

Conceptual Approaches to Peace

Introduction: Ideas and Individuals

Aigul Kulnazarova

The problem of the unity of the world is one of the oldest and central concerns of humanity. On the one hand, the world in its diversity is heterogeneous, and on the other hand, it is a kind of universal whole that forms an inseparable unity of all its constituent parts. The conceptual approaches to peace integrate *ideas* and *individuals*, and their various human characteristics, such as observations, knowledge, choices, and actions, which play a decisive role in the development of peace as a concept and movement. The next six chapters, which form Part II of the handbook, provide a thoughtful account of the concepts of peace developed in different intellectual and theoretical circles. These conceptual approaches, represented by cosmopolitanism, Gandhism, feminism, liberalism, public goods, and human security theories, on the one hand, use the language of humanity in the sense that “peace” is universal and applies to the whole world, and on the other hand, show that the world is infinitely diverse in its historical, political, economic, social, and cultural manifestations.

Chapter 2, “Cosmopolitan Paths to Peace,” contributed by the renowned scholar of international law and politics and long-standing peace activist Richard Falk, pays attention to cosmopolitan ideas, based on common humanity, and suggests that they are derived not only from Western but also Eastern civilizations. The “[I]inks between cosmopolitan thought and ‘peace’... being set forth both as an orientation toward world order and governance and as a personal matter of how to live best as an individual or in a local community” (Chapter 2, p. 30) can explain cosmopolitan peace intersected between individual and collective interests. One of “the least tested” (Chapter 2, p. 29) and oldest theories of international relations, cosmopolitanism, without denying the importance of national cultures and respect for

individuality, teaches that the Earth and the humans are one, and therefore, the interests of larger society must be above personal ones. Cosmopolitanism “rejects the primacy of any boundary that claims a hegemonic status with respect to political and moral consciousness or with respect to the choice of an organizational structure appropriate for the maintenance of world peace” (Chapter 2, p. 31); thereby opposing other major political theories (e.g., realism and liberalism), which mainly analyze international relations relating to issues of peace and security from the perspectives of states and international organizations. Dividing the entire legacy of cosmopolitan thought into the Classical Cosmopolitanism (influenced by the ideas of Diogenes, Erasmus, and Kant) and New Cosmopolitanism (which grew out of the World Order Models Project), Richard Falk concludes that “peace would only be sustainable if there occurred an embrace of cosmopolitan consciousness,” that is, belief in universal values, trust, and commitment to a shared human destiny.

Chapter 3, “Peace, R2P and Public Goods Theory,” deals with debates about “good” and “bad” public goods and the choice between them when it comes to the problems of peace and war. Derived from the economic theory, “public goods” in the classical sense means goods or services that, given to one person, could be made available to others without any additional costs on their part. At the domestic level, “public goods” are, for example, national security, ensuring the state’s legitimacy and order, as well as economic stability, information and knowledge, environment, health. At the international level, “public goods” include, but are not limited to, the maintenance of international peace and security, global governance, the conservation of biodiversity, world cultural heritage, and free trade. Bjørn Møller opens his chapter with the inventive contributions of David Hume and Adam Smith who first hinted at the problem and possible solutions for public goods. Møller further asserts that there is no enough evidence to claim that “peace is always a public good,” adding that “peace may not invariably be a good at all, as some wars may be to the public good, even globally—with the war against Nazi Germany as the most obvious example” (Chapter 3, p. 60–61). Another case of “good wars” is humanitarian interventions aimed at protecting civilians from their evil governments. However, without creating a “more cosmopolitan world order,” as the author argues, the theory of public goods can although be the “valuable analytical tool”; in fact, it will not “offer clear-cut solutions” (Chapter 3).

In Chapter 4, “Gandhism and Peace,” Ramin Jahanbegloo turns to the impacts of Gandhian peace on international affairs and the social life of peoples. The peace concept developed by Mahatma Gandhi was based on the idea of Satyagraha (i.e., truth-seeking), which, like cosmopolitan ideas, was far from utopian. In his struggle for India’s independence, Gandhi used the strategy of nonviolence that he equated with the search for “truth,” which later became the worldwide mass movement against racism, imperialism, colonialism, etc. It is important to note that Gandhi understood perfectly

well that “it would not be possible to understand the concept of ‘Truth’ [the Gandhian peace] without understanding the tradition in which such ‘Truth’ is nurtured” (Chapter 4, p. 76), which allows him not to abandon traditions. Gandhi’s concept of peace was not difficult; through the practice of *satyagraha* and *ahimsa*, he strove to create harmony in society. Many activists of civil rights and peace movements throughout the world were attracted to the Gandhian concept of peace. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Martin Luther King, Jr., Nelson Mandela, Lech Walesa, Vaclav Havel, Benigno Aquino, and others not only were influenced, but also successfully adapted the strategy of Satyagraha in their struggle for human rights, independence, and freedom, as well as against racial, religious, and economic injustices in their respective countries.

The origins of feminist ideas date back to antiquity. In Ancient China, India, Athens, Rome, and elsewhere, women played different roles, including the role of peacemakers, say in the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta, as Athenian playwright Aristophanes speculated in his “*Lysistrata*” what women can do to end war. In Chapter 5, “Feminist Continuum in Peace and Conflict Studies,” Amanda Donahoe surveys major works to illustrate the contributions of feminist scholars to peace and conflict studies. For her, feminism is the “normative endeavor, committed to seeking emancipation from oppression and domination in all its forms” (Chapter 5, p. 89). But feminism has another side as well, which is more philosophical and instructive, embedded in the ancient works of Aristophanes (*Lysistrata*), Ban Zhao (*Admonitions for Women*), Liu Xiang (*Biographies of Heroic Women*), Valmiki (*Ramayana*), and many others that most extensively tell us about women’s roles and conditions in their respective historical societies, thereby informing the following generations. The normative or political feminism, discussed in Chapter 5, is a movement in which women have fought most actively for gender equality, against humiliation and oppression in society. Donahoe importantly notes that “intersectionality is a framework increasingly engaged by both feminists and institutions incorporating a gender lens into their work; (...) the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage” (Chapter 5, p. 90). To do this, she uses the concept of continuum “to examine gender, peace and violence, power, and participation, each of which is inclusive of a continuous series of elements that share a basic character often erroneously simplified as dichotomy,” although “gender is a relation of power” that allows “particular kinds of participation and violence, and decisions about public life” (Chapter 5, p. 102).

For Syed Mansoob Murshed, the central dilemmas of the liberal peace are the problems of development, democracy, and soft power. The liberal peace is based on the assumption that democratic states are unlikely to engage in any dispute or war with each other because of their

economic interdependence. In Chapter 6, “The Liberal Peace: Challenges to Development, Democracy and, Soft Power,” while reflecting Kant’s cosmopolitan peace and Gartzke’s capitalist peace, Mansoob Murshed deliberates that, nevertheless, democratic regimes are not always peaceful and, even more, they frequently fight, if not with each other, then with authoritarian states. There is a close relationship between the economic stability, trade, and development, on the one hand, and peace, on the other: “The chances of the emergence of well-ordered tolerant societies, envisioned by Rawls as living in peace with one another, have greatly diminished with the rise in inequality, wealth, and the increasing income share of the richest 1–10% of the population, as well as the growth in the varieties of populism and the accretion of autocratic tendencies, in recent years” (Chapter 6, p. 122). Such tendencies, aggravated by various forces of globalization and violent conflicts mainly in the Global South but often with the involvement of wealthy nations, have recently led to serious migration/refugee crisis, global populist movements, growing inequality, social insecurity, all of which may make states, regardless democratic or autocratic, more prone to violence. As the author continues, for a stable and durable peace under the given conditions what is most needed are “internationally coordinated checks on hyper-globalization and agreements on certain wealth taxes on the richest individuals, as well as job destroying automation” (Chapter 6, p. 124).

In Chapter 7, “Human Security and the Socialization of Peace,” Leonard Hammer focuses on the concept of the socialization of peace in its close relation to human security. Both the notions of “socialization” and “human security” first appeared in the last century, opposing the traditional approaches to the state of war (according to which war is a useful tool in interstate relations that determines the survival of states). Human security focuses on the safety and protection of people through the satisfaction of basic needs, such as education, health, social services. And, as Hammer explains, “the socialization of norms and rules can assist to further institutionalize peace... Socialization involves various actors beyond the state, with a keen focus on the interests of people and their security, including civil society and grassroots organizations, and incorporates the essential elements of human security into a state’s internal infrastructure” (Chapter 7, p. 134). On the practical side, the author argues that the “socialization” approach can be effective for creating and maintaining sustainable peace, especially in the context of a postconflict peacebuilding, if the focus is on human security. Since the concepts of socialization and human security emphasize the needs of people, such a combined approach to peace can help assess the development process, improve strategies for actions, and increase the participation of various actors, including local groups and individuals.

The ideas and individuals discussed in these chapters have changed the minds of people and the world as a whole. Their importance remains unlimited, as they continue to influence even today’s events by their relevance and strength.