

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND

1.1 Background

Justice and security have always been two of the things human beings desire most. Long before all international documents, national and international constitutions existed on paper for the international system to abide to, justice and security have always been a part of human need. With the advancement of the world and the capacity of human being to think more broadly, there is an elevation in perspectives, and one of the major results of that is The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In addition to the having the need of justice and security, human beings were also created to always believe in something, to hope, to dream, and to have faith. Therefore, those things are naturally embedded and fabricated within the notion of human being.

To have faith is another thing that is embedded to human beings as well. To believe in something or someone, which the world called as 'religion'. The role of religion in international relations is imminent due to the fact that religion made important contributions and that the 'constructed-ness' of religion affects the theoretical approaches in understanding the world of international relations (Sheikh, 2012). In today's world and international system, there are profuse amount of religion or beliefs. According to Learn Religion (Fairchild, 2021) about 85% of the world's population identifies themselves with a religious group and the five

most practiced religion globally are Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. Thus, it is right to say that people all around the world are holding on to a certain type of religion or belief. The thread between religion and the idea of human rights is that religion welcomes human dignity as of the fundamental theme and motif (Henkin, 1998).

Human rights in its basic definition is “a universal moral right, something which all men, everywhere, at all times ought to have, something of which no one may be deprived without a grave affront to justice, something which is owing to every human being simply because he is human” (Renteln, 1988). Moreover, any human rights should comprise of four requirements, which are: (i) possessed by all human beings and only human beings, (ii) equally possessed, (iii) rule out as possible candidates any of those rights which one might have in virtue of occupying any particular status or relationship, and (iv) have additional characteristics of being assertable (Renteln, 1988, pp. 347-348). These are then one of the aspects that can be found on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, there are still individuals that have different conceptuality of human rights, yet, the UDHR serves as a foundation or rule-book of basic human rights.

In 1948, the United Nations’ [then] Human Rights Commission caught the world’s attention and this is due to the dynamic and benevolent chairmanship of Eleanor Roosevelt, former President Franklin Roosevelt widow and also known as a human rights champion because she devoted the rest of her life and influence, she had towards it. The Human Rights Commission then were chosen to draft the document, which then became the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The

declaration then was referred to as the Magna Carta for all mankind and then adopted by the UN on December 10, 1948 (A Brief History of the Declaration of Human Rights, n.d.). With the birth of the UDHR, member states of the UN are devoted and pledged to uphold the 30 articles in the UDHR to work together to help promote them. The UDHR also marked its presence deeper in the history of the world as the only single document that contained values of human rights. Fast forward to present day, more than 70 years later, these rights can be found as part of constitutional laws of democratic nations in various forms.

With that being said, this paper will trace back the origins of the ideation of human rights by proving that there are values and elements of Christianity that can be found, specifically on the idea of freedom of religion. Thousands of years before, the Bible have set an example in having the freedom of expressing one's own belief and emphasize on the fact that everyone is under the law. Thus, to have religious freedom requires the realization of states to acknowledge diversity of beliefs of its people and that the government cannot coerce and enforce a specific belief or prohibit a belief. However, as much as freedom of religion should be applied and put to action by everyone, every states, and every government, a 'safety-net' or boundaries should be given in order to maintain control, peace, and decorum of a state; which is one of the function of a government. All of these will be discussed and analyze in this paper. The purpose of this research, therefore, is first to understand and identify the influence of Christianity in human rights and its stance on religious freedom itself; and due to that reason, this paper will also subsequently

identify the role of religion and its importance in international relations and international system.



1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background that have been described above, I would like to suggest these questions:

- (1) How does the values of Christianity adopted in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights?
- (2) What Christianity values can be found in Article 18 of the UDHR that talks about religious freedom?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objective of the research is to first explain the connection between religion and human rights by giving examples of events and phenomena that leads to the development of the human rights itself and its movements. In addition to that, after doing an exposition regarding the connection between religion and human rights, another objective of this research will also talk about how Christianity and its values contribute in the making of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) that was published on December 10, 1948.

1.4 Research Significance

The significance of my research is to give an understanding of the influence Christianity has in the ideation of human rights and how its values were adopted in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, specifically on Article 18 about

freedom of religion. Thus, this research will lay out the blueprint by systematically tracing back to the origins and history of ancient Christianity, first ‘sightings’ or movements of human rights along with its more current journey post World War II. With that being said, latently, this research display for a fact that religion is still an active and influential actor in international relations as well.

