

# On permanent world peace from a political anthropology perspective

## Abstract

Humans share the same cruel genes as their close relatives, chimpanzees, and their belligerence and bloodlust may never lead to permanent peace of the world. Some people think that war can reduce violence by enlarging the scale of human social bodies, but it not only depends on the institutional structure of peace but also makes the scale of war between social bodies larger, which cannot solve the problem. With the development of religion and other cultural traditions, through thousands of years of subtle influence, people have formed a “no killing” rule of civilization in their minds and tend to solve disputes in a peaceful way to counter against the aggressive genes in their bodies. However, many religious traditions have made some “exceptions” under the rule of “no killing”, which makes killing a religious excuse and makes it possible to kill people on a larger scale. To solve the problem of permanent peace of the world, we need to start with religious and cultural reforms and more strictly limit the “exception” principle of killing. Of course, it will take a long time.

**Keywords:** permanent peace, world, war, religion, civilization, human

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Sheng Hong

Unirule Institute of Economics, Beijing, China

**Correspondence:** Sheng Hong, Unirule Institute of Economics, Beijing, China. Email shenghon@unirule.org

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## Introduction

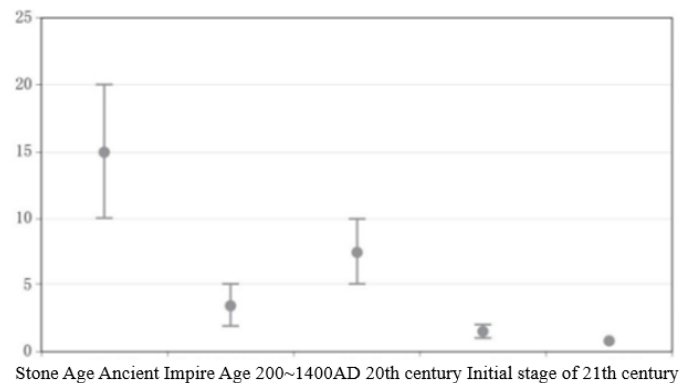
The method of this article is included in its title, where “politics” refers to the actions, strategies, and rules taken by individuals or groups to compete for benefits, as well as their consequences; “anthropology” refers to various disciplines related to humanity, including biological anthropology and cultural anthropology. The way people interact with each other partly depends on instincts, which are determined by genes; however, if instincts are to be allowed unlimited work, humans may perish in mutual slaughter. Therefore, humans developed cultural traditions such as religions to resist this instinct. As an institutional economist, I also imply an analysis of institutional rules in this article.

Human observations of their close relatives, chimpanzees, indicate that they are inherently cruel. As long as chimpanzees from neighboring tribes are left alone, they will seize the opportunity to kill them using extremely terrifying methods.<sup>1</sup> This is not a rational behavior but seems to be an innate instinct. Remembering that we are their close relatives, all of whom belong to the same class of apes, one can imagine that this genetically determined behavior must also exist in our bodies. Many human cases indicate that when they harm others, they seem to be controlled by alien forces. In the British television film ‘Law and Order’, a little boy killed a friend who was taller than him. The defense lawyer proved that his father was a murderer and had a bad gene, so he should not be responsible for killing someone. Extending this viewpoint, humans can avoid being held responsible for all their violent crimes, as they carry the same genes as chimpanzees.

Assuming this is true, does it mean that the ideal of permanent world peace for humanity will never be realized? It does not seem like either. In recent years, some scholars have held an optimistic view. They have found from human history that although wars have become increasingly fierce in modern times, on average, the proportion of people who die from wars is decreasing. See the figure below (Figure 1).

Surprisingly, some people who hold this view attribute this change in mortality rate to war, a human group behavior aimed at killing each other. As Morris believed, it was precisely war that led to the merger of human society, resulting in a significant reduction in violence within

larger social entities. However, the obvious flaw of this statement lies in the fact that the merger of human social entities has led to larger scales, not only through war but also through peaceful negotiations to form alliances. Moreover, the effective operation of larger and more complex social entities relies more on the development of organizational institutions and technologies of human society, and its core principle is to use peaceful means instead of violent means to solve conflicts of interest between people. If there is only war capability without such organizational capability, large-scale social entities cannot be sustained. The Mongol Empire once conquered most of the Eurasian countries.



**Figure 1** Violence mortality rate from 10000 BC to 2013.

**Source:** Morris, “War,” CITIC Press, 2015, p. 481.

History since modern times has not provided sufficient evidence. There was indeed a relatively long period of peace after World War II, but as a result, there were no larger social entities than before, and even some large empires—such as the British Empire—collapsed as a result. The decolonization and national liberation movements allowed many countries to become independent from the colonial empires of the past. The great changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe at the end of the 20th century also divided many countries, such as the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. Therefore, war does not necessarily form a larger social entity. The latter may not necessarily be the only reason for the decrease in violent mortality rates.

Another issue is moral judgment. It is a cruel statement to use the average violent mortality rate to indicate that the human condition has improved, because behind the average, there are real people. According to Morris, these deceased people are the cost for humanity to achieve a better society, but who should be the cost? For example, averaging the deaths of two world wars in the 20th century with the population of the entire century leads to the conclusion that the 20th century has unprecedented peace, which is just a number game. If we shorten the time to the period from 1931 to 1945, what would be the death rate of violence? According to the population of 2.3 billion at that time, the war resulted in 70 million deaths, and the violent death rate was approximately 3%. If we say to a certain generation that for the happiness of humanity in the future, please endure a temporary high mortality rate of 3%, do they agree?

If the war mortality rate is placed in countries that engage in war, the situation will be even more serious. During World War II, Poland had a casualty rate of 24.2% and a death rate of 21%. The Soviet Union had a casualty rate of 33.3% and a death rate of 14.4%. Germany, 39.4% and 11.26%. The proportion of casualties in Japan was 9.2%. The death rate was 3.86%. The proportion of casualties in China was 7.3%, and the proportion of deaths was 3.75%. It seems absurd to make this generation of these countries pay a price for the happiness of future generations of other countries in the world.

Of course, I agree with one point, which is that larger societies will control and eliminate violent conflicts between smaller social entities, reducing the mortality rate of violence during regular periods. This is because, assuming that social entities are parallel, if there is a conflict of interest between them, it is not possible to resolve it entirely through peaceful negotiations. If negotiations fail, generally only force will be used. Sometimes, due to deep grievances, it is almost difficult to reach a consensus in negotiations, and violent conflicts will never be resolved. As in the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Therefore, a two-country solution to the Palestinian Israeli issue will never solve the problem. If Jews and Arabs can negotiate within a country, it may actually solve the problem. This is the scene we can see before the founding of Israel, when Palestine was the trusteeship of Britain, where Jews and Arabs could generally coexist in harmony, as described in Oz's *The Story of Love and Darkness*.

However, the reduction in violent conflicts within this larger society is complemented by larger wars between larger societies. From ancient times to the present, wars continue to escalate. From dozens of people among tribes to hundreds of people among city-states, thousands of people among small countries, tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of people during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, and modern warfare, millions of people were thrown into the war at a time. Not only the death of soldiers but also the death of civilians. Civilians are not harmed "incidental" to the war but are themselves targets of war, such as carpet bombing and atomic bomb attacks on cities. If there is a war, thousands of people will die. This is unbearable for a generation.

Sort it out, we can change the average graph from the previous one to the one below, where the average remains unchanged (Figure 2).

Even if we accept Morris's hypothesis that every war brings about political integration in human society, resulting in a decrease in the mortality rate of violence during the conventional period and even a longer time interval between two major wars, as the scale of social entities increases, the scale of wars between them also increases. From an average perspective, humans are much safer, but if the scale of a war is large enough to destroy all humanity, there will be no future population, and there will be no use of the nonexistent population

as denominators to reduce the average number of war deaths. This is obviously not a simple deduction but a real dangerous existence, which is the emergence and development of nuclear weapons, which can destroy all humanity. Therefore, discussing war mortality rates solely based on averages is not feasible.

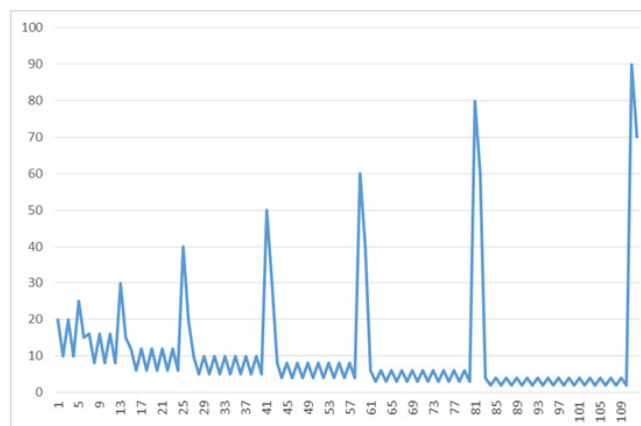


Figure 2 Transformation of violent mortality rate.

Therefore, the next issue is that since merging social entities cannot ultimately solve the problem of aggressive genes in humans, they can only accumulate problems and push them forward and will face greater wars. In other words, human political systems and technologies can only be used to suppress the aggressive genes of ordinary people but cannot eliminate them, nor can they be used to suppress the aggressive genes of those who control Leviathan. Every time Leviathan increases its scale level, the aggressive gene will rise to this level. Therefore, as long as we acknowledge that aggressive genes cannot be changed in a short period of time, it is equivalent to saying that the world can never achieve permanent peace.

However, is it truly so pessimistic? If we do not attribute the achievements that humanity has already made in the field of peace to Leviathan, nor do we place our hope solely on the great nation, there is clearly another way for humanity. This is the development of human civilization itself. This involves the concept of "civilization". In my article "What is Civilization" many years ago, I said, "Civilization is the use of peaceful means to resolve conflicts between people who were resolved by force in the past. The essence of civilization is harmony between people."<sup>2</sup> In human history, civilization is manifested as specific cultural traditions and classic civilizations, which are not abstract explanations of principles but actually influence and shape the cultural concepts in every person's mind in daily life. Forming a certain spiritual pattern has a function second only to human genetic instinct. When aggressive genes take effect, they will be counteracted, weakened, and eventually eliminated by the principles of civilization. This is the more fundamental reason for the decrease in human violent mortality rates.

The evidence we can find is that the classics formed before and after the Axis Age contain the principle of "love life, do not kill". As stated in the Ten Commandments of Moses, "You shall not murder"; *The Book of Changes* states, "The great virtue of heaven and earth is called life." The founder of Jainism, Da Xiong, emphasized the importance of "abstaining from killing"; Buddha said 'all living beings are equal'; Confucius said, 'Those who are kind love others'; Jesus said, 'Love your neighbors, love your enemies'; and so on. Of course, before the emergence of these classics, cultural traditions that break through the love of loved ones had already formed from the beginning of humanity. These classics summarize and refine these

traditions and strengthen and enhance them. These classic sayings seem to be just common sense to us today, but it is precisely because of the emergence of these civilization classics and cultural forms that we consider them common sense today. During the period when these classic proverbs were proposed, people might have viewed killing as a normal behavior driven by their aggressive genes.

For over two thousand years, these classics have been instilled in the hearts of ordinary people day after day through the influence of parents, education in schools, and ritual activities of religion or culture. After hundreds of generations of replacement, they have formed a strong cultural tradition that is internalized in the minds of the people. This cultural tradition enables the vast majority of people to resist aggressive genes in their bodies and adopt more peaceful ways to resolve disputes with others. This process is extremely slow, but over a long period of over two thousand years, humans as a whole have become less aggressive and less prone to killing people. This is true even without external constraints. That is what we often say, 'civilization'. The aggressive genes of humans can be overcome through artificial cultural traditions.

Therefore, the question is, why is the war getting bigger and bigger? Of course, in the above rough description, we did not mention the exceptional principle of these cultural traditions; that is, under the principle of "not killing", killing can still be done. These exceptions are those who harm themselves or their loved ones, criminals, bad people, aggressors, pagans, and so on. Some of them make sense. If a person wants to kill me, I must defend myself. If I have to kill the other person to save my life, killing is reasonable. For those who kill their loved ones, they should seek revenge. Of course, when national laws uphold justice, they should appeal to the state to punish the perpetrators. However, when there is no justice in the world, the country that should uphold justice does not uphold justice, and individuals can seek revenge on their own. This is the Confucian principle of great revenge. For example, Wu Zixu's father and brother were killed by the King of Chu, and he led the Wu army to capture the capital of Chu and whipped the corpse of his enemy three hundred lashes.

For criminals, if the crime is extremely heinous, especially the crime of murder, there is also a reason to kill them, but this needs to be within an extremely narrow range. A tyrant may have a dual nature of both enemies and criminals. If this political leader directly kills some people, he is their enemy, but for the entire society, he is a criminal. Therefore, Mencius said, "I have only heard of the execution of a single husband, Zhou, but I have not heard of the killing of a king." There are also bad people. This concept is very vague and easily exploitable. A 'bad person' is generally referred to as a person who seriously violates social moral rules. Christianity believes that homosexuality is morally corrupt. The Bible says, "If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They are to be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads." (Leviticus 20:13). This seems to be going too far. Homosexuality was killed in the Christian world, but it was only recently stopped.

Adding the exceptions of criminals and villains together can even lead to the slaughter of another nation or country. After Lord prescribed the Ten Commandments of Moses to the Jews on Mount Sinai, which included "no killing", he also promised to give the Jews "a land flowing with milk and honey". However, there have been people living in this land for generations, including the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. The Lord commanded the Israelites, "Completely destroy them—the Hittites, Amorites,

Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites" (Deuteronomy, 20:17). The reason is that they are guilty and because they do not believe in Jehovah himself. Therefore, it can be understood that the term 'person' in the Ten Commandments of Moses that cannot be killed does not refer to all people.

The most serious consequence of the "exception" is probably the exception of killing infidels. In the Ten Commandments of Moses, the parallel to "not to kill" is "not to worship other gods". If a person violates it, he or she can be killed. When Moses returned from Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments and saw his fellow Israelites worshipping golden calves, the Lord ordered the Israelites to kill as many as three thousand people who worshipped other idols. This principle is also applied to all infidels. As many as hundreds of thousands of "witches" were burned in the Christian world, and there was also an "exception" basis for the Crusade. The exceptional principle of this religion can be extended to the exception of "justice over evil". As long as one considers one's own side to be just and the enemy to be evil, killing the other can be legalized. Nazi Germany killed six million Jews not only because they inherited the anti-Semitic tradition of European Christianity but also because Jews were portrayed as morally corrupt and evil people.

The exception of "bad people" can be derived from the exception of infidels because infidels are likely to be "bad people". They do not believe in their own religion, which teaches people to be virtuous and to abide by morality. Not believing means having no morality. Without morality, one is morally corrupt, that is, a bad person. The key is that this bad person does not necessarily infringe on the territory of these good people or harm them. The reason why European colonizers went to America to kill the Indians was not only to seize their land but also because of their moral corruption. Even for a considerable period of time, European colonizers believed that Native Americans were not human.

Similar to the 'bad guys', there is another type of person who can be an exception, which is a lower class person, namely, a slave. In Greek culture, humans are not equal. Some people are destined to be masters, while others are destined to be slaves. Whoever becomes the master and who becomes the slave is decided by the God. The specific way is through war. Aristotle believed that "the only evidence of natural intent must be inferred from the results of war. Therefore, in every war, the victor is right, and the conquered is wrong." (Aristotle, cited from Russell, 1963, p.242)<sup>3</sup> At this time, war is not only evil but also an expression of the will of God and a basis for the legitimacy of human slavery. War itself has extremely high legitimacy, rather than something to be restrained and eliminated.

Bad people, slaves, and related to barbarians. In Greek culture, people outside of the Greeks are barbarians, barbarians are uncivilized and immoral people, and they are also good materials for slavery. Aristotle believed that slaves should not be Greeks but other inferior races with inferior spirits (Aristotle, cited from Russell, 1963, p.241).<sup>3</sup> From the perspective of Judaism Christianity, nonbelievers can also be called barbarians, so barbarians are synonymous with pagans. In the *Torah*, there is a specific term for "gentile sinner". The way to turn barbarians into slaves is through war, which is a way to test the will of God.

In modern times, this exceptional view of heretics, barbarians, and slaves evolved into nationalism and even into racial superiority. Nationalities are generally divided by culture, which includes both cultural and religious traditions. Therefore, we still divide each other according to religion and culture. Nationalism advocates the

supremacy of the interests of our own nation, which is clearly based on the superiority of our own nation over other nations. This is based on the consistent belief that believers in this religion are superior to pagans, and citizens of this culture are superior to barbarians from other cultures. Therefore, nationalism is nothing but the continuation and expansion of the exceptions of traditional religion and culture. However, it is nationalism that drives the drawbacks of this exception to the extreme. Both world wars in the 20th century had a cultural background of nationalism. World War I began with the tension between the oppressed Orthodox peoples and the Catholic Empire, while World War II was caused by the consistent persecution of Jews by Christians, the Germanic theory of racial superiority, and the existing differences between Catholicism, Protestantism, and Eastern Orthodoxy. The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union was also influenced by opposing factors of religion, culture, and ethnicity, which viewed each other as evil beings.

In fact, when religions or cultures that emphasize 'do not kill' make exceptions under this principle, there is a hidden danger of using these exceptions to justify killing oneself. The "civilized" effect of religion and culture is offset. Among all these exceptions, killing "bad guys" and killing infidels are the most dangerous. These two exceptions not only fail to make religion and culture resist aggressive genes but also promote an aggressive spirit, which can be used to mobilize resources at the religious or national level to launch wars and carry out large-scale killings.

Furthermore, religion can also be used for warfare. According to records, Constantine the Great converted to Christianity due to his dream of the cross and his victory in war. Edward Gibbon wrote a special section in *The History of the Decline of the Roman Empire*, titled "Constantine Sees the Manifestation of God", to describe this matter. He quoted, "During Constantine's many military marches, he once witnessed with his own eyes a shining cross shaped ornament standing above the noon sun, engraved with the words 'to defeat the enemy'. The scene in the sky shocked the entire army and shocked the emperor himself, who had not yet made up his mind on choosing religious beliefs at that time. However, his shock, coupled with the scene he saw that night, determined his religious beliefs up. Jesus Christ himself appeared before his eyes; He showed him the same image of the cross as seen in the sky, telling Constantine to make the same flag, holding it with confidence in victory, and advancing toward Maximus and his enemies."<sup>4</sup>

This "The enthusiasm which inspired the troops, and perhaps the emperor himself, had sharpened their swords while it satisfied their conscience. They marched to battle with the full assurance, that the same God, who had formerly opened a passage to the Israelites through the waters of Jordan, and had thrown down the walls of Jericho at the sound of the trumpets of Joshua, would display his visible majesty and power in the victory of Constantine."<sup>4</sup> The incident that caused the walls of Jericho to collapse was precisely the one in which the Israelites slaughtered the city in order to occupy the "promised land". This not only speaks of God's power in war but also implies the inheritance of the exceptional principle that deviates from the principle of "no killing".

Another example is Japan. After the Meiji Restoration, the new Shinto religion was established, in which the highest deity was the "Heavenly God", which was the ancestor of the Emperor. Therefore, the Emperor was the descendant of the Heavenly God, also known as the God (Koyasu, 2007, pp. 22-24, 63-79).<sup>5</sup> This played a role in national identity and political integration, but at the same time, it also deifies the emperor and absolutizes Japan's national interests. The will

of the Emperor is the highest justice, and his war orders against other countries issued in the interest of Japan will be resolutely executed. On the other hand, the sacrificial ceremonies and spiritual offerings of Shinto have truly inspired the spirit of war fighting and the slaughter of others, making the war even more tragic. As Shinto believes, those who died in war for the Japanese nation are gods and will be sent to the Yasukuni Shrine for tribute. For this, Japanese soldiers will go all out, and their relatives are also very pleased.<sup>6</sup>

In human history, far more people have been killed for faith than for profit. Of course, if these two overlap, there will be more killings. Killing for God and being blessed and motivated by God to kill are clearly important reasons for the continuous and escalating human wars.

The logical conclusion is that we must reflect on religious and cultural traditions and pay attention to constraining their "exceptions" when emphasizing their "civilized" role. Of course, it is necessary to carefully distinguish the boundaries of exceptions. However, first, we can confidently constrain exceptions to pagans. A group of people with different religious and cultural traditions formed in different regions and experienced different historical processes. They are all the results of human exploration of the heavenly way or the highest justice. However, there is competition among religions, as they compete for believers to support the development of religion. Peaceful competition is certainly benign and can promote the improvement of religious services, but competition also inevitably leads to violence. In particular, monotheism has a strong sense of exclusivity and competition and even stipulates in religious scriptures the exclusion or killing of pagans.

In the scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, there are teachings prohibiting the belief in other gods, as well as records of violent acts against other religious groups, and some even direct hostile remarks directed toward a particular religion. Therefore, in history, we have seen religious leaders inciting the killing of infidels, such as the extermination of alien races in the "promised land" by Jews, who gained "legitimacy" because the former did not believe in Jehovah; Pope Urban II, Innocent III, Honorius II, and Innocent IV all incited the Crusades, while Innocent VIII incited the hunting of witches; Jews in Europe have been forcibly converted by Christians for a long time and even collectively killed; The Quran emphasizes that "religion has no coercion," but in history, Muslims have also used force to force others to change their religion or adopted discriminatory policies to force them to change their religion.

In other nonmonotheistic religions or cultural traditions, such as the core scriptures of Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism, there is no requirement to prohibit believers from believing in other gods, no creed of discrimination, hatred, or even harm to pagans, and therefore, there is no mobilization of resources for large-scale religious wars. However, in individual practices, wars are also launched based on religious and cultural factors, and religious persecution is triggered by other factors. For example, Ashoka in India once killed thousands of "outsiders" who refused to believe in Buddhism, and there are Buddhist scriptures such as the *Great Nirvana Sutra* that openly advocate the innocence of killing pagans. The rulers of Buddhist countries are often involved in wars with other countries. Taoism and Confucianism do not have any precepts in their scriptures prohibiting conversion, forcing conversion, hating or even killing pagans. In reality, there have also been tensions and even confrontations with other religions or cultural traditions. However, societies influenced by these two cultural traditions did not use different beliefs as a classic resource to mobilize people to participate in wars, thus generally avoiding exceptions to pagans.

However, in nonmainstream Confucian classics, there is a saying that “the five evils should be punished”. “The five evils” refer to “the mind being smart but danger, the actions being secluded but firm, the speech being false but debating, the memory being ugly but broad, and obeying wrong way but profitable.” There are also records of Confucius punishing Shao Zhengmao for this reason. This gives many in power an excuse to kill dissidents. However, this proposition and the record of killing Shao Zhengmao were refuted by Confucian masters Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming. Zhu Xi pointed out that the earliest record of the killing of Shao Zhengmao in *Xunzi* was more than a hundred years later than the event. Prior to this, there were no records in *Spring and Autumn Annals*, *Analects of Confucius*, *Guoyu*, and *Mencius*, which were more like a fable. Moreover, the claim that “the five evils should be punished” did not align with Confucius’ consistent belief. As Ji Kangzi asked Confucius about governance, “If I kill ones violating Tao for maintaining Tao, is it right?” Confucius replied, “If you govern, how can you use killing?” Due to the internal resistance of Confucianism toward this bias of “being able to kill bad people”, even if it is harmful, it cannot rise up to the level of mobilizing war.

The attitude of Christianity toward pagans has undergone significant changes in modern times. Especially notable is the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. It is claimed that the United States Congress is prohibited from enacting any law to establish the Church of Nation, obstruction of freedom of religious belief. As a predominantly Protestant country, this principle holds extraordinary significance. Of course, this is limited to only one country. In other places, there were still remnants of killing pagans in the 20th century. The massacre of six million Jews by Nazi Germany was another climax of European anti-Semitic tradition. After World War II, the situation improved. We have not seen any more blatant persecution of infidels. Although the conflict between Palestine and Israel manifests as a war between different religions, it is mainly not fought because of different religious beliefs but because of the struggle for land.

However, this does not necessarily mean that the problem has been resolved. Because if this were just a temporary period of peace between two major wars, it would not be worth speaking out. We cannot be certain that humanity has found the path to permanent peace. In fact, if we look at religious and cultural traditions, the exception principle under the slogan of “love life, do not kill” still exists, and there is basically no sign of improvement. For example, the Catholic Pope has not yet apologized for the crimes of the Crusades and the hunting of witches, indicating that mainstream religions have not changed in this regard. The exceptional factors of religion will still occur at a specific time and at a higher level, leading to wars that destroy humanity.

Today, the intellectual elites pretend to have solved the problem of permanent world peace, and some even do not believe that war is a bad thing, which implies the intention to look forward to the next war. In fact, there has been no fundamental change in the religious and cultural reasons that have led to wars in the past and have become increasingly prominent. The exceptions that deviate from the principle of ‘no killing’ have not been corrected, and they remain the deep-seated cultural basis and motivation for large-scale killing in modern society. Therefore, the people living on Earth today are actually living in the illusion of temporary peace. In addition, this illusion is actually very fragile, as long as there is improvement in weapons and military investment, it should be considered that there is war. Because preparing for war is actually war, it will only happen at a certain moment in the future. After World War II, the military expenses of major powers increased, which is a fact of war.

In practice, the international strategy of major countries has basically not made efforts toward permanent world peace, and the priority goal is their own strategic advantages. For example, the United States Congress vetoed the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1999. In 2016, the United Nations launched negotiations on the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which faced opposition from the United States, Britain, France, and Russia. China, India, and Pakistan also abstained from voting. No nuclear country supports this negotiation process. The five permanent members of the United Nations and nuclear powers stated that they would not participate in the negotiations that began in 2017. Without the participation of nuclear powers, it is impossible for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to commence negotiations, let alone succeed.

The reason why nuclear countries refuse to ban nuclear weapons is the threat of hostile forces. The representative of the United States stated that there is currently no guarantee that the security of their own people can be protected when bad people are allowed to possess nuclear weapons, while good people attempting to maintain peace and security do not have nuclear weapons. This “bad people” should not refer to smaller nuclear powers or nuclear terrorists, but to Russia. For Russia, this reason is more valid because the United States, Britain, and even France may be potential enemy countries. Since all four nuclear powers are not interested in banning nuclear weapons, China has finally decided not to participate in the negotiations on the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The reason is that nuclear powers are not “leading by example”, and as a country with weaker nuclear power, China has no need to weaken its own nuclear power. Based on this consideration, in October 2018, China, along with five executive members of the United Nations, including the United States, Russia, Britain, and France, jointly issued a statement opposing the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty on the grounds of “detachment from reality”.

It seems reasonable to view this issue solely from an international or geopolitical perspective. If a country naively assumes that other countries will not threaten itself, the result may be catastrophic. Taking defense as the reason, we need to expand our army and prepare for war and develop even more terrifying killing weapons. The key is that if hostile countries all think this way, the arms race will continue endlessly and without borders until the destruction of humanity. The core issues are still religious and cultural issues. This mutual suspicion stems from the exceptional principles of various religions toward infidels, foreigners, criminals, villains, and slaves, which is the deep-seated reason for the hostility or vigilance of different countries, races, and ethnic groups toward each other. Therefore, to truly change this seemingly unsolvable problem, it is necessary to reform from a religious and cultural perspective and eliminate the “exception” principles that lead to killing.

It is not easy to carry out new religious and cultural reforms. Religious and cultural traditions with thousands of years of history will not easily change themselves, let alone change the places they consider advantageous. However, today, our task is only to raise questions, as the question of “is it a problem?” is still a question. It can be imagined that the dominant trend of thought in the international community today does not consider this to be a problem. Therefore, treating it as a problem, making humans realize that we are in an extremely dangerous situation, still require great and sustained efforts.

In summary, we cannot expect this issue to be resolved in the short to medium term. There are always loopholes in the human institutions of heteronomy, and we cannot believe that there can be a perfect international or domestic political system that can ultimately solve

the problem of permanent world peace. It also depends on religious or cultural traditions to play a role in people's minds. As mentioned earlier, they have achieved great success, but the "murder exceptions" left behind provide an excuse for war. Our suggestion is that various religions and cultural traditions should gradually change or eliminate these "exceptions" and narrow loopholes in their concepts. Of course, this will take hundreds to thousands of years. To accelerate this process, international institutions such as the United Nations should make the reform of religious or cultural traditions a part of the United Nations Charter or international agreements.<sup>7</sup>

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### Conflicts of interests

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