Spring 1992

The Jain, The Just War, Or The Jihad?: A Brief Look At the Evolution Of Christian Perceptions On Warfare

Joseph Manno
Carroll College, Helena, MT

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholars.carroll.edu/theology_theses
Part of the Catholic Studies Commons, Christianity Commons, and the Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholars.carroll.edu/theology_theses/21

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theology at Carroll Scholars. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theology Undergraduate Theses by an authorized administrator of Carroll Scholars. For more information, please contact tkratz@carroll.edu.
CARROLL COLLEGE

THE JAIN, THE JUST WAR, OR THE JIHAD?:
A BRIEF LOOK AT THE EVOLUTION
OF CHRISTIAN PERCEPTIONS
ON WARFARE

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY
IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR GRADUATION WITH HONORS

DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

BY

JOSEPH MANNO

HELENA, MONTANA
APRIL, 1992
This thesis for honor recognition has been approved for the Department of Theology.

Director

Reader

Reader

Date
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</th>
<th>iii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Chapter**

1. **INTRODUCTION** .......................... 1

2. **THE JUSTICE OF JUDAH** ................... 4
   - War in whose name?

3. **PRE-CHRISTIAN FATHERS** .................. 9
   - The delineations of Judaism at the time of Christ
   - Parallels of pacifism - the Essenes

4. **A PEACEFUL DAWN** ........................... 13
   - The nascent Christian faith on war

5. **FOUNDATION AND EMPIRE** ................. 16
   - From problems to preeminence

6. **SECOND FOUNDATION** ..................... 19
   - The thought of Augustine

7. **GLADII DEI** ............................... 21
   - The Byzantines and the "first" First Crusade
   - The Arab explosion and the rise of knighthood
   - Military orders

8. **THE "CONDENSATION" OF PHILOSOPHY** ...... 25
   - Aquinas: on just war and just revolution

9. **WHAT MUST A CHRISTIAN BELIEVE?** ...... 27
   - Luther: A rebel chastises rebels

10. **CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATIONS AND INSIGHTS** ...... 30
    - The influence of mass media
    - Varying types of pacifism - Berrigan and Day
11. THE JUST WAR IN THE 21ST CENTURY AND BEYOND ........................................ 35

The true comprehension of mass destruction

12. CONCLUSION ........................................... 37

END NOTES .................................................. 39

REFERENCE LIST ........................................... 41
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Isaac Asimov, who unknowingly lent me the title of two of his great novels to serve as chapter headings.

Thanks to Drs. Richard Lambert and Alexandra Swaney, who remained at my beck and call despite my chronic procrastination.

A special thanks to Fr. Michael Driscoll, who said the right thing at the right time.

I cannot express the gratitude I feel towards Dr. John Hart, my thesis director, who has watched me get every paper I've ever done for him in just under the wire. Sure enough, this qualified as another in the long tradition.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Who is more aware than a sincere Christian of the dichotomy which often emerges between the theory behind the faith, and its execution or practice? The immense conflicts which arise in our consciences are only compounded by the simple fact that we often have no definitive guideline for our actions. Even those inspired sources to which we in our uncertainty often turn for assurance can give us conflicting responses. This leaves us, in many cases, no better off than we were before.

I hope with this paper to accomplish two purposes. The first is almost exclusively scholarly - to trace the development of the Christian philosophy on war so as to show the various influences to which this philosophy was exposed, especially at the time of its inception and in its first 1,300 years. The second is much more practical - to understand more fully not only how, but why Christians came to think the way they do on the subject; this would be an important first step towards a more complete comprehension of the faith. Hopefully, that understanding will function as an aid to increased tolerance and compassion, both among fellow Christians and among the religions which it influenced - as well as those which influenced it.
As an explanation of the title, I thought to show the three general perspectives of the Christian on the question of warfare. These are as varied and at odds as we might expect from a faith which has more sects, denominations, and delineations than any other major world religion.

The Jain is a reference to Jainism, a Far Eastern relative of the Hindu faith, which espouses the principle of *ahimsa*, or complete non-violence. I hope to show briefly as an aside some basic similarities between *ahimsa* and the Christian ethic on war as it existed in its infancy.

The Just War, of course, hearkens back to the period of St. Augustine, when a newly Christianized Roman Empire needed explanations of right and wrong at a time of incredible crisis.

The *Jihad* recalls a militant era in the history of Christianity, a time of universal empires, Crusades, and the rise of Islam, a faith far more influenced by Christian example than we are comfortable to admit. All in all, an apt alliteration, I believe.

Admittedly, such an overview must be broad, but I believe there are a number of patterns which can be traced with this particular method, and which in my opinion are a useful addition to the Christian body of knowledge.

Finally, if there is an occasional tendency towards the speculative as opposed to the concrete in this paper, I shall apologize beforehand, with the following disclaimer:
any ideas backed more by intuition than information will be clearly labeled as such. Too much spice makes any meal unpalatable. Too little, and the food is bland. Hopefully, with this paper, the seasoning is just right.
Before one can begin a discussion of Christian perceptions on war, a look further back into pre-Christian history is in order.

We are well aware of the origins of what eventually became Judaism - how the Hebrews were liberated from Egypt by the power of Yahweh acting through the prophet Moses. Throughout this period of the Exodus and the entrance into Canaan, the Israelites were called upon to fight a number of times. The first occurrence was against the people of Am'alek as recalled in Exodus 18:

Then came Am'alek and fought with Israel at Reph'idim. And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us men, and go out, fight with Am'alek; tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand." So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Am'alek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; and whenever he lowered his hand, Am'alek prevailed. But Moses' hands grew weary; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat upon it, and Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, one on the other side; so his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua mowed down Am'alek and his people with the edge of the sword. (Exodus 17:8-13)

One can see the significance of this passage upon analysis. The Lord had essentially fought Israel's battles for them previously, setting plague after plague upon Pharaoh and Egypt, and crushing the pursuing Egyptian
army in the sea. Here, for the first time post-Exodus, the Hebrews engage an enemy directly, sword to sword, as it were. While the victory is credited to the intervention of Yahweh, direct battle is here seen for the first time as a legitimate consequence of dispute. Not only is it justified by the prophet Moses, Yahweh too takes a hand.

Later the loose confederation among the twelve tribes would be led by judges, de facto chieftains who were elected when the need for unified leadership became desperate. Often these judges were called upon to deal with military situations; the problem with occupying the Promised Land was that there were current inhabitants - the Canaanites.

To go into detail on the conquest of Canaan is hardly necessary, but there is of course another splendid example of the Jewish perception of Yahweh taking an active role in their military affairs. There are few of us unfamiliar with the story of Joshua at the walls of Jericho:

On the seventh day they rose early at the dawn of day, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times ... And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout, for the Lord has given you the city. And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the Lord for destruction ... and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city ... Then they utterly destroyed all in the city, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and asses, with the edge of the sword. (Joshua 6:15-17,20-21)

Examining the battle from a purely military perspective, the strategy cannot really be faulted; to achieve and maintain dominance in the region, the Hebrews
had to essentially eliminate large numbers of the Canaanites, so as to alter the area's overwhelming demographics in their favor. Yet again, it is the hand of Yahweh which strikes down the defenses of the Israelites' foes.

These genocidal tendencies continued even into the era of the Israelites' first king, Saul. Saul's choice to take captive the king of the Amal'ekites, and claim treasure and booty from the victory, rather than slaying them all as was the Lord's command, causes him to be abandoned as king of Israel. This leads eventually to the anointing of David. 1 Samuel 15 relates this.

Often it has been the case that these readings and others contained within the early portions of the Old Testament have been cited in order to demonstrate the fact that war is permissible - nay, even desirable, in certain situations.

Certainly if we merely take the Biblical passages at face value, the argument seems short and unassailable. If, however, one remembers that in the time of the Judges what today is the Jewish faith was still in a relatively early stage of development, it becomes shakier.

Looking ahead in the Old Testament to a period when the nations of Israel and Judah are established firmly in Palestine, we see that military prowess has become less important than devotion to the God of Israel, even in the
kings, who by this time have replaced the judges as political and military leaders. A prime example of this is the life of Judah's king, Josiah (who reigned 640 – 609 B.C.).

The worship of foreign gods, which was running rampant at this time, was sharply curtailed by Josiah's decisive action, and his restoration of the pure worship of Yahweh spoke volumes of his attitude. His military actions, however, were less than successful. Josiah met his end at the hands of the Egyptian army under Pharaoh Neco, and the Israelite forces suffered a sharp defeat on the plains of Megiddo. This would seem to indicate that Josiah's reign was a less than successful one. Yet in Biblical terms, this is not so:

Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his father ... And he died, and was buried in the tombs of his fathers. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. Jeremiah also uttered a lament for Josiah; and all the singing men and singing women have spoken of Josiah in their laments to this day. They made these an ordinance in Israel; behold, they are written in the Laments. Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and his good deeds according to what is written in the law of the Lord, and his acts, first and last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. (2 Chronicles 34:1-2; 2 Chronicles 35:24-27)

A ringing salute for an unsuccessful military commander. Furthermore, there are numerous citations in Kings and Chronicles of successful military leaders who are condemned as "having done evil in the eyes of the Lord." An example of this appears in 2 Chronicles 21, where
Jeho'ram, son of Jehosh'aphat, crushes the rebelling Edomites, but is informed by the prophet Elijah that he is to be punished for leading Judah astray:

And the Lord stirred up against Jeho'ram the anger of the Philistines and of the Arabs who are near the Ethiopians ... and after all this the Lord smote him ... with an incurable disease ... and he died in great agony. His people made no fire in his honor ... and he departed with no one's regret. They buried him in the city of David, but not in the tombs of the kings. (2 Chronicles 21:16,18-20)

These last examples seem inconsistent with those that had preceded them. Once one is no longer fighting for survival, as the Jews were for so long, however, one can afford to alter opinions on what is acceptable conduct. That at least would be the cynical reading.

Is this, then, a simple difference of opinion on the importance and correctness of war, or the signs of a religion maturing into a new perspective?
Palestine has long been a thoroughfare for the great empires of history. By the time of Christ, it had been dominated by the Akkadians, Egyptians, Hittites, the Hebrew Kingdom (under David and Solomon), Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Alexander the Great, the Ptolemies, Seleucids, and, finally, the Romans. It comes as no surprise that in an atmosphere of strife and ferment the Jewish faith would eventually splinter into a number of groups with vastly differing opinions on war:

The study of Judaism in the centuries immediately preceding and following the time of Christ presents a maze of small sects. Some accepted the claims of false Messiahs. Some advocated violence to establish an independent Israel. Some were pacifists and ascetics awaiting the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. (Pfeifer, p. 45)

There were, of course, the Pharisees, from whom later would come the Rabbinic tradition with which we are so familiar. They were not a particularly violent sect, despite their despair at seeing Israel under foreign domination. Opposing them were their rivals, the Sadducees, who held control of the Temple worship, and were composed almost entirely of high-society types. The Sadducees had fallen into a habit of cooperation with their Roman overlords, which is not overly surprising, considering
their affection for things Hellenistic and their rejection of much in the way of belief that other Jews held dear.² Both of these groups are familiar to us from the Gospels.

Lesser known than the above, though mentioned, are the Zealots, who believed in defying Caesar and the Romans openly, utilizing whatever means, including open warfare, necessary to effect Jewish independence. It was under their leadership that the ill-advised Jewish revolt of A.D. 66-72 took place; this, of course led to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem (and the Diaspora) in reprisal. Another group, the Sicari, who were either a sub- or splinter group of the Zealots, represented, according to some scholars, an elite group of assassins who attempted to spread terror through Roman-held Palestine by means of political killings and other sorts of subversive violence. It has been speculated that Judas Iscariot was secretly a member of this sect (note the partial anagram - Iscari(ot) = Sicari).

Then there were the Essenes, a sect of Jews who lived apart from the general community. They merit mention both for their well known pacifist stance, and the speculation that Jesus Himself may have been an Essene (or at least been influenced by them):

Essenes lived lives of simplicity. They devoted much of their time to devotion and religious study. They were industrious. Each member was required to perform manual labor. They practiced community of goods and lived a life of strict discipline in submission to an overseer. The young were required to defer to the older members of the community ... Slavery and war were repudiated. The
Essenes did not take part in the Temple worship. (Pfiefer, p. 43)

There are incidents from the life of Jesus which could link Him to the Essenes: the chaos at the moneychangers' tables in the Temple; His stance on non-violence. Some scholars think it unquestionable that Jesus was indeed an Essene:

Dr. David Christian Ginsburg boldly asserts that all Jews in the time of Christ were either Pharisees, Sadducees, or Essenes, and that, since Jesus clearly did not fit into one of the first two categories he must be ranked among the third. (Pfeifer, p. 97)

In some ways, this brash statement is unjustified. There are many inconsistencies between Jesus' thought and that of the Essenes. Many of them lived lives of complete separation from the outlying communities (in something of a Jewish forerunner to the Christian monastic movement centuries later), while Jesus Himself could hardly be considered a separatist by any stretch of the imagination. Considering just how few true pacifists there were in Roman-held Palestine at the time, though, a familiarity with and acceptance of some Essene principles cannot be discounted. Thomas Bokenkotter, author of A Concise History of the Catholic Church, cautiously acknowledges the possibility:

Another Jewish group - the Essenes ... had, as the Dead Sea Scrolls show, the same sense of joy at the imminent advent of God's Kingdom ... from them Jesus may have derived his doctrine of not resisting evildoers. (Bokenkotter, p. 19)

It seems very possible, then, that Jesus at one time may have been an Essene, perhaps even a "monk" at the famed
Qumran community in Judea. Later in life, around the time of His ministry, perhaps He expressed dissatisfaction with some Essene principles, and departed to start His own school, or at least to follow His own conscience. This would explain both similarities to and differences from the Essene teachings of the time, and why nothing was heard from Him for so long - until, some would say, the time was right.
CHAPTER 4
A PEACEFUL DAWN

As with so many Christian precepts, one has only to look back to the Gospels, and the words of Christ in particular, to find the inspiration for the specific belief in the principle of pacifism. Jesus speaks of this idea obliquely in His Sermon on the Mount:

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth ... Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:5,7-9)

It could be argued that Jesus is not speaking directly on the subject of warfare here, but the same cannot be said of points He makes later in the same sermon:

"You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment ... be reconciled to your brother ... You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil." (Matthew 5:21-22,24,38-39)

The sentiment does not alter from one Gospel to another on this subject. Much the same tone is found in Luke, as well:

"But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly. To the man who slaps you on one cheek, present the other cheek too ..." (Luke 6:27-29)
Perhaps the most compelling evidence for what Jesus had said and implied in His statements came later when He was arrested by the chief priests and elders, and one of His followers attempted to use violence to protect Him:

And behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father and he will send me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matthew 26:51-53)

All this was taken by the early Christians to mean that violence was to be forbidden to them. While some might dispute this statement as lacking in evidence, historically speaking, it is essentially sound. Even the Roman writers who later revile Christianity make no mention of violence (aside from the occasional invented infanticide) or even resistance from them in their own behalf.

Christians took further justification for this stance from Paul's Letter to the Romans, where while he makes it abundantly clear that submission to the civil authorities is a good Christian's duty, he reiterates the idea that there is no room for violence within the scope of this obedience:

Do all you can to live at peace with everyone. Never try to get revenge; leave that, my friends, to God's anger. As Scripture says: vengeance is mine - I will pay them back, the Lord promises. (Romans 12:18-20)

The early Christian converts were known for more than just their faith in Jesus and a communal lifestyle. Their steadfast refusal to serve in the Roman military made them a convenient target for patriotic persecution. One recalls
the legend of the Roman centurion St. Sebastian with renewed interest.
CHAPTER 5
FOUNDATION AND EMPIRE

Christianity enjoyed a period where its association with Judaism provided for it a shield against the political and religious demands of the Roman Empire. The Jews had been permitted almost since their annexation in the first century B.C. a number of privileges unique among Roman subject peoples, the most important of which were the exemption from worship of the *Divinus Imperator*, or Divine Emperor; and that of immunity from military service.

For a while, these protections were of immense help in permitting Christians to believe and worship as they would. Eventually, though, conflicts with more orthodox Jewish followers led to a mutual repudiation, and a declaration by each side that they were the "real" Jews. Predictably, a Judaism which admitted Gentiles freely and worshipped (at least in Roman eyes) another god besides Yahweh wasn't about to be permitted the same rights accorded the "proper" Jews. At least, that was the attitude in some circles. Others weren't so sure:

The first evidences of Christianity in non-Christian literature we find when perplexed Roman officials began to write to one another and exchange views upon the strange problem presented by this infectious rebellion of otherwise harmless people. (Wells, p. 542)

Edward Gibbon, in his immortal *The Decline and Fall of*
the Roman Empire, makes a distinction he considers important. "The Jews were a nation; the Christians were a sect." (Gibbon, p. 268)

Therein lay the problem. The Jews could be excused as wayward and humored, because it took less effort to do that than it did to force them to the yoke; and because they were a conquered nation, with what the Romans considered "strange ways".

The Christians though, who became composed ever more as the centuries progressed of Gentile converts from other religions, could not be permitted to let their pacifist tendencies spread, lest the Empire crumble through lack of soldiery (and mettle) to protect it. Thus are justified the attempts to crush the fledgling religion.

After all this dispute over the right not to bear arms, it seems a pinnacle of irony that the Emperor Constantine attributed his victory at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in A.D. 312 to the beneficence of the Christian God. Once again the Deity took part in the conquest of the unbeliever. It seems interesting, however, to note that Constantine withheld his baptism until his deathbed. There were, admittedly, a number of political reasons for doing this. Perhaps one motivation, though, was a more personal one - the fact that he knew a true Christian ruler could not engage in warfare. Speculation, yes, but entirely compatible with what we know of how the canny
Constantine might handle such a dilemma.

The persecutions had continued through the first four centuries, abating and waxing alternately until the Emperor Theodosius in the year A.D. 380 declared Christianity to be the sole religion of the Roman Empire.4

Unfortunately, the Christian rise to prominence had coincided with the slow disintegration of Roman military might, and by the early fifth century A.D., the barbarians were literally at the gates.
Behind a particular gate, at Hippo in North Africa, stood one of Christendom's most brilliant thinkers, St. Augustine. While answering charges that the furious pagan community had made against his faith, Augustine also addressed the long-held Christian ideas on pacifism, saying in effect that the Christian could indeed fight in certain instances, that soldiering was not necessarily anathema to them:

I know the objection that a good ruler will wage wars only if they are just. But surely, if he will only remember that he is a man, he will begin by bewailing the necessity he is under by waging even just wars. A good man would be under compulsion to wage no wars at all, if there were not such things as just wars. 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. It would be deplorable in itself, apart from being a source of conflict. (City of God, p. 447)

With the introduction of the just war, Augustine ignited a controversy which has not ceased to divide Christians to this day. Cynics point out that the just war was the first logical step in permitting a now dominant, proselytizing religion to maintain its grip on a precarious political situation.

Furthermore, Augustine echoed the sentiments of Paul on revolution; that is, he strongly disapproved of it. Both
believed in the idea of Divine Authority. "Slaves, be obedient to your masters," from Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 6:5, and "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities," from his Letter to the Romans 13:1, is echoed in Augustine's ideas:

I refer to the civil wars and social uprisings that involve even more wretched anxieties for human beings, either shaken by their actual impact, or living in fear of their renewal. (Augustine, p. 446)

Augustine felt, much as Paul did, that a tyrant or bad master was placed there to test the faith of the society or slave, respectively. Again, cynics would say, "the just war is acceptable, but the just revolution is not. The convenience of this is too easy." Despite the possible imperfections in this line of thought, it was to become more and more attractive in the centuries to come - and moreover, its evolution was far from complete.
The Byzantine Empire supplanted the Roman as the dominant power in the Mediterranean region, and one glaring difference between the two was apparent: whereas the Roman Empire had been a heterogeneous society where religion was concerned, the Byzantines were enthusiastically Christian, almost without exception. To such a civilization, the idea of the just war as it had been put forth by Augustine was instrumental to survival - the Avars, Sassanid Persians, and other enemies of the Empire were unlikely to withhold their assaults merely because their opposition espoused non-violence.

It was during the early seventh century, when the Byzantines found themselves embroiled in yet another chapter of their centuries-long warfare with the aforementioned Sassanids, that the next alteration in the Christian conception of warfare took place. Needing to rally his people, the Emperor Heraclius pointed to the fact that the Persians had sacked Jerusalem, the birthplace of Christ. He then called on all good Christians to defend the Savior's honor. While his war was successful in the short term (and still technically fell under the conditions Augustine had set for a just war), it also had the distinction of
introducing the idea of the Crusade, a religious war, to Christianity.6

A parallel idea is found in the fundamental principles of Islam, which at this time was summoning its first strength in the deserts of Arabia:

Say to the desert Arabs who stayed behind: 'You shall be called upon to fight a mighty nation, unless they embrace Islam ... if the unbelievers join battle with you, they shall be put to flight.' (The Koran, Dawood, tr., p. 277)

Islam as a religion had a much accelerated and more successful early childhood than Christianity, and from the beginning, combat was an instrumental part of the faith. The idea that Allah (God) blesses the warrior who goes into battle for Him was certainly not uniquely Islamic, but the Moslems put it into practice most effectively. Islam threatened to overrun all of Europe within the first century of its inception;7 as a result, the Christian West was forced to realign itself along more militaristic lines, and feudalism (with its idealistic stepchild, knighthood) was one result.8

Most Westerners are familiar with the concept of the jihad, or holy war. Fewer are aware that in many ways, parts of this philosophy grew out of necessity in response to Christian aggression.

After its period of initial expansion, Islam had coalesced into a number of kingdoms and principalities. Due to a combination of factors (including the preponderance of
feast days instituted by the Church) medieval knights had insufficient opportunity (in their view) to practice their warcraft. Additionally, the introduction of the Seljuk Turks to the Holy Land in the late 1000's, and their subsequent mistreatment of visiting pilgrims (combined with Byzantine inability to do anything about it), were both factors that brought on the Crusades we are so familiar with.

One of the outgrowths of the Crusading period was the growth and expansion of military religious orders. Bernard of Clairvaux, who was, in his time, the most popular and influential man in Christendom (even more so than the pope), himself lent his support to the developing Knights Templar. He was certainly not alone in his enthusiasm for the idea of piety and power combined in such a manner:

He [Bernard] had the statutes drawn up and he wrote that "Praise of the New Militia" in which he commented passionately on the ideal of those soldiers of Christ. The Templars' white cloak was a reminder that they were descendants of Citeaux (it was only later that the great red cross was added). And the warrior-monks were obliged to live in renunciation and asceticism as "poor soldiers of Christ" in contrast to the worldly chivalry decried by Saint Bernard. Do not the most ancient escutcheons of the Templars show two knights on one same mount? An eloquent reminder of the virtue of poverty. (Daniel-Rops, p. 102)

One looks at this era, a time of immense conflict between Christianity and Islam, and sees, at least in the philosophies on warfare, undeniable similarities. The warrior has a status of respectability and honor which seems to surpass even that of the holy men of the time. Which
civilization influenced which more? A rhetorical question, perhaps; from a distance, on a battlefield, there wouldn't have been much to distinguish them.
CHAPTER 8
THE "CONDENSATION" OF PHILOSOPHY

The High Middle Ages, in addition to being the time of Crusades and military orders, was also the era of Scholasticism. Its most brilliant theologian, St. Thomas Aquinas, addressed almost every conceivable religious question in his *Summa Theologiae*, including those on warfare. Like Augustine before him, Aquinas was a supporter of the just war:

In order for a war to be just, three things are necessary. First, the authority of the sovereign by whose command the war is to be waged ... Secondly, a just cause is required, namely that those who are attacked, should be attacked because they deserve it on account of some fault ... Thirdly, it is necessary that the belligerents should have a rightful intention, so that they intend the advancement of good, or the avoidance of evil. (Aquinas, Vol. II, Q. 40, Art. 1)

Rather more exacting than Augustine. It reflects 800 years of additional theological development (and, also, of course, the prodigious intellect which spawned it). Notice also that by the original definition of just war, as given by Augustine, the First Crusade (A.D. 1099) may not have been legal. Aquinas solves the difficulties quite nicely. Again, cynics would say, this is too convenient.

Aquinas' thought differs from Augustine's (and Paul's as well) in yet another regard. Aquinas believes wholeheartedly that rebellion against tyrannical civil
authorities is certainly permitted:

A tyrannical government is not just, because it is directed, not to the common good, but to the private good of the ruler, as the Philosopher states (Polit. iii, 5; Ethic, viii, 10). Consequently there is no sedition in disturbing a government of this kind, unless indeed the tyrant's rule be disturbed so inordinately, that his subjects suffer greater harm from the consequent disturbance than from the tyrant's government. Indeed it is the tyrant rather that is guilty of sedition, since he encourages discord and sedition, among his subjects, that he may lord over them more securely; for this is tyranny, being conducive to the private good of the ruler, and to the injury of the multitude. (Aquinas, Vol. II, Q. 42, Art. 2)

Aquinas adds to Christian thought what is now termed the just revolution, giving specific instances where this course of action may be employed.

However, his thought on war, and that of Augustine, were soon to be challenged - from within.
CHAPTER 9
WHAT MUST A CHRISTIAN BELIEVE?

The Protestant Reformation exploded across Europe in the early sixteenth century, and one of the principles it was founded upon called for a return to the Scriptures as the ultimate authority in the Christian life, to take the place of the teachings of the Catholic Church, both of the (then) contemporary clergy and the ancient Fathers.\textsuperscript{10}

One often remembers Martin Luther (who, along with Zwingli and Calvin, initially led the fledgling Reformation movement) in a somewhat fanciful manner, picturing him defiantly nailing his 95 theses to the door of the Cathedral at Wittenberg. He was the first of those who made the call back to the basics of Scripture, sort of a "proto-fundamentalist", to coin a phrase. This call included his opinions on warfare, and more specifically, revolution.

Luther, who spent much of the remainder of his life after A.D. 1517 (the aforementioned "95 theses" incident) the "guest" of German princes hostile to the Catholic Holy Roman Emperor, was similar to St. Paul in that he had ample opportunities during his lifetime to make clear his position on various issues. One of the most famous of his stances was in response to a peasants' revolt in the German province of Swabia, when they themselves appealed to him in an
attempt to gain his support:

The fact that the rulers are wicked and unjust does not excuse tumult and rebellion, for to punish wickedness does not belong to everybody, but to the worldly rulers who bear the sword ... Can you not imagine it, or figure it out, dear friends? If your enterprise were right then any man might become judge over another ... (Luther, pp. 219-244)

Luther later became even more virulent in his condemnation:

... nothing can be more poisonous, hurtful, or devilish than a rebel. It is just as when one must kill a mad dog; if you do not strike him, he will strike you, and a whole land with you. (Luther, pp. 248-254)

One gets the idea the peasants were hoping for a more favorable response. Considering Luther's perspectives, though, this opinion is not exactly surprising. At first it might be thought that he would have more sympathy for fellow rebels. His desire to adhere to Scripture as closely as possible, however, puts him firmly in Paul's (and, thus, Augustine's) camp.

This new interpretation of true authority, led by Luther, had an immense influence on the hitherto focused Christian conception of war. While some denominations (e.g., the Episcopal) essentially duplicated the Catholic Church's viewpoints on war and revolution, others preferred a more aboriginal approach. Later Protestant groups such as the Amish, Mennonites, and Quakers have returned to the early Christian idea that all violence is abhorrent to God. These groups are notable for their refusal to serve in a nation's armed forces, even in a non-combat position.
With the advent of the Reformation, thus, the idea of a single Christian opinion on war and violence went from outdated to nearly impossible. It can be simultaneously amusing and disturbing to hear a discussion on the subject between two Christian scholars of differing perspectives, as they hurl quotes from Augustine and Aquinas at each other with a vehemence usually reserved for condemnation of heretics. If the experts can't decide, well ...
One of the advantages Luther and the leaders of the Reformation possessed over the great Christian writers of the past was a method of fact dissemination far superior to anything previously achieved. The discovery of the printing press in the 1450's revolutionized the communication process, and was an immeasurable aid in spreading the opinions of the movement's leaders. Luther's ideas (on any subject) were put into the public forum with an immediacy which had never been approached. Printed in the vernacular, they possessed a clarity which had been lost over centuries of esoteric debate, and for which the people were eager.

Even Gutenberg, inventor of the printing press, could not have imagined the development of the mass media only a few centuries later, and the influence it would have on all thought, let alone so debated a subject as war.

People whose voices would never have been heard, who would have lived their lives out in quiet piety and obscurity, are thrust (or place themselves) onto the socio-political scene. Here their voices and deeds sometimes inspire us. More often they make us profoundly uncomfortable with their insistent reminders of Christian responsibility in a contemporary society.
This division of viewpoint has even pervaded the often monolithic structure of the Catholic Church. The recent papal encyclicals involved with social justice and economic reorganization, coupled with the immense repressions in South America, have led to the development of Liberation Theology:

Liberation Theology is an attempt to spell out the social and political implications of the Gospel in terms of the liberation of men and women from oppression and injustice ... The implication of these doctrines ... is that God is at work in the world to change man's total situation ... We can scarcely quarrel with liberation theology for its attempt to spell out the political implications of Christianity ... one of the strongest points of criticism against traditional Christian ethics has been its failure to take seriously the social and political aspects of love of the neighbour. (Hebblethwaite, pp. 91-92)

Further, a radical interpretation of Liberation Theology, the Theology of Revolution, has been embraced by some clerics within the church. This variation speaks of war as a legitimate, even desirable vehicle for social change.

Within Catholicism itself, movements towards absolute pacifism counterbalance such radical interpretations as the Theology of Revolution. Daniel Berrigan, Catholic priest and radical activist in the name of pacifism, is famed for his participation in the actions of the Catonsville Nine. This collection of clergy and laity banded together and utilized home-made napalm to burn draft cards which had been collected in Catonsville, Maryland, during the Vietnam War. Father Berrigan despises war in general, but for the Vietnam
conflict he held a special disdain:

... The papers destroyed in Catonsville in May of 1968 were in fact hunting licenses issued against human beings, licenses declaring a twelve-month open season on Vietnamese men, women, and children. (Berrigan, p. 29)

This is polemic, to be sure; but it is not without its own inherent justification.

Father Berrigan takes action according to the dictates of his conscience; not all pacifists are called to express their opinions so vehemently. Certainly this "neo-pacifism" has made its strength felt in other, quieter ways. A shining example of this is the Catholic Worker movement (along with the newspaper of the same name) and its founder, the late Dorothy Day:

For nearly half a century now, the Catholic Worker has been published monthly .... Its message ... creating community, affirming peace and denouncing war; restoring true human creativity to the idea of work; and, as always, criticizing the ever-growing and baleful giantism of an economic system that ultimately would make people into blank-faced nullities who in their leisure time were positioned like dolls, in front of the television. (America, Vol. 143, No. 19, p. 384)

We can see that biblical message of Jesus and Paul in Day's reflections on war from 1940:

There are so many who hate war and who are opposed to peacetime conscription who do not know what they can do, who have no sense of united effort, and who will sit back and accept with resignation the evils which are imposed upon us. This is not working for God's will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven. (Day, p. 42)

The variety of differing beliefs, and of the methods of espousing them, has provoked a number of opinions; though not directly as a result of the above, the National
Council of Catholic Bishops has definitively stated its position on war in a pastoral letter entitled The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response. Specifically, the bishops felt it time to address in a more substantive way the presence of nuclear weapons in the modern world, and the conduct of men and armies in such an age:

96. (e) Last Resort: For resort to war to be justified, all peaceful alternatives must have been exhausted. There are formidable problems in this requirement. (The Challenge of Peace, pp. 41-42)

Many of the requirements of the National Conference, taken to their ultimate conclusion, would essentially condemn a great many wars, and the overwhelming majority of revolutions. Again, it is interesting to note that according to the dictates of the National Council, the recent U.N. intervention in Iraq was possibly unjustified.

98. (f) Probability of Success: This is a difficult criterion to apply, but its purpose is to prevent irrational resort to force or hopeless resistance when the outcome of either will obviously be disproportionate or futile ... (The Challenge of Peace, pp. 42-43)

It is interesting to see that despite the justifications people have used for centuries to make war, the Catholic Bishops cut right to the heart of the question that should be on everyone's mind:

99. (g) Proportionality: Proportionality means that the damage to be inflicted and the costs incurred by war must be proportionate to the good expected by taking up arms. Nor should judgments ... be limited to the temporal ... without regard to the spiritual. (The Challenge of Peace, p. 43)

The bishops ask: At what cost, war?
At what cost to our neighbors?
At what cost to ourselves?
CHAPTER 11
THE JUST WAR IN THE 21ST CENTURY AND BEYOND

For great numbers of rabid science fiction fans since the 1960's, the television series "Star Trek" has been a clever and entertaining allegory of the problems facing the world (or, in this case, the galaxy) and human attempts to overcome them through the power of the spirit. Its contemporary successor, "Star Trek: The Next Generation," has carried on this tradition with hardly a glitch. In one episode, entitled "The Enemy," the U.S.S. Enterprise confronts a Romulan Warbird [both craft are futuristic equivalents of a battleship] which has penetrated the territory the Enterprise's government calls its own:

Picard: (grimly) Commander, you have entered Federation space despite my warning.
Tomalak: (in the grip of near apoplectic rage) You forced the situation! I will not leave without him. [referring to a badly injured Romulan officer the Enterprise crew has captured on a Federation planet]
Picard: He's dead.
Tomalak: Then he is but the first to fall, Picard. (The viewscreen goes blank. From the back of the bridge, Lieutenant Worf, Tactical Officer, joins the interplay)
Worf: The Romulan ship is routing power to its forward disruptor array.
Picard: All shields to maximum. Lock phasers on target.
Worf: Phasers locked, and ready.

The tense moment stretches out until Picard makes an appeal for restraint on both sides.

Picard: Commander, both our ships are ready to fight. We have two extremely powerful and destructive arsenals
at our command. Our next actions will have serious repercussions. We have good reason to mistrust each other, but we have better reason to set those differences aside.

Picard explains that the second Romulan survivor on the planet will be beamed aboard, but only after his ship has lowered its shields. If Commander Tomalak chooses to attack, a single shot will probably destroy them. It is his choice to make.

It's not difficult to surmise that the crew of the Enterprise survived this dangerous encounter. That's television for you. What is interesting is the immense power of the weaponry at the two captains' fingertips. Though nuclear weapons are hardly of the destructive potential of disruptors, phasers, or the dreaded photon torpedoes (matter and anti-matter in a magnetic containment field), the metaphor is glaringly apparent: for the last century or so, one shot can easily kill more than just one person. While it might seem silly to include a fictional incident in a scholarly paper, we need to remember that someday this may be more fact than fancy, and that our entertainments often reflect our truest concerns. Potential for mass destruction and the targeting of civilians specifically are issues which have yet to be addressed in a thorough manner.
CHAPTER 12

CONCLUSION

One can see how history and necessity may have forced certain modes of thinking upon early Christianity, though the faith remained pacifist in the first few centuries of its existence. It is interesting to note that, today, in locations where Christians are particularly persecuted, the necessity of "just wars" and "just revolutions" is trumpeted with great regularity, whereas those who live in affluent areas often speak of war as never desirable (unless for thinly veiled economic reasons). While this is certainly a generalization, it seems that perhaps there is an element of pragmatism to Christian thought on war.

Is this really wrong, however? Christianity might not have survived as a vibrant world religion had it not been decided that it was all right to fight for the state. Then again, state sponsorship didn't save Zoroastrianism.

To those who say it is impossible for men who have known war to live in peace, I point to the example of the Emperor Asoka, who ruled a kingdom in India, and defeated Alexander's general, Seleucus, in battle. Exposed to Hindu and Jain thought, converted to Buddhism, he vowed never again to take up arms. He kept that promise through the remaining years of his reign, and his kingdom, despite a
lack of expansion, was prosperous and happy.

If one of the goals of religion is to respond to the people's material needs as well as their spiritual ones, then perspectives such as Liberation Theology are a development stemming from an unfulfilled need.

Is there a solution to the seemingly irreconcilable differences between "pure" Christian pacifism and the Augustinian/Thomistic philosophies on war? How can a Christian, even one who, like Augustine, believes in the rightness of war in certain situations, resolve the problems of weapons of mass destruction, which lay waste combatant and non-combatant alike?

Christian thought on warfare has run the complete gamut from absolute pacifism to aggressive conversion and conquest. Often it seems related to the economic stature or the political strength of the people who created the philosophy.

Ironically enough, we now live in a society where a return to what some might term the "over-idealistic" values of the early Christians might be a lasting one. If the majority of people espoused peace, and lived peace, perhaps it would become a reality, for all.
NOTES

1. The king of Israel intrigues for help with Egypt, that "broken reed", and in 721 B.C., as we have already noted, his kingdom is swept off into captivity and utterly lost to history. (Wells, p. 265)

2. ... the Sadducees['] ... Political interests tended to thrust religion into the background. Although claiming to believe the Old Testament (or, specifically, the Law) as authoritative, the Sadducee's orientation in theology was purely negative. He did not believe in spirits, angels, resurrection - or oral tradition. (Pfieffer, p. 41)

3. St. Sebastian, according to the childhood Sicilian legends, as told by my grandmother, put down the sword, and was martyred (after a number of attempts) by being pierced through with arrows. Traditionally, though, he was considered more a champion of restraint and quiet resolve than actual pacifism. A paper to explore the official, as opposed to the above "peasant" perception, might be interesting.

4. Rome was tolerant in principle and allowed many religions to flourish. It only declared war on the Christians when it realized their aim was total triumph over all other religions ... The struggle for the soul of the Empire raged on a vast scale ... Under Constantine the Church was firmly set on the road to union with the state. (Bokenkotter, pp. 47-52)

5. ... The City of God breathes the atmosphere of Götterdämmerung that pervaded the world as the Roman Empire began to crumble. (Bokenkotter, pp. 92) [Augustine himself was answering the charge that the Christians themselves had caused this disaster.]

6. This career of conquest was at last arrested by the Emperor Heraclius (610), who set about restoring the ruined military power of Constantinople. For some time Heraclius avoided a great battle while he gathered his forces. He took the field in good earnest in 623. The Persians experienced a series of defeats, culminating in the battle of Nineveh (627); but neither side had the strength for the complete defeat of the other. (Wells, p. 569)

7. Within a century of Muhammad's death in 632, Islam had spread eastward into Persia and westward into Spain,
from which it threatened to overrun Christian Europe. (Hanscom, p. 9)

8. It was in this atmosphere of ... invasion and economic stagnation that feudalism developed ... Scholars have argued for generations over the origins of feudalism, and are still far from agreement on many points. (Strayer, pp. 60-61)

9. In the twentieth century, papal teaching had used the logic of Augustine and Aquinas to articulate a right of self-defense for states in a decentralized international order and to state the criteria for exercising that right. (The Challenge of Peace, pp. 36-37) [It must be remembered that neither the thought of Aquinas nor Augustine on war has ever been adopted as official church policy, though their words have great weight.]

10. Since the Church had not been challenged in such a widespread and fundamental manner previously, it was not until the Counter-Reformation (and the Council of Trent) that many of these principles were actually put down, where before they had been accepted as a matter of course.

11. In doing this we realize, and we want readers of this letter to recognize, that not all statements in this letter have the same moral authority. At times we state universally binding moral principles found in the teaching of the Church; at other times the pastoral letter ... allow[s] for diversity of opinion ... (The Challenge of Peace, p. ii) [Again, it seems the bishops acknowledge that the doctrinal power of their statements is not binding unless reiterating a previous Church teaching.]
WORKS REFERENCED


Kung, H. Christianity and the World Religions: Paths to


