test of time and so has been moderated to take new types of war techniques and technological developments into account. However, this doggedness of the theory is still under pressure at the face of the recent exigencies of the international political scene

One major difficulty of this theory is its tilt towards absolutism. It is a moral theory with justice as its goal but is couched in politico-legal terms so it becomes very difficult for skeptics, militarists and realists to accept and comply to.<sup>186</sup> However War does not exist outside of moral deliberation. The argument that moral

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<sup>186</sup> Militarism - Militarism is the belief that war is not inherently bad but can be a beneficial aspect of society. Realism - The core proposition of realism is skepticism as to whether moral concepts such as justice can be applied to the conduct of international affairs. Proponents of realism believe that moral concepts should never prescribe, nor circumscribe, a state’s behavior. Instead, a state should place an emphasis on state security and self-interest.

categories do not apply to war is not convincing, in the same way the claim that war is inherently a moral evil is not convincing either. Therefore, it must be possible to subject wars to moral standards according to which some wars will be found more just and others unjust.

International politics are presently so complex that the rights and interests of one nation affect and sometimes disentangle the interests of another nation. The resultant effect is that due to the popularity of this theory (especially in the western bloc) the international scene is often being thrown into confusion as belligerent countries try to interpret and misinterpret the just war principles in order to remain credibly justified in their involvement in wars. One big issue, therefore, which JWT poses, has always been the fact that every bellicose nation will always claim to be just in its motifs for waging a war against another. There are always claims of legitimacy as regards competency to wage wars; a good example will be the circumstances surrounding the Persian Gulf War of 1991. Sadaam Hussein( the Iraqi leader) justified his invasion of Kuwait on the basis of land taken from Iraq and given to Kuwait by the British and the fact that Kuwait was pumping oil on the border which rightfully belonged to Iraq. President Bush (U.S.A) countered by trying to downplay his economic interest (e.g., that oil and gas importation to the West from that area was being jeopardized) and sought to focus on the moral dimensions (e.g., Hussein was a brutal Hitler who ordered an unprovoked invasion on helpless and innocent Kuwait). This kind of example could be found from both sides of every modern, and possibly every ancient war. The urge to find, or at least to rationalize

and fabricate a moral justification for conflict is irresistible. In the case of the 2003 invasion of Iraq as well, the question of whether the invasion would be a just war was posed. Many of those on both sides of the debate framed their arguments in terms of the just war. They came to quite different conclusions because they put different interpretations on how the just war criteria should be applied. Supporters of the war tended to accept the US position that the enforcement of UN resolutions was sufficient authority, or even that the United States of America as a sovereign nation could count as legitimate authority. Opponents of the war tended to interpret legitimate authority as requiring a specific Security Council resolution. This kind of dilemma brings to fore the weakness of this theory even though Article 3 of the 1949 Geneva Conventions side-stepped this kind of issue. It stated that if one of the parties to a civil war is a "*high contracting party*" (a state recognized by the international community), and the other one is not, both parties to the conflict are bound to comply with the humanitarian principles of the organization (U.N.O). Article 4 of the Third Geneva Convention also makes it clear that the fair treatment of prisoners of war is binding on both parties even when captured soldiers have allegiance to a government or an authority that is not recognized by the detaining power.

But the biggest flaw of this theory is that it is fast being eluded by the fact that wars of the modern times are transcending boundaries of its coverage. Terrorism and other guerilla warfare where battles are fought unconventionally are good examples of the aforementioned point. Moreover, wars have gone international; it is now a

general concern rather than conventional or sectional affairs of the concerned nations. The major reason for this shift is the development and introduction of weapons of mass destruction (*mala in se*): atomic bombs, biological war-heads and other nuclear weaponry. Commenting on this issue Shannon states:

In the past, wars have been limited fairly much to the territories of the belligerent nations..., Such is not the case with nuclear war. Once a high level of radioactivity is released into the atmosphere, its effects endure for years and the health and ecological consequences of this will be incredible...While it was possible in the past to think of war affecting primarily only those nations who were waging it. This is no longer viable because of the consequences of nuclear war.<sup>187</sup>

This point raised by Shannon must be taken seriously because it actually touches on the very fabric of this theory. In the first place, in the event of the use of these weapons of mass destruction there is no time for anyone to consult or scrutinize the competence of authorities that used them at war.

Another flaw is the very fact that victory must be the reasonable prospect of any war, for it to be a just war. This also is meaningless at face of a nuclear attack and its consequent radioactive fallout. This is because the effect of these dangerous weapons render both the conqueror and the conquered lifeless. In fact, anyone who survives will be the loser because life after a nuclear weapon attack will be a disastrous one.

Furthermore, the immunity of the non-combatants as proposed by just war, in terms of conduct *jus in bello*, is defied variously by the non-discriminating effects of radioactivity emitted into the ecosystem. When all these glaring facts and realities

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<sup>187</sup> Shannon, What Are They Saying About Peace and War? p. 116-117.

of our nuclear age are summed up, one is left wondering how relevant the just war theory has been of late to modern man.

However, JWT has rendered service to educate authorities and to prevent some wars, but perhaps some of its line of arguments are becoming obsolete for the modern society and need to be either reframed or even substituted with better and more plausible solutions that answer the modern questions. This is because with it, hundreds of horrible bloody wars have occurred in the last 1600 years for which flimsy and false justifications were given by their perpetrators.

### **3:7. Arms Race**

The core notion of just war ethics, inherited from Thomas Aquinas, was self defense as a logical justification for engaging at war as a last resort. Unfortunately this positive aspect of the theory has been negatively transformed to "*a dark side*" of modern man's experience of that theory, especially as it's been misappropriated and misinterpreted by nations of our time. In the pretence of self defense, nations now amass weapons (including mass destructive ones) even at the expense of the welfare of the masses. The unhealthy competition technically is referred to as "*Mutually Assured Destruction.*" This is literally described as a situation whereby nations engage in the craze of fortifying themselves with massive destructive weapons in readiness for war or similar altercations. The logic here is that since both sides knew that any attack upon the other would be suicidal for them as well, they would (in theory) refrain from attacking one another. This flimsy reason, if not

only foolhardy, is very deceptive because it never takes into consideration the fact that, nuclear weapons aren't really weapons; they are devices of unimaginable destruction that draw no boundaries between soldiers and civilians, men and women, the old and the young. They corrupt by their very presence in the society. They aggravate belligerency and mastermind cold war among nations. The arms race contributes to a culture of secrecy and animosity. It undermines democracy, disrespect life and human dignity. These accumulated weapons are ready to exterminate humanity in seconds and must not be toyed with. The arms race often impoverishes nations. For instance, some of the nations who parade themselves as *nuclear power nations* today are nations that are struggling hard with economic stability and even are ranked among nations that can hardly take care of hunger issues in their countries.

In his article "*A turning of heads not a twist of fate, prevents peace*", Douglas Roche, a Canadian senator, estimated world military expenditure to be about \$781 billion as against only \$7 billion per year estimated by UNICEF for education. He was actually decriing the fact that:

The human right – of educating all children would cost the world community less than one one-hundredth of what it spends on arms per year.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Breakthrough News: Global Education Associates (Jan- April 2001) . p.9.

Note: Senator Douglas Roche, O. C. of Canada, Chairman of GEA (Global Education Associates) from 1990 to 1996 is a member of the Board of International Advisors. He is the chairman of the Middle Powers Initiative, (an NGO network working to abolish nuclear weapons). Senator Roche was recently awarded the 2000 Josephine Pomerance Award of the UN NGO Committee on Disarmament.

### 3:8. Mutual Disarmament: A Way Forward

However gruesome this situation may be, there are rays of hope. As a remedy and a kind of a step forward, an off-shoot of JWT seeks to restore its relevance to modern minds by introducing the concept of *mutual disarmament* among nations. In their stunning contribution to this new way of re-establishing the force of this theory, the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), insisted that the ideal approach to peace in our time will be:

A common policy of progressive bilateral disarmament built on mutual trust between nations and not imposed on them through fear of weapons or by equilibrium of terror.<sup>189</sup>

As a follow up to this *pluri-dimensional* statement an American Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen, stated that:

I believe that one obvious meaning of the cross is unilateral disarmament. Jesus' acceptance of the cross rather than the sword raised in his defense is the Gospel's statement of unilateral disarmament. We are called to follow. Our security as people of faith lies not in demonic weapons which threaten all life on earth. Our security is in a loving, caring God. We must dismantle our weapons of terror and place our reliance on God"<sup>190</sup>

Basing his conviction on the Christian injunction- "*Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple*" (Lk 14:27), Hunthausen said that in our day we must think of the concrete and practical ways in which we need to take up the cross. He admired the fact that "*taking up the cross*" for Jesus in his epoch meant "*being willing to die at the hands of political authorities for the truth of the Gospel*". He

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<sup>189</sup> James J. Norris, "International Order" *Vatican 11: An Interfaith Appraisal*. Ed. John H. Miller, (Notre Dame & London, 1966)p. 501.

<sup>190</sup> Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthausen, "Faith and Disarmament." Speech delivered to the Pacific Northwest Synod for the Lutheran Church in America, June 12, 1981.

therefore, insisted that in our era, "*taking up the cross*" might require unilateral nuclear disarmament of all people and nations. In other words, the Cross-event for modern man should translate into a systematic non-violent love that must seek no harm to fellow humans but promote such a tranquility that assures co-existence of all humans on earth.

So, after all is said and done, disarmament seems to be reasonable and closer to recapturing the divine will of peace and tranquility among men. For a world under the imminent threat of deadly weaponry (which sometime encourages their holder to wage wars), disarmament (if ideally complied) will be a sure sign of the dawn of a new era, of an idyllic world as depicted by Isaiah (11:6-9):

And the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in my entire holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah's idyllic world depicts a culture of love and peace. It says "*NO*" to war in all its ramifications. It prefers co-existence and non-violence, over violence. It is all about peace and tranquility over the earth. So for us to attain this ideal we need a *mental revolution*, we need to realize that laws or theories may help, but the way to have peace demands that all men must realize that wars are purely manmade. The authorities that declare wars are humans and thus, the so called "*war-culture*" will not stop until each human person and society "*bends*" their hearts and attitudes to a "*love-culture*": a culture of nonviolence enthroned over that of violence.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **4:1. DIVINE JUSTICE AND PEACE AMONG MEN**

Throughout this study, we have reflected on war as a pervasive element in human interaction, as far as the historical memory reaches. It is one of those human problems to which Man has no clear answer, as regards why he engages in it or why he should not. Unfortunately it has always been there and is as old as human existence itself. We have also made an appraisal of the various conceptions of man's attitude to war through religious systems of belief. We have studied the adherents of the holy war, who claimed that their passive or active participation in wars are responses to God's command, as exhibited by Israel and Islam. Just war theory and its humanitarian/ legalistic precepts were not left out. But after all is said and done, violence, injustice, excessive economic or social inequalities, envy, distrust and pride raging among men and nations continue to threaten peace and to cause wars in our world. My evaluation of all these orientations is that they produce a very narrow analysis of the current exigencies. In my opinion, data about the arms-race and the reality of nuclear war seem to be squeezed into an extremely narrow framework that can barely accommodate the challenges confronting modern man. From all indications therefore, a new orientation is imperative for the modern world to

survive the monstrous threat of imminent extermination posed by the new challenges of the modern warfare technologies. The Second Vatican Council's pastoral Constitution- (*Gaudium et spes*), offers a useful stepping stone out of this maze of theories and concepts. It states:

Insofar as men are sinners, the threat of war hangs over them and will so continue until Christ comes again but insofar as they can vanquish sin by coming together in charity; violence itself will be vanquished and these words will be fulfilled: "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore"<sup>191</sup>

Doctrinal chauvinism may distract the uncritical reader of the above statement from appreciating the inherent truth of these words. It unequivocally presents the convincing fact that Christ is the "Prince of peace". However, in as much as Christianity is concerned, the fact remains categorically true, the larger picture, to which the view is pointing, is that, as long as men relegate God to the background, war (which is a direct effect of inconsequential life) will continue to ravage the world, and peace will remain elusive. The basic import of the Council message here is that in God we find peace, He is the sole source of peace. Buttressing this point in an attempt to probe into the real nature of peace, the Council Fathers stated that:

Peace is not merely the absence of war. Nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies. Nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called "an enterprise of justice" (Isa. 32:7). Peace results from that harmony built into human society by its divine founder and actualized by men as they thirst after ever greater justice<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> *Gaudium et spes*, #78:  
See also, Isa. 2:4-9

<sup>192</sup> [Vatican Council II Document\(Pastoral Constitution\) #78](#)

Therefore Peace is both a gift of God and a human work and must be constructed on the basis of central human values: truth, justice, freedom, and love. This same line of thoughts tallies with Shannon's position when he posits that:

The new orientation suggests that peace be the beginning premise rather than the conclusion of one's methodology. By this I mean that one must engage in the process of developing theology of peace so that one may be working actively toward establishing structures in society and relationships among people that will help insure peace rather than see peace only as the end product of armed conflict.<sup>193</sup>

The phrase *theology of peace* is of importance to us in this section since it links us to a comprehensive grasp of the nature of God from whom justice and peace emanate. Peace here transcends the usual definition as the absence of conflicts and strife. It must therefore, be qualified since our age has become so relativistic that objectivity is no longer the stronghold of truth. It is peace according to Maimonides, as that true natural state of man- a state that was interrupted by *primeval sin* and which waits redemption by an *awareness of the Divine truth* from the abyss of violence into which impulse and emotionalism has plunged mankind. For him:

Just as a blind man, who cannot see, stumbles, injures himself and causes harm to others ... groups of people, due to their stupidity, grievously harm themselves and others. Through knowledge of truth, enmity and strife are averted, and people will no longer harm each other. The reason for the disappearance of hatred, hostility and struggles is people's awareness, at that time, of the Divine truth.<sup>194</sup>

Maimonides traced the source of violence, war and other acts of inflicting of harm on one another, to irrationality and ignorance. For him, the comprehension of truth, i.e. "*knowledge of God*," displaces man's natural inclination to seek illusory goods

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<sup>193</sup>Shannon, *What are they Saying about Peace and War*, p.112.

<sup>194</sup> Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed* 3:11.

and interests, and also completely eliminates the irrational factors that arouse mutual conflicts between individuals, groups and nations. In other words, the ability to attain this *intellectual perfection* is the *guarantor of Peace*. He took the issue to the next level, giving a rationalistic turn to it by emphasizing the efficacy of man's reasoning, and accordingly implied that war is a product of reason or lack of it. Maimonides' point on the natural peaceful state of man was excellently rendered but he seemed to have reduced peace to a mere *triumph of rationalism* and so he attracted the contrasting view of Rabbi Avraham bar Hiyya, who rendered the point more positively by conceiving peace as divine intervention which will alter human nature and stimulate universal observance of the *mišvah*- loving one's neighbor as oneself. Stressing this point Rabbi Hiyya said:

This mitzvah {Love of your neighbor as yourself} will pertain and be fulfilled by all the world's inhabitants in those days. If all the world's inhabitants will love one another as one loves himself, naturally, enmity, hostility and envy, will be eradicated from the world and these are the factors which produce war and killing in this world.<sup>195</sup>

A miraculous divine intervention is stressed here as the basic transforming impulse on man's inclination to evil. The implication of this statement is that pure and genuine peace emanates from God. He is *YHWH shalom*- Lord of peace-(Judg. 6:24, Isa. 45:7, Ps 35:27). The Psalmist (4:9) and Isaiah (26:3), summarized it all by stating that whoever places confidence in him can lie down to sleep in peace. In the actual sense, Man desires peace from the very depths of his being. But he is frequently ignorant of the nature and benefits of that to which he intensely aspires,

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<sup>195</sup> Cf. Nachmanides, Commentary on Deuteronomy 30:6, 28:42.

\*The mitzva refers to 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' See also: Avraham bar Hiyya, Shaar Hegyon HaNefesh (As quoted in "The Pursuit of Peace in Classical Jewish Sources" by Moshe Sokolow).

so he often seeks it outside of God, who is the embodiment of peace, and ends up in anarchy of violence/war and other conflicts. It was in the light of this understanding that St Augustine defined peace as “*tranquillitas ordinis*”- the tranquility that comes from order (the peace that comes from order or a just peace). Augustine actually contends that the only legitimate end that one can seek in a war situation is not found in anarchy but in social stability and this kind order can only be a divine gift. To appreciate the full flavor and value of the reality concealed beneath this concept, we must savor the flavor of its full meaning as expressed in the Hebrew word *shalom* (שלום). Just before we focus on the Hebrew concept of shalom, it will be worthwhile to highlight the general concept of peace among the neighboring people (especially the Jebusites). Hans Heinrich Schmid summarized the basic ideas in three concepts: “overflowing fertility, living in safety, and security against the enemy and wild animals.<sup>196</sup> However, the Hebrew concept of the subject is somewhat different in terms of deeper religious insights and the total link of the concept with the Creator. Benjamin Davidson in his *Analytical and Chaldee Lexicon*, describes the basic meaning of *shalom* among the Hebrews as: “wholesomeness, integrity, perfection and well-being”.<sup>197</sup>

This broad meaning derives mainly from the Book of Leviticus (26, esp. 3-7). *Shalom* can then be defined as: “the welfare and state of completion of all creatures,

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<sup>196</sup> Hans Heinrich Schmid, *Salom, “Frieden” im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament*. (Stuttgart, 1971)p. 58.

<sup>197</sup> Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 13, Jerusalem, 1991, Col. 194; cf. Benjamin Davidson, *The Analytical and Chaldee Lexicon*.( London, 1970) p.720f.

arising from a divine will for peace, including their peaceful coexistence in a way of life based on God's Commandments".<sup>198</sup> Its usages designate the fact of "being intact and complete" (Job 9, 4), e.g., the action of re-establishing things to their former state and their integrity (Ps 50, 14). Biblical peace, then, is not only the "pact" which permits a tranquil life, nor the "time of peace" in opposition to "the time of war" (Eccl. 3,8; Ap 6,4). It also indicates the well-being of daily existence, the state of the man who lives in harmony with neighbor, nature, with himself, with God. It's all about a concrete experience of solidarity that should underlie life in the society, as St Augustine earlier reflected. This concept of shalom is concretely expressed in the corporate life situation of the ancient Israel, whereby every member had a responsibility toward all others. It was a situation where active cooperation and mutual concern were imperative. There was a dynamic interchange and mutual understanding between the individual, the group, including leaders, patriarchs, kings, nobility, priests and common people. Even though there was a later abuse of this principle of embodiment (e.g. many came to believe that later generation will be visited with the consequences of the misdeeds of their ancestors). As a matter of fact, this false conception of reality was the subject matter of passages like Jeremiah 31:29-30, Ezek. 18).<sup>199</sup> Shalom was not discussed in isolation of the milieu in which Israel was situated, a world view in which a bilateral treaty was a basis for peace and harmony between nations or groups throughout the region. So transgression of the commandments which the vassal had accepted was the

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<sup>198</sup> Walter Homolka & Albert H. Friedlander, The Gate to Perfection: The Idea of Peace in Jewish Thought. (Berghahn Books Inc. USA, 1977) p.6.

<sup>199</sup> H.W. Robinson, Corporate Personality in Ancient Israel: (Philadelphia Pennsylvania:Fortress Press, 1980).

occasion for a court case and punishment. Thus it is not surprising why God, who often deals with man with realities familiar to his realm of intelligence, used this cultural phenomenon to relate with his chosen nation Israel. Reflecting on this issue Norbert Lohfink defined covenant as:

The common and general term for the relationship of God to a particular group through which he acts in the world<sup>200</sup>

In the light of this definition, it becomes comprehensible when the fifteenth chapter of Genesis describes the unilateral covenant whereby God committed Himself irrevocably to Abraham and his descendants.<sup>201</sup> But the other covenant experiences- were bilateral involving responsibilities on both sides. Thus Exodus (19-20) depicts the Sinai covenant as the formation of a people who are promised a land wherein they will be free to serve the one God and him alone (Exod.19:4-6).

Describing this relationship, Lawrence E. Frizzell summarized it thus:

The covenant is a pure gift flowing from divine initiative and graciousness, an expression of steadfast love (Hesed) which is multifaceted and integral to the very name of God (the name manifesting the person -Exod. 3:14; 34:6-7). The response to this gift is called hesed as well and translated as "loyalty" that is a devotion made explicit through keeping the commandments.<sup>202</sup>

The major aim of the Covenant was to achieve wholesomeness, tranquility, and harmony of all people and creatures, especially with reference to their relationship

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<sup>200</sup> Norbert Lohfink: The Covenant Never Revoked: Biblical Reflections on Christian-Jewish Dialogue. Trans. John J Scullion: (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press. 1991) p.10.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

\*In Scripture, the personal relationship between God and man is based upon and mediated through means of covenants. God wants to bind Himself to His people to keep His promises so that He can demonstrate in history His character. The nature of a biblical covenant is of two types: conditional and unconditional. A conditional covenant is of the nature that God makes a promise to man conditioned by "if you will" whereby He then promises to bring about the covenantal promises. An unconditional covenant is a sovereign act of God whereby He fulfills the covenantal promises made with an individual regardless of man's obedience or disobedience. This type of covenant is characterized by "I will" which declares that God alone will bring about the promises.

<sup>202</sup> Lawrence E. Frizzell, "Hebrew Bible and Peace", World Encyclopedia of Peace: Vol.1. (A-M). (Oxford:Pergamon Press, 1986). See also, Lawrence E. Frizzell, "Mary's Magnificat ;Sources and Themes" Marian Studies. Vol.50 (1999).

with their Creator. The functional word *hesed* plays a reciprocal part which must not be ignored; it virtually makes everyone in the treaty responsible and a peacemaker.

In addition to this covenantal disposition, another implication or effect of shalom was that it was the goal of the corporate concept of reality that gave life a pilgrimage outlook<sup>203</sup>. The people lived in a situation where all pilgrims join others in an experience that manifests the sacred meaning of life, growth and transformation. In this sense, the *temple* became a *city of peace* which continued to orient them towards the age of universal peace, promised by the prophets, especially Isaiah and Micah, when all creatures will learn and adhere to the precepts of YHWH and will no longer be disposed to be bellicose or belligerent but will sue for a peaceful co-existence of all mankind.<sup>204</sup> A.J Heschel described this situation as when *passion for war will be subdued by a greater passion: the passion to discover God's ways.*<sup>205</sup> In the same vein, Homolka and Friedlander offered their view that such a unification of all peoples will then lead to the end of all strife and will facilitate eternal peace for mankind.<sup>206</sup> Summarily the prophet Isaiah envisions the possibility of settling all strife by peaceful means as a reality that can only be offered through divine justice and the willingness of people to accept moral action and voluntary destruction of all weapons.<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Pilgrimage was regarded as a journey, with specific goals involving a sense of purpose and commitment.

<sup>204</sup> Lawrence E. Frizzell, 1993, "Temple and Community Foundations for Johannine Spirituality", *Mystics of the Book*, R. A. Herrera (ed.), Peter Lang, New York.

See also: *World Encyclopedia of Peace, Vol. 1*, (1986), "Hebrew Bible and Peace", (Pergamon Press, Oxford.).

<sup>205</sup> Abraham J. Heschel, *The Prophets*, (Philadelphia, 1982) p.184.

<sup>206</sup> Homolka & Friedlander, *The Gate of Perfection*; p.11.

<sup>207</sup> Isaiah 2:3-4.

The pursuit of this quality of peace is also linked with the search for righteousness/justice (*ṣedeqah*) and right judgment (*mišpat*) in society. The terms judgment and justice when mentioned immediately connotes: a juridical order, the quality of being just, righteousness, equity, moral rightness, rightfulness or lawfulness, justness of ground or reason, just conduct, administering of deserved reward or punishment, to give each one his due and to bring to justice. These activities are imitation of the righteousness or integrity (*ṣedeqah*) of God who calls for norms for goodness and honesty in legislative and judicial orders (Exod. 23:1-3).

An African appraisal of the above sense of corporate/communality and justice among the Jews is pertinent at this stage of our study. Among the Igbos of the southern Nigeria, the proverb which brings out the full import of the Igbo sense of justice is that of: "*egbe bere ugo bere, nke si lbeya ebena, nku kwapu ya*". This proverb literally means: "*Let the Kite perch and let the Eagle perch also; whichever says the other will not perch, let its wings break off.*" Its basic principle is "*live-and-let live*" which stresses also the principle of fairness, fraternity, liberty and equality of all. It is justice that accommodates all in the community – the rich and the poor, the young and the old. Acts of justice are all embedded in the concept of *omenala*, literarily translated as the "acceptable acts" but it strictly translates the English "*tradition and customs*" of a people.<sup>208</sup> Any action which does not contradict the *Omenala* principles is regarded as a straightforward action. In other words, action which is in conformity with the

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<sup>208</sup> *Omenala* or *Omenani*: These words literally mean legitimate acts and reactions observed in the land. It includes all the provisions, prohibitions, traditional beliefs and practices, which are contained in the unwritten code of law and customs and are brought down from ancestor to posterity.

requirements of the custom and traditions is justified. It must fit into the patterns outlined by the tradition – *Omenala* – which contains also all the duties of the *Umunna*( the community and its members both in vertical and horizontal directions). There is also the concept of “*aru*” which refers to actions that directly contravene the *Omenala* and are classified as taboos punishable by the laws of the land. *Omenala* defends the right of the innocent, the poor and punishes the wicked or evil-doer. It is justice that gives order and harmony in the community. *Omenala* is regarded as a primordial justice, a reality which in its nature is believed to involve, transparent honesty, innocence and fair play. For the *Igbos*, this high sense of justice sustains the mutuality, harmony and corporate link between the *Umunna* (community) and the individual members. Hence commenting on this mutuality, A.O. Iwuagwu wrote:

The Igbo emphasizes the need for corporate responsibility in social-economic matters. The problem of an individual is considered as the problem of the family or the community. There is always the emphasis on co-operation and mutual concern in the traditional religious community. People help one another in building their huts, in farming, in marriage (ceremonies) or in times of difficulty. According to this philosophy, the individual should neither suffer alone nor enjoy alone. Life and responsibilities are shared.<sup>209</sup>

It is this high sense of justice that commits him to Chineke-(the supreme God and the Creator) and of course, to his communal bond.

Justice, therefore, concerns the proper ordering of things and persons within a society. John Rawls, for instance, claims that "Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought."<sup>210</sup> In conformity with this view, studies

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<sup>209</sup> Iwuagwu A.O., 1966, "Chukwu: Towards a Definition of Igbo Traditional Religion" in *West African Religion*, Vol. XVI, no 1, Nsukka. p.26.

<sup>210</sup> John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*. (revised ed.) (Oxford University Press: 1999)p. 3.

at University of California/Los Angeles (UCLA 2008) have indicated that reactions to fairness are "wired" into the brain and that, "*Fairness is activating the same part of the brain that responds to food in rats... This is consistent with the notion that being treated fairly satisfies a basic need.*"<sup>211</sup> In other words *justice as fair-play* is as attractive to human brain as flowers are to the butterflies. This point is even buttressed and consolidated by the research conducted in 2003 at Emory University, Georgia. In this research, the Capuchin Monkeys were used to demonstrate that "*inequality aversion may not be uniquely human.*" This indicated that ideas of fairness and justice may be instinctual in nature.<sup>212</sup>The above mentioned findings and views points to one truth about humans, that is, the fact that justice and fair-play is a natural desire in all humans. So it becomes more comprehensive when the Israelites express their sense of justice as *imitatio Dei (imitation of God Creator of mankind) in whom justice abounds* and who filled the world with admixture of justice and mercy at creation to enable it to stand.<sup>213</sup>

The Jewish concept of justice and peace therefore cannot be isolated from its consequent *Şedeqah (righteousness) and mišpaṭ (justice)* connotations. For a comprehensive grasp of these concepts (*şedeqah and mišpaṭ*)), reference must be made to the Hebrew word חֶסֶד (*hesed*). The meaning of this word is very crucial to us

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<sup>211</sup> [UCLA News](#). Brain reacts to fairness as it does to money and chocolate, study shows / UCLA Newsroom.

<sup>212</sup> 18th September 2003 publication of *Nature* [425] p. 297-299.

\*International weekly *Nature* is a prominent scientific journal first published on 4 November 1869. It is one of the few journals, along with other weekly journals such as *Science* and *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* that still publishes original research articles across a wide range of scientific fields.

<sup>213</sup> S. Daniel Breslauer, "Jewish view of Justice". *A Dictionary of the Jewish-Christian Dialogue*. Ed. Leon Klenicki and Geoffrey Wigoder (New York / Mahwah: Pualist Press 1995) p.110-113.

because it is basically the key word that explains everything about the relational link between Israel and YHWH and indeed all humanity. Unfortunately חסד(*hesed*) is one of the most difficult Hebrew words to translate directly; this is because of its rich meanings and dual import. One of the major reasons for this is that transitionally, the word seems to have undergone several developments over the centuries of its usage. חסד(*hesed*) is translated as *eleos-mercy* in the Septuagint (LXX) and as *miserordia-mercy* in the Vulgate. In English it has been rendered as *loving-kindness* (*hesed va-emet*) of God towards mankind. This difficulty in finding the actual meaning makes it imperative, for us to seek the adequate meaning within the Hebrew cultural milieu. *Hesed* in the Hebrew cultural understanding actually designates two shades of meanings. It is one of those attributes that distinguishes God's extraordinary quality of descending unconditionally to the needs and welfare of his creatures even when they do not merit or deserve his kindness. This could be better understood in the context of God's covenant with his chosen people Israel, where it is designated as a "*pure gift, flowing from Divine initiative and graciousness, an expression of steadfast love which is multifaceted and integral to the very name of God*".<sup>214</sup> At the same time, it also designates the human response to this gesture of God, by doing what they are expected to do for God and their fellow humans. It is in other words, a kind of "loyalty, devotion to God made explicit through keeping the commandments". Whichever way it is used, the meaning is determined by the context. Perhaps, the best way to expound the real meaning of *hesed* will be to digress a little, to look at the various

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<sup>214</sup> Lawrence E. Frizzell, "Hebrew Bible and Peace" *World Encyclopedia of peace*:((1999) p. 96.

ways and particular words that are often associated with *hesed* in its everyday usage in the Bible.

*Hesed* is often associated with the word *mišpat* –*judgment signifying justice*. *Hesed*, in judgment, designates the notion of God who acts not as an *arbiter* in his dealings with humans but as a *deliverer*. Put in other words, God’s standard of judgment is dominated by his “will to save” rather than intent to punish. This is better understood in the context of another Hebrew word *yešua* – meaning-*salvation*. This is exemplified in the episode where the Psalmist who trusted in the *hesed* of God, rejoices in the deliverance of YHWH (Ps.13:5). Another excellent evidence of the use of the word in relation to salvation is found in Psalm 85:7, where the Psalmist prays that God should manifest his *hesed* and grant salvation.

Righteousness- *šedaqah* ( צדקה ) is another Hebrew word that is often used in association with the *hesed* of YHWH especially in relation to his dealings with those who know him and revere him ( Ps 36:10, 40:11, 143:11ff). Out of the *hesed* of YHWH, comes *shalom*, meaning peace. Peace here, does not necessarily mean merely absence of war as mentioned above, but a uniquely embracing word expressing -wholeness or well-being, harmony, prosperity and tranquility to humans and all creatures. Though this is a gift from God, it still depends upon human willingness to conform or enter into union with God, the ultimate source of *shalom*. The Prophet Jeremiah gave a glimpse of what happens when God withdraws his *hesed* from among us- the result is always anarchy (Jer. 16:5) and more specifically hatred and war. The word *hesed* is

also used to designate “*sentiments and feelings*” for instance, the word *raḥamim* which has its root from *reḥem*- meaning- womb or belly, designates or implies a genuine emotional state that is best rendered as mercy or pity. The word *raḥamim* is usually used in association with *ḥesed* when it is exhibited towards those who suffered misfortune e.g. the helpless and the defenseless or those who languish in abject poverty (Ps.103:13).

#### **4:2. Images of Peace Among the Israelites in the Old Testament**

Though the image of the warrior God was highly significant during the long periods of Israel’s understanding of its faith, it was complemented by an image or a sense of peace, justice and security among them. The post exilic period ushered in a transforming period wherein, God was no longer identified with military prowess, victory and might as in the earliest period of their history. Other images of God began to be manifested to them as they become deeply involved in their encounter with God in their new life situation. In their sedentary disposition, Israelite’s values and notion of God as a peaceful liberator gradually began to complement the “warrior God”

images of their warlike days in the desert. For them, peace became gift from God and fruit of God's saving activity. Individual personal peace was not over-emphasized; rather the well-being and freedom from fear which result from divine love are viewed primarily as they pertain to the harmony of the community and its unity. This unity and harmony was rather inclusive and extended to all of creation. As we already expressed above, *shalom* became the realization of wholesomeness and completeness of all realities. This therefore implied a restoration of the right order not just among peoples, but within all of creation.<sup>215</sup> Another important aspect of their sense of peace was deeply rooted in their covenantal union with YHWH. The book of Leviticus (26:12) expressly declared this when it stated that: "*I will walk among you and will be your God and you shall be my people*". These words of the covenant bound the people to God in fidelity and obedience; while God, in turn, was also committed in the covenant, to be present with the people, to save them, to lead them to freedom. YHWH would strengthen the people against those who opposed them and would give peace in the land. In other words, peace was always a special characteristic of this covenant relationship. So it becomes understandably clear when the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel prophesied the establishment of the new situation, whereby God would establish an everlasting covenant of peace with the people (Jer. 31:31-34, Ezek. 37:26). The prophet Ezekiel not only promised a covenant of peace, he also bluntly condemned the false prophets who alleged there was peace in the land while idolatry and injustice was still the order of the day in his time(Ezek. 13:16). Jeremiah

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<sup>215</sup> National Conference of USA Catholic Bishops, Challenge of Peace: p.11.

had expressed this tradition already and berated those who “healed the wounds of the people lightly” and proclaimed peace while injustice and infidelity prevailed (Jer. 6:14; 8:10-12). Isaiah’s lamentation: *“O that you had hearkened to my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea” (48:18)*, also made the connection between justice and fidelity to God’s law clearer and evident. Even more so, Jeremiah and Isaiah both condemned the leaders when, against true security, they depended upon their own strength or alliances with other nations rather than trusting in God (Isa. 7:1-9; 30:1-4; Jer. 37:10). So in the actual sense there is no real peace in isolation from God. In him abounds *shalom*. It is only when God reigns in the hearts of all men that *shalom* (wholesomeness and completeness) can be achieved. So, the prophet Isaiah spelled out clearly when he wrote that it is only then that they *“shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. (Isa. 2:3-4)*.

So to arrive at this idyllic postulation of Isaiah’s, an *imitatio Dei*<sup>216</sup> is imperative on all men. The imitation of this loving kindness of God by all men therefore is the starting point of justice, fair-play and peace on earth.

This is because this *divine hesed* is all about “benevolence”, the “will to do well to another” and the goodness of heart, a disposition, which engenders *shalom* (as complete and unadulterated peace).

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<sup>216</sup> Breslauer, Dictionary of the Jewish-Christian Dialogue, p. 110-113

The nature of this task suggests that religion and spirituality have an immense role to play in the ordering of the world and re-establishing a peaceful world. The wisdom of the world's religious and spiritual traditions has much to offer to our world that is in constant struggle to find direction in a time of transformation like ours. The task of transformation of the modern man's belligerency into a culture of loving-kindness and peace must be the priority of the world's religious and spiritual traditions. This is not only because they are the avenues through which the concept of the divine will is conveyed to the world but also because they have such a powerful worldwide network and more effective way of doing it through their ministries. The modalities of carrying out this task will be discussed in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER V

### SHAPING A PEACEFUL WORLD

#### 5:1. Man's Primeval Disposition Is Peaceful

The Israelite creation story established concretely the doctrine that at the beginning, God created us in his own image (Gen.1:26-28). One striking thing about that primeval world is that it was essentially peaceful; in that world there was no bloodshed. The food of man and beast were plants (Gen. 1:29-30). As in Genesis chapter one, so it is in Genesis chapter two; the world was at peace. Human beings do not shed blood, not even the blood of animals. Genesis chapter two also added that they lack any sense of shame, for there is nothing for them to be ashamed of. Humans have no knowledge of evil. However, from Genesis chapter three to chapter six, we read that violence resulted from "*The Fall*" which consists in disobedience, jealousy, hate and greed of wanting to be like God (Jas. 4:1ff). The "*fall*" violently affected both humans and beasts. Emphasizing this point, Walter Homolka and A.H. Friedlander, opined that:

In the beginning, the relationship between human beings and animal was well-structured, depicting complete peace... That means that human beings did not hunt and no animal devoured another. This age of peace ended with the flood, after which the animal world also became a source of nourishment for human beings. It signified the end of the primeval state of happiness and the harmony of creation was followed by division.<sup>217</sup>

The emphasis is that man never killed originally until after the fall. Killing animals became permissible, at least sacrificially, for food and perhaps for clothing (Gen.

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<sup>217</sup> Homolka & Friedlander, The gate to perfection. p.8

9:3). The first instruction on eating animals is not found until after the deluge (Gen.9:3) but strictly forbidden was the shading of human blood by fellow humans (Gen 9:6). So, even from the beginning of creation the Creator made the respect and dignity of human life emphatic. A further reflection on that prohibition (Gen. 9:6) projects the implicit divine intention that men should live in peaceful co-existence in imitation of him who is peace par excellence. So peace and justice were certainly integral to human divine imprint or image and their privilege of being the crown of creation. In other words, *"man cannot be (fully) human unless he is conscious of the divine imprint he bears in himself."*<sup>218</sup> Philosophically Rousseau articulated this original innocence of man thus:

Man in his original condition was an unwarlike, free, and creative being, naturally predisposed to good and supported in his inclination to virtue by a benevolent nature and God. Evil, far from being fundamental to his nature resulted from the perversions introduced by false social institutions. The social contract...was a means whereby the individual, through surrendering his individual freedom of action to the community at large, for the mutual benefit of all, could actually achieve greater freedom and higher morality.<sup>219</sup>

Even though the life history of mankind has always been infested with conflicts and aggressions, this original innocence and "utopic paradise of peace" has always largely formed his nostalgic ambitions and goal in life. According to Homolka and Friedlander:

The memory of a lost but happy state of peace stayed alive, however, and we can see in Leviticus 26:6, that prospects for its return are expressed, though it was made dependent on the keeping of the Commandments.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Roger Garaudy, *Appel Aux Vivants*: (1979)p. 296.

<sup>219</sup> "Social Contract" *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion (Q-Z)*; Ed. Paul Kevin Meagher, Op, ST.M. , Thomas C. O'Brien, Sister Consuelo Maria Herne, (Corpus Publications: Washington, D.C., 1979).

<sup>220</sup> Homolka & Friedlander, *The gate to perfection*, p.9.

For them, because this original tranquility is often elusive in the present, it was “*transferred in time to an expectation for the final days,*” as is evident in Isaiah (35:1-10), so it becomes a projection of the ideal final state in the future.

Men have always craved for it; they have always opted for peace as a preferred alternative to disorderliness and belligerency. However, one problem of man (already suggested by Homolka) regarding realization of this goal has always been his predicament in terms of choice of methods he employs in the bid to attain this objective. Unfortunately, he has always misplaced priorities and fallen into the fallacy of wanting to attain peace through the use of negative means of *force*. He has always fallen short of realizing that violence begets violence and violence has never achieved peace but have always aggravated altercations at all times. This fallacious mind-set has for millennia shrouded the real meaning of peace (*shalom*) and offered the world pacified situations instead. By *pacified*, I mean a kind of *forced or imposed* peace. This kind of peace may superficially look tranquil but in actual sense it is like a loaded gun which remains seemingly quiet as long as nobody pulls the trigger. This is the kind of peace on the lips of the modern man who has gone crazy with armaments and their consequent technologies. It is far from being holistic and is contrary to the concept of *shalom per excellence*, which we discussed above. It is certainly a *logical lacuna* and dangerous to the progress and advancement of human welfare. Peace has never been, and can never be the end-product of armed conflict. Substantiating this view Shannon, observed that:

The state of affairs produced by deterrence and the arms race may not be active conflict, at least at the present moment, but one would hardly describe it as a state of peace because of the tensions and anxiety that the structure itself produces both nationally and internationally.<sup>221</sup>

Shannon's observation simply implies that peace is not imposed; it is rather cultivated through mutual trust and healthy relationship among men. So, in vain do the nations amass sophisticated nuclear and biological warheads, in vain do religious sects defend their stances for either support or condemnation of war and conflicts, and in vain do philosophers and thinkers of all epochs produce theories and logics: the truth is that humanity needs peace as in *shalom*. We need a holistic concept of peace that takes care of the common good and tranquility in all its aspects. This quality of peace is defined in the Pastoral Constitution of the Second Vatican Council- *Gaudium et spes*, as that which is not merely the absence of war, nor can it be reduced solely to a maintenance of a balance of power between enemies. It is not a product of dictatorship. Instead, it is appropriately called *an enterprise of justice* (Isa. 32:7). This quality of peace results from "that harmony built into human society by its divine founder and actualized by men as they thirst for higher justice".<sup>222</sup>

## **5:2: Peace in Modern World**

In our time, this nostalgic search for original disposition to peacefulness has become stark and urgent, especially as the ferocious new means of warfare threaten

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<sup>221</sup> Shannon, *What are they Saying About Peace and War?* p.112

<sup>222</sup> Austin Flannery, "Gaudium et spes" *Vatican Council: Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents* (Dublin Ireland: Dominican Publications, 1980) #78. See also, Isa. 2:492.

savagery on the existence of humanity. Deceit, subversion, terrorism and genocide are geometrically becoming increasingly horrendous. So it has become imperative that all hands must be on deck in condemnation of all actions by either government or individual groups who contradict or complicate the inalienable human rights. We must all feel concerned and committed in achieving these natural cravings (search for peaceful existence). We respect the well articulated insight of the Catholic Church as epitomized thus:

Certainly, war has not been rooted out of human affairs. As long as the danger of war remains and there is no competent and sufficiently powerful authority at the international level, governments cannot be denied the right to legitimate defense once every means of peaceful settlement has been exhausted. Therefore, government authorities and others who share public responsibility have the duty to protect the welfare of the people entrusted to their care and to conduct such grave matters soberly. But it is one thing to undertake military action for the just defense of the people, and something else again to seek the subjugation of other nations. Nor does the possession of war potential make every military or political use of it lawful. Neither does the mere fact that war has unhappily begun mean that all is fair between the warring parties<sup>223</sup>.

This and other similar positions that still remind the *unjust aggressor* that legitimate authorities still have the inalienable rights of self-defense are all positive efforts even though they are still deficient regarding permanency. So the issue here is not so much whether we have the right to sue for our inalienable right to justice and peace, the emphasis is “*the how*” of that defense, which engenders the moral option. The emphasis is on choice of means (*modus operandi*) to achieving the goal. This is where the ills of our times lie.

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<sup>223</sup> Vatican II Document, “Gaudium et spes.” #79

### 5:3. A Peace Culture: As a Way Out

Thich Nhat Hanh, a Buddhist monk, once advised:

In each of us, there is a certain amount of peace and a certain amount of non-peace, a certain amount of violence and a certain amount of nonviolence. We must work on ourselves if we want to have a real impact. If we work for peace out of anger, we will never succeed. Peace is not an end. It can never come about through non-peaceful means. When we protest against war or Injustice, we feel that we are a peaceful person, but this is not always true. If we look more deeply, we will see anger, frustration, and the roots of war in ourselves, also. To create a peaceful society, we have to transform the anger and defuse the bombs that are in us .... Most important is to be peaceful, so that when a situation presents itself, we will not create more suffering.<sup>224</sup>

If we recall Furfey's point on *over exaggerated nationalism*,<sup>225</sup> a kind of uncontrolled exuberance, then the point this revered monk is making here becomes clearer. Most peace makers actually begin well and innocently as well, but along the line they ruin their good intentions out of sheer vain glory and over ambition. The task of building a culture of peace, therefore, begins with a certain degree of self discipline. This kind of peace does not come easily; it demands a disciplined mind, a "*mental revolution*", a shift from our stereotyped idea of "*makeshift pacification*" born out of unrepentant prejudice. We need a primary shift from attitude of pursuit of peace as a conclusion to an attitude of making peace our *status quo*, a premise from which we start and a conclusion that we must draw.

A Christian appraisal of concretizing this concept of peace on earth is made manifest in the sabbatical mission of Jesus Christ as fundamentally rooted and idealized in Isaiah 61:1-2:

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<sup>224</sup>Thich Nhat Hanh, *Love in Action: Writings on Nonviolent Social Change* (Berkeley, California: Parallax Press, 1993).

\* Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk, currently lives in France at Plum Village, a monastery he founded to train people in Buddhist spirituality and nonviolence.

<sup>225</sup> Paul Hanley Furfey, *The Mystery of Iniquity*. (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1944) p.152.

The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom to the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."<sup>226</sup>

In the Lucan version of this prophecy of Isaiah, Jesus was not only proclaiming and inaugurating his *Messiahship* but also declaring "*a year of freedom—a Sabbatical year, a jubilee year of restoration, a year of freedom from captivity and a year of remission and judgment on oppressive rich Land/property- owners, he was inaugurating liberation to the debtors and the poor.*"<sup>227</sup> To grapple with the significance of the sabbatical year commandment, let us look at its real aim. This sabbatical regulation has a humanitarian intent to feed or provide for the poor and the underprivileged, especially the slaves and the landless. According to Hermann Cohen:

Sabbath aims to secure the equalization of human beings; irrespective of their diverse social positions...Basically the Sabbath eliminates the distinction among human beings which comes to expression in their various forms of work. On that day the manual laborer becomes "his own master".<sup>228</sup>

Hermann Cohen reflected on the Sabbath as an affirmation of the equality of all beings, irrespective of their diverse social positions. It was this frame of mind that Jesus inaugurated his Sabbath mission as an attempt to redress and balance an imperfect world of his time. He wanted to bring about a total social transformation with an eye on the future, based on the vision of justice which God has already set forth in the past. He was re-instituting the sabbatical mind-set, as it was established by Moses as a social revolution aimed at preventing the accumulation of wealth in hands of a few (Rabbi Finkel, Oral communication-2003).

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<sup>226</sup>Luke 18:4.

<sup>227</sup> Finkel Asher, *The Jewish Roots of Christian Liturgy*, Ed. Eugene J. Fisher, (Mahwah: Paulist, 1990).

See also: 2003, "Millennium, Jubilee and Human History Under God", Helgo Lindner (ed.), *Ich bin ein Hebraer. Zum Gedenken an Otto Michel (1903-1993)* (Basel, Brunnen).

<sup>228</sup>Simon Noveck: *Contemporary Jewish Thought*. (Teaneck N J: Ben Yehuda Press, 2007) p. 147.

Jesus was re-instituting *an era of peace* where everyone gets his due, a goal for which Sabbath or precisely the sabbatical year and the jubilee years are supposed to evoke in the minds of his immediate audience as well as his future adherents (Christians). He was proposing a *peace culture* which he later concretized and sealed with his blood at the Cross-event. He was re-enkindling the original mind of God especially at creation, when he put Adam and Eve in the Paradise to be happy and in tune with their Creator and in harmony with nature without any creature harming another, in spite of the fact that they all have the potentiality do so.

To recapture this divine intention is a way forward. To shun these belligerent cultural values superimposed on humanity of the modern epoch by societal false value systems and misguided technologies is a way out. To cultivate a *peace culture* such that would include patterns of belief, value, and behaviors that promote peaceful relationships is a plausible solution to our present predicaments. The quality of such a *peace-culture* will lie upon the fact that it includes institutional arrangements that promote wellbeing, equality, stewardship, and equitable sharing of the earth's resources. It is when these become the motivational force or targets of all humans and nations, that the process of peace culture begins.<sup>229</sup> This *peace culture* must be such that will redefine our values and attitudes. It must reflect a pro-life endeavor/ program that must be aimed at concern for each other and equality of all human beings. Reflecting on this quality of peace, the beauty of being

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<sup>229</sup>Elise Boulding, "What is a Peace Culture?" Breakthrough News: Global Education Associates. (Jan-April 1999) p.3.

human and the universal vocation of all humans to be one and at peace with each other, Abraham J. Heschel appeals to the conscience of the modern mind saying:

First and foremost, we {must} meet as human beings who have so much in common; a heart , a face, a voice , the presence of a soul, fears, hope, ability to trust, a capacity for compassion and understanding, the kingship of being human. My first task is to comprehend the personhood of the human being, I face, to sense the kingship of being human, solidarity of being... a person is not just a specimen called Homo sapiens. He is all of humanity in one and whenever one man is hurt we are all injured. The man is a disclosure of the divine, and all men are one in God's care for Man... to meet a human being is an opportunity to sense the image of God, the presence of God.<sup>230</sup>

Heschel seem to have said it all in this one passage. He implied that the beginning of this *peace culture* is recognition of the dignity of the *other* and recognizing the fact that he is fully human as us. It is a realization of the fact that all humans have feelings and rights that must be respected and life to be preserved. For him, that mutual respect for the dignity of everyone must be given priority because it is the fundamental clue that *turns everyone on* especially when it comes to negotiating peace with them. T. C. O'Brien stressed this point when he wrote:

Because justice observes equality as its norm and measure, in any relationship between persons that justice regulates equality proper to the interaction characterizes the condition existing between the two parties; the recipient is to be respected impartially and exactly. Issues of justice arise with respect to natural equality, political equality, and social equality, accordingly as the rights involved derive from nature, positive law, or the structure of a society. A theistic moral philosophy pre-supposes that all men are equal in terms or rights connected with their God-given common nature and dignity as persons.<sup>231</sup>

So the point is, even though there are still specifics and uniqueness to human existence that demands attention when dealing with each individual or groups, all humans are still ontologically the same and share equal dignity.

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<sup>230</sup> Harold Kasimow, "No Religion Is an Island" Abraham Joshua Heschel and Interreligious Dialogue. Ed. Byron L. Sherwin. (Orbis Books, 1991) p.312.

<sup>231</sup>Thomas C. O'Brien, "Equality" Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion. p.1224.

In her classical analysis of building up a culture of peace in the modern world, Elise Boulding(1999) opines that:

Every person comes into the world with two basic needs. One is the need for bonding, for closeness to and acceptance by other human beings; the other is the need for space, separateness from others, room to be one's own self, to be autonomous. A society with only bonding relationships would be passive, dull, and enclosed; a society, in which separateness predominated, would be an aggressive Society in which everyone would be concerned with their own space. When groups of humans hold the need for bonding and autonomy in balance, nurturing one another engaging in many cooperative activities, but also giving each other space. Then we find the conditions for peace culture.<sup>232</sup>

Implicitly, Boulding's point is that it is only when people learn to harmonize and keep in check these two separate needs (bonding and separateness) that the society or person comes to term with peace. And when this harmony of life is blended with the principle of *unity in diversity* then a peaceful co-existence is achieved. Boulding further distinguished what she called the *peaceable* and the *warrior* societies. Warrior cultures are infested by power struggles between the strong and the weak, men over women etc, while peaceable societies are ideally peaceful. However, according to her, there are usually no purely peaceable societies. It is almost a utopia to think of a perfect *friction-free* society as far as human limitations are involved. There are always some conflicting behaviors and war-prone patterns of behavior intermingling to set the stage of societal situations. In other words, peace is cultivated, great efforts are made towards building it.

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<sup>232</sup> Elise Boulding, "What is a Peace Culture?" Breakthrough News: Global Education Associates. p.3.

#### **5:4. Analysis of Our Situation**

According to the above analysis, our modern society is basically a warrior culture and is heavily burdened by complexities. It is a culture where conflicts and violence of wars combine with the craze of arms race. It is a society where the subsequent destructive mode of industrialization, distorts our clear view of genuine peace. Ours is a society battling with moral decadence and the impeding influences of globalization empowered by new technologies and discoveries. It is a culture seriously challenged by nihilism and godlessness. Not only do we fear a nuclear holocaust and genocidal ethnic warfare but a society which is also infested with egotism, gang mentality, factionalism and violence of all kinds. Ours has become a society where peace is at stake. The question is how can we come to equilibrium, as proposed by Boulding?

The first step towards a change will be to recognize the dynamics and the fluidity in the nature of events of our times. Due to globalization the world, in some ways, is becoming a little village. We are no more self-sufficient, no more independent, and no more isolated individuals or nations. Energies, experiences and ideas that come from outside the boundaries of our nations continue to challenge or affect us. Horizons are wider; dangers are greater and have become infectious. A phenomenon like war is becoming an international concern especially with the invention of nuclear and biological warheads capable of wiping out humanity in seconds. In the words of John Donne, "*No Man is an Island*" any longer; we are all

involved with one another. A repercussion of actions/decisions of one nation affects the life situation of all others. Views adopted in one community have an impact on the other communities. Duane Elgin's analysis of our present situation is stated thus:

We are moving toward some form of global community and consciousness at breathtaking speed. The challenges we face-economic, ecological, cultural, and political-are part of a tightly intertwined network of global activity. We must adopt an approach and perspective that is equal in scope to the problems we face. The human family is now obliged to discover a global vision of a sustainable future that honors human unity while fostering human diversity.<sup>233</sup>

Elgin emphasizes the need for consciousness of the impeding reality of globalization that demands an urgent response to the principle of unity in diversity required to grapple with our new realities. So today, neglect of another's dignity, freedom and right to live decently and peacefully should be a by-gone and regarded as a *forgotten myth*. We must interact and encounter the *other* in a more respectable manner, as human beings who have so much in common. We may disagree in law and creed or even on the mode of commitment to our political, socio-economic and religious convictions. We may say *No* to one another in some substantial and fundamental issues that we consider very sensitive and sacred to us, but in a most understanding way.<sup>234</sup> We may disagree about the ways of confronting and achieving our deepest fears and trembling, but these fears and trembling (we must understand) are ontologically the same. Our stories/ experiences may be different but the destiny of all human beings is the same. Human nature has not really changed; we have slight

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<sup>233</sup> Duane, Elgin. Voluntary Simplicity: Toward a Way of Life that is Outwardly Simple, Inwardly Rich; Rev. & Ed. Quill, William Morrow.(New York: 1993)p.191.

<sup>234</sup> Kasimow , "No Religion is an Island" Abraham Joshua Heschel and Interreligious Dialogue. p.311-314.

differences in conditions or situations of existence but always and essentially the same. Over and above these points, mutual respect and acknowledgement of our indebtedness to one another should hold sway.<sup>235</sup> These imposing globalizing impacts on us must be taken seriously and be given a conceptual articulation for us to be able to strike at the *equilibrium* to which Elise Boulding referred.

In any case, in the midst of these seeming complications, a critical survey still reveals some rays of hope. Underlying the misty horizons of our times are some qualities, wisdom and potentials that must not be ignored. This scientific and technological mindset of our modern society, when critically evaluated, is supercharged with some wisdom and advantages. Our societies will even be better if this wisdom is channeled and enhanced appropriately. We can build a richer and more diversified culture than any of us can ever imagine, out of our seemingly battered situation. An interconnected global peace culture could emerge out of the wealth of knowledge, cultures and languages of our recent experiences.

Technological inventions especially communicative technology could be actually channeled positively to transform our bellicose and violent-prone international systems into an interconnected world of adventurous but peaceful problem solvers; such a positive move could then create a culture whereby technology begins to nurture the planet rather than stress it.

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<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.* p.311 .

Violence (as in inappropriate use of force) is eradicated by a clear conviction that life must be respected and that people are more important than ideologies, wealth and economic gains. One of the greatest maladies of our time is Furfey's *exaggerated nationalism*,<sup>236</sup> a misconstrued patriotic syndrome whereby egocentric interests of the individual nations blind them from realizing the necessity and the urgency of a global security against the impeding danger of extermination by the threats of modern warheads. Commenting on a similar misplacement of priorities, Abraham J. Heschel contends that:

We fail to realize that while different exponents of faith in the world of religion continue to be wary of the ecumenical movement, there is another ecumenical movement, world-wide in extent and influence: nihilism.<sup>237</sup>

Heschel's point is that while the exponents of the world religions were selfishly busy struggling for supremacy and superiority of faith, more dangerous challenge *nihilism* is eating fast into the fabric of our society. To be precise and more comprehensible, the problems of our recent world have always been putting *the part* before *the whole*. This egocentric attitude to life has always driven men of all epochs to series of clashes that could be avoided if they had realized that they are basically social *animals* who cannot really live alone in the whole wide world without a peaceful interaction with other. This point goes back to Maimonides's contention; that either ignorance or the neglect of reason is the cause of man's bellicose situation. We seem not to have realized that the changing signs of our era:

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<sup>236</sup> Furfey: *The Mystery of Iniquity*. p. 152.

<sup>237</sup> Kasimow, "No Religion Is an Island" *Abraham Joshua Heschel and Interreligious Dialogue*. p.311

Marks the end of complacency, the end of evasion, the end of self-reliance...we stand on the brink of the abyss together. Interdependence of political and economic conditions all over the world is a basic fact of our situation. Disorder in a small obscure country in any part of the world evokes anxiety in people all over the world<sup>238</sup>

Issues pertaining to security *per se*, must therefore be objective and not to the expense of others. In considering others we also secure ourselves.

Violence, injustice, war, oppression, and poverty are avoidable because they are mere consequences of aggression and symptoms of a world disorder caused by putting the parts before the whole (*egocentrism*). A global order of peace and justice can only be achieved by our acceptance of the reality of a *global citizenship of all humans*. There must be a new consciousness or recognition of the interdependence of all nations and unity of systems.

Let us recognize that a culture of violence thrives when humans give in to attitudes of anger, aggression, prejudice and intolerance; these are directly linked to the ravaging effect of poverty, racial discrimination, the depletion of ecological protection to our human life and other social evils.

Let us be aware that together we can exterminate violent mentality, stop the glorification of violence on our media, and promote global disarmament. Racial discrimination and injustice<sup>239</sup> could be laid to rest if we cultivate a *love culture* that appreciates unity in diversity as the beauty of creation. These shall be the basis from where we begin to postulate a new *culture of peace*.

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<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Which have offered the world nothing but heinous and gruesome mishaps, like human enslavement (*which has become a vicious circle even in our time*) and holocaust mayhem.

## 5:5. Cultivating a Peace Culture

Perhaps the greatest obstacle to peace is lack of acceptance and patience to listen to others. This deficiency found its breeding ground in racism, intolerance and injustice that have continued to rule the minds of many in our world today. Listening is an expression of the need to go beyond the limits of self or the *I*, in the bid to understanding and appreciating the uniqueness and gifts of the *thou- the different other*. According to Martin Buber's reflection on human relations, relationships are indispensable to the ordering and maintaining of human life. Martin Buber in his philosophical articulation: *I and Thou-(Ich und Du:1923)*, presented a philosophy of dialogue. It defined human existence by the way in which we engage in dialogue with each other, with the world, and with God. For him, human beings adopt two attitudes toward the world: *I-Thou* or *I-It*. *I-thou* is a relation of subject-to-subject, while *I-It* is a relation of subject-to-object. In the *I-Thou* relationship, human beings are aware of each other as having a unity of being. In this kind of relationship, humans do not perceive each other as consisting of

specific, isolated qualities, but engage in a dialogue involving each other's whole being.

In the *I-It* relationship, on the other hand, human beings perceive each other as consisting of specific, isolated qualities, and view themselves as part of a world which consists of things. In other words, *I-Thou* is a relationship of mutuality and reciprocity. To drive this point home, *I-thou* relationship reflects Boulding's view of authentic harmony between *bonding and separateness* while *I-It* is a relationship of separateness and detachment that often degenerate into a warrior society.

Buber explains that humans are often tempted to convert the *subject-to-subject* relation to a *subject-to-object* relation, or *vice versa*. This overt behavior is what causes a break-down in the flow of dialogue because the very nature of the *subject* is holistic and cannot be reduced or analyzed as an *object*. This tendency for him is not genuine because it lacks authentic mutuality that characterizes genuine relationship. According to Buber real knowledge of another requires openness, participation, empathy- genuine encounter and mutuality, therefore, whoever lives in the world of *i-it* alone is not fully human.<sup>240</sup> Following this insight, a world like ours where gruesome killings, armament and nuclear war-heads and their frightening threat have become a human nightmare, constitutes a glaring example of a

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<sup>240</sup> Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. by Ronald Gregor Smith (New York: Charles Scribner's & Sons, 1958)p. 26.

situation where people must improve their mode of communication. In his articulation of this view Yves Congar quoted Buber as saying:

Real dialogue takes place when each of the partners is really concerned with the others in their existence and in their particular character and turns to them with the intention that a living mutuality may be created.<sup>241</sup>

For him, Buber refers to a conscientious dialogue, whereby others are treated as subjects, who are expected to have their own view of the world and their own ideas. We grant, at least provisionally, that the *other* may have good reasons for differing from us. It is a situation where all parties to the dialogue should be disposed to submit their own ideas to critical examination, with the hope of being open to readjustments. The goal of such a well disposed process of dialogue should be a shared insight which transcends partial views held by each of the participants when the dialogue began. In other words, when dialogue is channeled to such a heuristic function, the interlocutors will surely arrive at a truth they did not previously know.

This is exactly what building a genuine peace culture that will advance tranquility in the modern time requires. In fact, this should be a pre-requisite in the pursuit of the friendship and co-existence of the modern world.

However, the positive contributions of the new communicative technologies, especially the Internet, are equally commendable. This is because of its tremendous new ways of linking peoples together, penetrating their nonchalance and creating a listening culture in its own dimension. None the less, there is still great need for this

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<sup>241</sup> Yves Congar, Dialogue between Christians (Westminster, Md. Newman, 1966)p.56-57.

listening attitude if we must promote peace in our world today. This is essential because knowledge and appreciation of the *other* certainly demythologizes him in the mind of his neighbor and renders all aggression towards him unnecessary.

The genuine culture of peace should be such that will be able to break through the use of prejudices and stereotyped preconceptions of the other peoples' past histories and cultures to judge and evaluate their performances and actions even in the modern world. For instance, the fact that history traced the origins of man to African Continent does not mean that Africans still live in caves or share the same branches as birds with birds and monkeys in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as some people still think. Another, example will be the fact that the forefathers of Afro-Americans were slaves doesn't make their off- spring slaves in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Furthermore, if critically evaluated the same age-long deep-rooted prejudices, preconceptions, presumptions underlie the occurrences of some of the world's known heinous sins like the holocaust and other ethnic cleansing tendencies that world history has ever recorded. The culture of peace should rather seek to create consciousness and be sensitive to those symbols, signs and signals that transmit the positive effects especially those that promote peace and other positive values of any given culture and people.

While explicating what he called *hologram*, a famous French philosopher and sociologist, Edgar Morin contends that every culture contains the seeds of peace; though hidden or forgotten, they can be retraced in the effort to understand the

world.<sup>242</sup> This is a call to search for dialogue among cultures and allowing a culture of peace to grow out of the fabrics of latent values they already possess naturally. A culture of peace therefore, must be sought for and appreciated in all cultural values. Therefore, the implication is that, for these efforts to establish a *culture of peace* to be successful, we must be ready to enter into dialogue with the various cultures and their values, knowing very well that every culture is unique, irreplaceable and has something to offer to each other which are very enriching. This attitude of *acculturation* will go a long way to educate and sanitize the present race and cultural chauvinism which have plunged our world to constant pugnacious and confrontational circumstances.

Finally, they say actions speak louder than words; the starting point of this peace culture program will be the task of inculcating these new values to the future generation. At this juncture I must point out that there is a need for a revolutionary education system such that will transcend the stereotyped assumptions, prejudices and concepts which have achieved nothing except to promote racism, divisions and rancor among men. We need a conceptually revolutionized strategy that will transmit and inculcate this new legacy unto our children and young people. Allman J. M, who believes that humanity is cut up in a virtual *circle of violence* which is basically the precipitate of fear, antagonism and other forms of provocations, opines that:

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<sup>242</sup> Terra-Patria (Milano: Raffaello Cortina Editore. 1994). English translation from the Italian by Edgar Morin.

The best way to break this cycle of violence is for someone to choose not to retaliate. In essence to choose either: (1) to take the hit, humiliation, or threat and not respond. Or (2) if one finds "just taking it" to be a form of self-hatred or complicity in one's own abuse, then to leave, move on, or engage the help and protection of others, but in ways that do not demean the aggressor. The basic logic is by not repaying humiliation with violence, the "tit-for-tat" pattern ends. Groups (from families to nations) that have a strong sense of what is "honorable" may require education and training to re-conceptualize non-retaliation as an honorable act for the common good and to develop alternative methods of conflict resolution.<sup>243</sup>

Allman's point is hydra-headed. It sounds pacifist but connects neatly with the principle of *Imitatio Dei* (mentioned earlier). In the actual sense, the principles at work in the pacifist are those of the conviction that true *shalom* abounds in God, whose peaceful attributes must be imitated by humans, unconditionally. It is the spirit that endures all pains for the sake of the common good (which implies peaceful co-existence). But Allman said more than just that. He recommends an alternative way of conflict resolution- *training as a process of re-conceptualizing non-retaliation as an honorable act for the sake of the common good*. Perhaps to achieve this effect, we may resort to Charles Morris' conclusions of his in-depth study on resolution of conflicts, he summed it up thus: "*Most important in reducing aggression and violence over a long-term; are the presence of nonaggressive models and the teaching of empathy and caring for all human beings.*"<sup>244</sup>

The major contents and meaning of Allman and Morris's classical contributions were concretely detailed by Federico Mayor of UNESCO thus:

We must give our children and young people a sense of meaning and understanding of other peoples, their culture and history; We must make our children and young people feel that together they all truly share the same sense of belonging to humankind; We must teach our children to refuse violence and how to use peaceful means to resolve disagreement and conflict; We must teach our children and young people to think of others, to be open to and

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<sup>243</sup>Allman, Mark J., *Who would Jesus kill? : War, peace, and the Christian tradition*. p.63.

<sup>244</sup> Morris, *An Introduction to Psychology*. p.534.

respectful of others, to participate; we must give our children and young people a sense of identity and the ability to recognize the many different facets of our belonging to the human species within different cultural and social contexts.<sup>245</sup>

A cursory look at Mayor's appeal reveals almost immediately that violence (as in inappropriate use of force) is a tendency in man that is learnt and so can be eradicated through training and positive thinking. It recalls Aronson's conviction that the better we know, understand and appreciate other people; the more unlikely we will resort to aggression against them<sup>246</sup>. Conclusively therefore, aggression and violence are basically disease of the environment polluted by man's rebellion against his Creator whose loving kindness humans sometimes overlook as weakness. Violence (as in war) is an abuse and rejection of the divine gift of peaceful existence to man. It is a refusal to acknowledge the divine wisdom that wrought the beauty of unity in diversity in human existence. It is therefore the product of man's false freedom that turns against him and puts him in danger of extermination. God's involvement/intervention in this predicament of man flows out of his *hesed* (*loving-kindness*) and his concern for the salvation of the innocent and the defense of the defenseless.

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<sup>245</sup> Federico Mayor, Opening speech at the International Forum "For Solidarity, Against Intolerance, [or a Dialogue of Cultures]" (Paris: UNESCO, 1996).

<sup>246</sup> Aronson, *The Social Animal*. (1980).

## Conclusion

All along this study, I have preoccupied myself with the task of proving that no matter the perversity of war, human conflicts and aggression, there is still no such thing as inevitable war. In other words, whenever war occurs it is as a result of failure of human reason. This affirmation is based on the fact that humans are basically rational *decision-making beings*, who are not condemned to their instincts. Humans synthesize the sense data, imagines, remembers, and performs instinctive actions. Humans strive for sensuous good, avoid sensuous evil, and experience various emotions. They make judgments, plans and possess reasoning faculties to execute their wills. They exercise free will and desire spiritual values. It is this rationality and intentionality that qualifies them as moral beings, responsible for the moral quality of their actions. Humans, therefore, becomes aggressive when they consider it necessary and decide not to when it is not necessary. Conflict and aggression is not innate in man and can be controlled. War which is considered one of the most conspicuous manifestations of human aggressions is not ineluctable. War is *an intentional choice* of man, an option for which he is responsible and must take the blame for its consequences. Under these conditions God is not responsible when man abandons his divine gift of freedom of choice to act irrationally, or engage in act of aggression like war, when he could have chosen peace instead. God's involvement in the act of human warfare is therefore, for the sake of peace and

salvation of man. He gets involved to restore peace and harmony and more so, to protect the innocent/defenseless from the evils of this human choice.

In dealing with this ubiquitous phenomenon (warfare) in human history especially as it is conspicuous in the sacred Scriptures of the Abrahamic faiths; they have employed verity of concepts to justify their involvement in this act of a reprehensible nature. This study classified these concepts under holy and just war theories. In the actual sense, none of these religions can be said to have been fundamentally pacifist in attitude towards warfare. In the very words of William Klassen:

There is in Judaism and Christianity both a time for peace and a time for war: God is both a warrior as expressed in the song of Miriam (Exod. 15.3) and a God who is peace, as celebrated by Gideon in (Judg. 6.24).<sup>247</sup>

However, these concepts might have served their purposes to their proponents; the glaring fact remains that the exigencies of our present generation yearns for urgent attention. Our so called *jet-age* is headed to the wrong direction; imminent danger of extermination, *a suicide of mankind* may become our fate especially as all nations seek to become nuclear powers. Human situation has become precarious. The direct effects of the unhealthy competition commonly referred to as *arms race*, are weighing heavily on us. It is like mankind is sitting on a "*keg of gunpowder*", we are at the mercy of the evil geniuses of our time. Time has come when we must collectively say "no" to this craze of arms race and its "*slaughtering spree*".

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<sup>247</sup>William Klassen, "Peace" A Dictionary of Jewish-Christian Relations, Ed. Edward Kessler and Nerl Wenborn, (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Peacemaking is not an optional commitment. It is an obligation and a requirement for all.

JWT could have been the greatest effort, humans have ever made to curb this warring culture that seem to be trailing mankind since the beginning of life on earth to this present time. However the imposing wave of globalization and the imminent danger being posed by weapons of mass destruction have challenged its basic tenets adversely. This theory that has held sway for over one hundred and fifty years has therefore come under critique as *obsolete* since some of its premises are no longer relevant enough to answer the modern warfare situation questions.

My conviction is that it will be too much of an oversight to dismiss the just war theory as an outlandish, obsolete and an irrelevant program for modern man. I rather see it as a kind of *spring-board* for a new appraisal of the issues at hand. It is not superseded yet; among other merits, it created the consciousness that the problem of war and its effect on humanity is a collective responsibility of all and therefore prepared the stage for our modern experiences. However, it needs re-framing; for instance, issues like Thomas Aquinas's "*competence of authority*" are still relevant to the modern mind. Modern thinkers like T. Mooney came up with views like: "Competence of an internationally constituted authority" fully invested with the commensurate powers to supervise, monitor and keep surveillance over the war decisions and other political activities of nations of the world community. Mooney was actually arguing from the point of view that; as long as the danger of

war persists there should be an international authority with the necessary competence and power to supervise and legislate over international affairs, otherwise governments cannot be denied the right of lawful self-defense, once all peace efforts have failed. The reason for his insistence on this view is because such an internationally constituted authority stands at a better chance of moderating the activities of all nations than the individual nation who may be prone to mistakes due to prejudice or some selfish interests. The surveillance in question here is security oriented. It is such that seeks to prevent all nations from pitfalls of the deadly logic of arm racing syndrome which have plunged the nations to perpetual fear of each other. However, this kind of pacification built upon deterrence, is still *sick and very inadequate* to suffice for *Shalom*. It is therefore my conviction that if such a legally established authority should be more dialogue oriented and perhaps promote and initiate peace culture programs, it will be able to control this violent culture of our time and guarantee tranquility and shalom to all. Such endeavor will certainly restore human respect, dignity and right to co-existence in our world.

The United Nations organization (U.N.O) is acting in this capacity already but lacks some competence and adequate empowerment, so much so that it is incapacitated by excessive sectionalism and other political inhibitions.

It is when the above suggested human efforts and wisdom is combined with divine intervention through "*imitatio Dei*" (*an imitation of God, especially his hesed*) that the world will experience *peace par excellence*. When Jews and Christians and Muslims

imitate this superlative quality of God in an unadulterated manner, then there will be peace. But the complexity of human nature, peace and Justice are not just in place naturally, they are cultivated, and they demand a great effort to be in place. Shalom doesn't come until the attitude of people towards one another changes from building up walls against others to linking each other with *communicative bridges*. Such disposition among men will lead to a mental revolution that can transform our attitudes towards one another, facilitate total disarmament and usher in a *culture of peace* which will fulfill Isaiah's idyllic peace when all nations:

*Shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks: (none) shall lift up sword against another neither shall they learn war anymore (Isa. 2:4).*

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