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**THE CONCEPTION OF THE ISLAMIC
STATE (ISIS) ACCORDING TO THE
ISLAMIC AND WESTERN THEORIES OF
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, Germán y Eugenia, to my brother Byron, my sister-in-law Sofía and my nephew Juan Martín, who are my emotional support in every aspect of my life. To my beloved Lucas. To my friends: Denisse, Claudia, Chilita, Meli, Amanda, Juliana y Emilia, who always were there for me in the good and bad times. And finally, to my friends: Edgar, Mateo y Carlos, for having brightened my university life.

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ABSTRACT

Inside the International Relations discipline, there are several theories that help to understand in a better way the international stage. Thus, within the discipline mentioned, we can see the huge influence of the western theories that have been the guide to understand the world facts for years. However, there are other theories that analyze the problems in a different way, being an example the Islamic theories.

Actually, it has been possible to evidence the birth and growth of the self-styled Islamic State, better known as ISIS. Its analysis is complex due to its lack of definition about its participation in the international system. Therefore, this case study represents the possibility to oppose the western and Islamic theories of the International Relations, as a way to find out the possible definition of ISIS.

The Islamic theories represent the possibility of a better development of the discipline when we take into account that its vision is more proper to analyze the phenomena that are not western original, such as the case of ISIS. The religious perspective that is marked in these theories is a key factor considering the fact that the Islamic community is one of the most important around the world. The Islamic countries participation in the international system demands that the International Relations discipline includes the Islamic vision, as a way to leave aside the eurocentrism that has been prevalent through centuries.

Key words: western, Islam, ISIS, International Relations, theories, International system, state.

RESUMEN

Dentro de las Relaciones Internacionales existen diversas teorías que ayudan a comprender de mejor manera el panorama internacional. Es así que, dentro de la disciplina mencionada, podemos destacar la gran influencia de las teorías occidentales, que por años han sido la guía para comprender los hechos mundiales. No obstante, existen otras teorías que analizan las problemáticas de distinta manera, siendo un ejemplo las teorías islámicas.

En la actualidad, ha sido posible evidenciar el nacimiento y crecimiento del autodenominado Estado Islámico, mejor conocido como ISIS. Su análisis resulta complejo debido a que no existe una definición precisa sobre cuál sería su participación dentro del sistema internacional. Es por ello que este caso de estudio representa la posibilidad de contraponer las teorías occidentales e islámicas de las Relaciones Internacionales, como un medio para lograr dilucidar de mejor manera la concepción de ISIS en el mundo.

Las teorías islámicas representan la posibilidad de un mejor desarrollo de la disciplina al tener en cuenta que su visión es mucho más acorde para analizar fenómenos que no son originarios de occidente, tal como ocurre con el caso de ISIS. La perspectiva religiosa marcada en dichas teorías es sin duda un factor clave, considerando que la comunidad musulmana es una de las más importantes a nivel mundial. La participación de los Estados islámicos dentro del sistema internacional exige que las Relaciones Internacionales incorporen la visión islámica para así dejar de lado el eurocentrismo que ha sido prevalente durante siglos.

Palabras clave: occidente, islam, ISIS, teorías, Relaciones Internacionales, sistema internacional, Estado.

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CHAPTER 1

1. WESTERN THEORIES

1.1. Western theories basis

There is a high predominance of the western thought in the International Relations discipline, that's why this discipline is considered as universal due to the importance of its study in the international level. However, one of the essential pillars that the International Relations discipline has is based on different western theories that have arisen during the years. The western theories birth and its importance over other currents of thought, such as the Islamic or the oriental, is based on the historical context that has ~~been~~ evolved due to the events that have arisen in the West; at the same time, the main postulates of this discipline have arisen by authors from the West. And due to the "acceptance" of these theories around the world, it is considered that in some cases the discipline of International Relations in general has been considered of western influence.

1.2. History

The International Relations discipline is of incipient birth; it becomes important in the XX mid-century. However, its origins can be found centuries ago where it is possible to link some of its precepts with the ones related with international politics. A first historical link came from the Ancient Greece and the State-Cities birth (around 700 B.C.- 300 B.C.) and the Roman Empire (500 B.C.- 476 A.C) (Rourke, The evolution of world politics , 2007). During this period, the basic premises of politics appear and then developed within the international system, being these terms the following ones: state territory, sovereignty, nationalism and democracy. Philosophers and political scientists such as Aristotle and Thucydides contributed enormously to the development of the national political system. Aristotle was one of the first that contributed to the systematization of the towns politics, being the State the superior form of the human communities (Grupo Editorial Océano , 1991). On the other side, Thucydides argues, from his experience, about the political institutions, the political characters and how the human nature is the source where power is born. The political systems of that time were the beginning of a lattice system much more complex that would unfold with more clarity in the Middle Ages. During this period, political power in the West was distributed in two ways, local and universal (Rourke, 2007).

The universal authority of that time was represented by the Roman Catholic Church, where even Kings of Europe were subordinated to this power. Nonetheless, there were secular authorities represented by the great empires, with the example of the Ottoman Empire. In the local level, there was a predominance of the feudal system that was in charge of the nobles. It is inside this period that the notions of territory and political authority began to take hold, being its meaning apart of what we

know in actual times. Here, the terms of territory and political authority belonged to the monarchy and the nobles, but this did not guarantee its right of sovereignty; instead, it was presumed that God gave them the right of governing over certain lands. This system remained stable during several centuries; however, in the end of the medieval period, the international system suffered a dramatic transformation, where several feudal jurisdictions of lords, emperors, kings and popes started to be less important. The hierarchical existent system was replaced by a system based on defined state territories, with a sovereignty that made them legally equal to each other (Rourke, 2007).

With the arrival of the Renaissance, and the new perspectives that this period provided, a remarkable author known as Nicholas Maquiavelli, managed to perform important contributions to the development of the political and international system. In his famous book called *The Prince*, Maquiavelli exposes the human nature as selfish. At the same time, he proposes to understand the international system through a modern conception of politics, where moral is not an essential factor but instead it is focus in the laws of power and how this should be conserved (Maquiavelo).

However, it will not be until the year 1648, with the peace of Westphalia, that the International Relations emerged within a world of National States. This system arises due to the decay of the European medieval system of universal empires. Instead, a group of equally powerful States emerge, which generated the balance of power system as a result of the absence of a central supreme authority to control the system. The peace of Westphalia was the result of the Thirty Year War that was mainly caused by religious reasons. With the treaty of the same name, the small European States gained sovereignty, thus destroying the possibility of creating empires in the region (Rojas, 2004). The International Relations became to be relations between States based on the balance of power, something that some analysts consider is a problematic legacy for the academic discipline.

Later, with the advance of the centuries and after several historical events, such as the French Revolution that marked a milestone inside the international system by implementing democracy in some countries, the European Concert takes place. This event refers to the informal process of consulting to negotiate the disputes between the great European powers that occurred from 1815 to 1914. The European Concert was the answer to the French imposition of beginning a war against the rest of Europe as a way to preserve its revolution and spread the new ideas about Republic (Rojas, 2004).

With this conflict the Congress of Vienna took place by establishing an international order based on the balance of power, differentiated of that balance that was achieved with the Westphalian peace. This new order was not based on the selfish pursuit of the national interest of each State, but now it was complemented with an agreement where there was shared values (Rojas, 2004). It means

that the new international system reaffirmed the balance of power as a way to achieve stability in the system by searching to control the States behavior through moral and political links giving the chance for a consensus between leaders with similar ideas. Thus, the study of the International Relations discipline was not deepened during this time, since it only existed a study approach dedicated to diplomacy and international law.

Nevertheless, with the two World Wars in 1914 and 1939; as well as the emergence of United States as a world power, the International relations started to develop in depth. Evidently, this tendency has the West as a central point, excluding other countries from this new discipline analysis. In this sense, the world order imposed by the Congress of Vienna which was based on a highly rigid system of alliances, was destroyed with the chaos caused by those wars. This caused the necessity to find a new mechanism to solve conflicts, being this proposed by president Woodrow Wilson under the name of League of Nations (Rojas, 2004). As we know, this organization was a resounding failure due to the outbreak of the World War II. However, this was not an obstacle to the late establishment of a new international order based on a less rigid system between States, adding the participation of international organizations as mediators.

The obvious growing of United States within the international stage caused a major study of the system, including new perspectives by several American scholars and philosophers of the International Relations discipline. It is so that theories such as realism and liberalism become entrenched within the International Relations discipline, becoming the main western theories from that time. These theories started to understand the events and the root causes in the period between wars in order to explain the reason of the international system behavior.

On the other hand, the classical theories that were previously mentioned, led the international stage until the end of the Cold War; then, the critical theories, such as constructivism, poststructuralism, feminism and critical theory arise as new alternative answers against the established theories of realism and liberalism. Actually, International Relations as a discipline is being studied from different perspectives without ignoring the premises of the previously mentioned theories.

1.3. Main western theories

1.3.1. Realism and Neorealism

Within the International Relations discipline and the different study perspectives of the discipline, realism is one of the most important. Realism is the most antique theory of political thought in the history of the West; it has been the common thread that has allowed us to understand many of the most relevant historical events since the beginning of the theory. The essence of this theory is the

world politics vision through a power competition and the persecution of the self-interest. The hard fight for power between countries is what many authors propose, with the main purpose of preserving the military security and the economic wellness by involving the gain of one country to the detriment of others. Also, a key concept inside realism is the denominated Balance of Power, that suggests that countries are continuously making decisions to increase its own capacities while causing a decrease of the capacities of the rest of countries; in order to build a balance of power in the world to prevent that one country or a coalition of countries to dominate the system (Antunes & Camisao, 2017).

As an International Relations theory, and itself, of international politics, realism has its first roots with several remarkable authors that postulated certain jobs related to that theory. One of those authors was Sun Tzu (544-946 B.C), being an important Chinese war strategist, he published *The Art of War*, a paper that would enhance the importance of war as a vital factor for States, as well as moral policy being different from the religions one (Rourke, 2007).

Another renowned author was the Greek historian called Thucydides (460-399 B.C), with his job called *History of the Peloponnesian War*, he exposes that the human nature is ambitious and that it is always looking for power, as States do, by applying a realism based on a political judgement instead of an ethical one of the facts (Rodríguez). Furthermore, a historical character that in certain way marked the path of realism was Otto von Bismarck (1815-1898), who was a German chancellor that introduced the term *realpolitik* or reality politics, which is the politics or diplomacy that emerges through the practical interests and concrete actions of a country in order to obtain what it desires by doing whatever it takes. This term is closely related with realism (Rourke, Thinking and Caring about World Politics, 2007). Finally, it is necessary to mention that one of the authors that marked the political realism was Nicholas Maquiavelli. This author enhances in his book *The Prince* the part of the selfish leader that maintains power by leaving morality aside (Maquiavelo). Evidently, these great authors plotted the path for realism to emerge as a discipline within actual times.

On the other side, realism as a theory arises from the failed attempt of preserving peace after World War I. The creation of the League of Nations and its later failure with the explosion of World War II, positioned even more this theory (Rourke, Thinking and Caring about World Politics, 2007). With this event, the basic premises of realism were established, as the conception of Nation-State as they main actor in International Relations. Also, it conceives the State as a single actor under the premise of who makes decisions are rational actors that are seeking the self-interest of the State. Finally, it conceives the interactions system as an anarchical system that is not regulated by any authority, so each State has to ensure its own interest without depending on anyone (Antunes & Camisao, 2017).

Continuing, it is relevant to consider that realism has several perspectives, being the most important the classic realism and neorealism. Regarding classic realism, it is possible to find renowned authors such as Thomas Hobbes, Hans Morgenthau and Edward Carr, that exposes a pessimistic perspective of the human being. For those authors, classic realism exposes an inevitable fight between humans because they have a dark side; which in the case of States, these authors contemplate the fact that countries can hardly trust others.

Classic realism has some of its first premises on several postulates of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). In his more notorious job called *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes presents the “State of Nature” in which he includes some of the most important principles of realism, such as the state of anarchy and the inherent evil of human beings that turn them into enemies and shore them to fight and destroy the others (Oldemeinen, 2010). The very name of the book, which is related to the biblical monster whose supreme power does not admit a pair on Earth, denotes the reference that tries to explain and justify the existence of an absolutist State that subdue its people. The Leviathan is a fearful being that has no scruples or morals, so Hobbes relates it to the government. Finally, he concludes its masterpiece by saying that the religious power has a secondary part, coming to question the religious authorities by calling it as “The Kingdom of Darkness” (Hobbes, 1980).

Another renowned author within classic realism is Hans Morgenthau (1904-1980). After the World War II debacle, he tried to implement an international theory that postulated that politics, as society, is governed by laws that have its roots on human nature (Jackson & Sörensen, 1999). Coinciding with Hobbes, Morgenthau argues that humans are selfish and have power ambition, so there is always going to be disputes; and his main concern was to clarify the relation between interest and moral in International Relations. Morgenthau emphasizes that power is always over moral and that this has to be abolished in politics (Antunes & Camisao, 2017). Likewise, Edward H. Carr (1892-1982) agrees on the fact that he claims that between countries and people exists deep interest conflicts, and that it will always try to preserve the privilege position that each one has (Jackson & Sörensen, 1999).

Neorealism is a new trend that derives from realism by sharing with it some essential premises. The neorealist authors expose, as same as realism, politics as a power struggle, with the difference that they believe that the problem cause in the international system is its anarchy. Neorealism confirms that the international system based on sovereign States, which does not respond to any authority, is anarchical without any authority that governs and provides security. The result of this selfish system is that each State has to trust on its own resources to survive and progress. Here, there is a manifestation of a rational state of countries with certain tendency to uncertainty (Rourke, 2007).

One of the most important exponents was Kenneth Waltz (1924-2013), who in his book called *The International Relations Theory* proposes a distance between ethics and moral in order to focus on the International system “structure” and the consequences of that structure for the International Relations. With the term “structure” Waltz claims the anarchical state of the system, as well as the fact that each State acts as a unity with the same governmental functions; however, it differs in something particular which is the power of each one (Jackson & Sörensen, 1999). For Waltz, States are power ambitious and are conscious for its own security, not related to human nature, but for the international system structure that forces States to behave that way.

On the other side, John J. Mearsheimer (1947-) agrees with Waltz by claiming that neorealism does not pay attention to the human nature but it focuses on the anarchical international system where States coexist. This system causes States to have a prepared military system to attack the enemy and so achieve its main objective which is to survive within the system. Also, States have to put special attention to the balance of power in order to maintain its status in the international system (Mearsheimer, 2010).

After analyzing the different neorealism precepts, it is appropriate to mention that this theory is one of the most studied within the International Relations. It emphasizes the international politics restrictions as a result of the selfish human nature and the absence of an authority that soothes the anarchical system. For realists, the main objective is the State survival, leaving aside the moral part of its actions to achieve that end. Its two principal trends, classic realism and neorealism, have expanded the initial precepts of this theory, so it is still considered as an analytical tool of the International Relations.

1.3.2. Liberalism

Just as it happens with realism, liberalism is also one of the most ancient theories of the International Relations within the international system. This theory is the explanatory key of the modern democracy, which can also be illustrated as “liberal democracy”. However, within the International Relations, liberalism comprehends a variety of arguments of how institutions, the behaviors and the economic connections contain and mitigate the violent power of States. Furthermore, liberalism contemplates inside its theory the acting and the importance of citizens and international organizations (Meiser, 2017). Unlike realism, liberalism provides a much more optimistic perspective about States and the international system, by emphasizing cooperation.

The basic premises of liberalism are about emphasizing the wellness of individuals as an essential part of the political system construction, not based on monarchical or dictatorial authorities.

Liberalism seeks the construction of institutions that protect the freedom of the individual by limiting the political power. Is so that, unlike realism, governments based on liberalism do not emphasize the military power because it has greater coercive power. Thus, as part of the many contributions that liberalism has made to the International Relations discipline, is that of being able to achieve the application of the theory of democratic peace between States (Meiser, 2017). This theory exposes the fact that democratic governments are more likely to recognize other States as legitimates and non-threatening, thus, it creates a higher bound of cooperation between countries. Since the beginning of the dominance of this theory, from World War II, it is confirmed that the international system is formed by institutions, organizations and rules (classic of liberalism), founded as they have been done by the liberal domestic institutions of each country (Rourke, 2007).

In this sense, three key points should be highlighted, that according to Daniel Deudney and John Ikenberry, quoted by Meiser (2017), describe the new universal liberal system. First, international law and the treaties celebrated between countries are accompanied by the work of international organizations in order to create an international system that goes beyond just forming friendly States. Second, with the expansion of international trade worldwide and capitalism through the effort of liberal countries and organizations such as the World Trade Organization, the Monetary Fund and the World Bank, has originated a market and a much more open international economic system. Finally, liberalism has contributed to the generation of international norms that favor cooperation, human rights, democracy and law (Meiser, 2017).

As it happens with other classic theories, liberalism has its roots marked for several centuries. Authors like John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau have traced the path for liberalism to develop and consolidate as an International Relations discipline of the XXI century. Liberalism is characterized for being the counterpart of realism by rejecting the idea that politics is a constant struggle for power; however, they do not discard this idea, but they include other factors such as moral, ideology, and emotions and feelings of friendship and altruism. Furthermore, liberals state the fact that every human being has a common bound beyond the borders of a country, which guides them to collaborate with each other.

The authors previously mentioned, have contributed to form the classic liberalism branch, being this one the descendant of idealism. Just as classic realism has done, liberalism of this type also emerges based on human nature. However, the distinction with realism is that liberals are more optimistic about human beings. That is why it is interesting to know the perspective of two key authors for the formation of the liberalism that we know today.

A part of the first postulates about the liberal tendency are those from John Locke (1632-1704), who in his writings support several positions against the harshness of realism. First, while realism proposes a much more negative concept of the man in terms of his relationship with himself and the others, Locke affirms that it is not like that. He proposes the fact that the man is free and so in a general way, people are not predisposed to harm because it advocates the respect for the rights of each individual. He declares that the human being is a social animal by nature, so that, instead of seeking his own individual survival, he collaborates together within society in order to achieve a common benefit (Grupo Editorial Océano , 1991).

On the other hand, another precursor of classic liberalism was Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). His postulates are considered as precedent for what today is known as political liberalism with a classic tendency, which is typical of the time of such a great writer. In his most remarkable work, *The social contract*, he proposes the idea that human beings have reunited in civil societies with the purpose of assuring their existence through cooperation instead of individualism. He affirms that the membership to a political body does not destroy the freedom of individuals; so the contract represents the political consecration of freedom and equality rights, characteristic of man in a nature state (Del Vecchio, 1974). Thus, he contrasts this theory with realism, where there is not consideration for the others rights, so as the equality term. The social contract in essence looks for the man to live in community by benefiting this one without becoming a toy of foreign forces.

Likewise, neoliberalism is a branch within liberalism that has recently developed in the years 1970 and 1980, in parallel with neorealism. The coincidence inside the two “neo” branches is that the competition between sovereign States in an anarchical system necessarily causes conflict. Nonetheless, neoliberals differ from neorealists in their conception about the anarchical system because it is marked by a complex interdependence. In this concept, countries are bounded to each other through economic, social, commercial and other aspects that increase the cooperation and limit the conflict (Rourke, 2007). The neoliberal tendency takes the State as the main unity within the international system, but leaves aside the idealism that has been tied with liberalism of the early days. However, due to the time when neoliberalism emerged, being marked by the confrontation of the Cold War, it lost consistency against neorealism which was much more associate with the historical antecedents (Jackson & Sörensen, 1999).

1.3.3. Constructivism

Constructivism is a proposal that is born as an alternative of the classical theories of realism and liberalism. It is born from the Cold War in the decade of 1980, due to the lack of explanations to understand this event by classical theories. Due to the exclusive approach that traditional theories put on States and the struggle for power, these theories have put a lot of interest in the observance of the

actions of individuals (Theys, 2017). Thus, constructivism proposes a new vision of International Relations, seeing this theory as an interactive process that takes into account the ideas of the individual as a central base for the theory. Constructivists argue that the most important aspect within the International Relations is the social one and not the material, as classical theories argue (Jackson & Sorensen, 2006).

Is so that constructivism proposes in its basic premises a socially constructed perspective of the world. In this perspective is the individual who participates as an active agent to build structures. Being an agent implies the ability of an individual to act, while the structure is understood as the international system that is formed through material elements and ideas. Thus, both agents and the structure are elements that are correlated and influence each other to build or deconstruct the reality (Theys, 2017). On the other side, referring to the State conception, constructivists do not deny the existence of countries, but these are primary structures that are based and created by the will of the agents (citizens) that desire to define themselves politically in terms of State and behave (paying taxes, fighting for the country, etc.), with the purpose of supporting the country that they have constructed (Rourke, 2007).

On the other hand, constructivists argue that States can possess multiple identities that are socially constructed through the interaction with other actors. When talking about these identities, those can be understood as representations of what each actor is and what are their particular interests within the system. For this reason, States that possess an identity must fulfill and adapt to the social norms that are associated to this identity, which allows them to behave according to a pattern that is considered as “correct”.

Same as the other theories, constructivism has contributions of significant authors such as Nicholas Onuf and Alexander Wendt. The first one, Onuf, was the first author that introduced the term “constructivism” in the International Relations discipline in the year 1989. In his arguments, he claimed that States and individuals live in a world that is constructed by all of us; where several entities and beliefs are created by human action. He also claims that the relations between countries constitute a world by own right, created by and for us. Regarding the actions of the “agents”, Onuf puts special attention to the rules that make people to constitute a society and vice versa. For him, a rule is a statement that indicates people what should be done; these rules mold the behavior of the “agents” and help in their decision-making. Finally, Onuf proposes that constructivists should consider to stop using the word structure and use instead what he denominates as *social statement*. This in order to understand that international anarchy is in fact a social statement, an institution on a large scale where several institutions are clearly connected (Onuf, 2015).

On the other hand, it is pertinent to mention the postulates of Alexander Wendt (1958), who is one of the authors that contributed important ideas to constructivism. With his work *“Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of political power”* (1992), Wendt establishes the basic parameters of what he considers that constructivism contributes to the International Relations discipline. For this author, the classical theories as realism and liberalism do not properly explain the identities of States, because these theories conceive the States interests as taken for granted for all the cases. Wendt contradicts this when affirming that the States interests emerge through the interactions within and out each country; so his conception is framed in a collective ontology where social interaction allows the existence of the interests of each country (Wendt, 1992). According to his constructive premise, State interests are not evident or are given, instead, these are born due to the interaction between States according to the time or period of time where they are in.

Likewise, Wendt affirms that anarchy does not always contain the chaos state as other theories see, but it is constructed by States, giving the chance of having a different conception from that of chaos. Also, he considers that institutions are positive from a constructivist point of view, by being a group or a structure of identities and interests. These structures are generally codified in rules and norms that have a motivational power for actors to socialize and establish a collective knowledge. However, the author is capable of recognizing that many of the constructivist postulates are much more focused on the ontological part (existence) than in the empirical one that explains how identities and interests are produced in the practice within the anarchical system of conditions. In this sense, for Wendt, constructivism is a structural theory of the international system that contributes the following points: 1) States are the main units for the international policy theory. 2) the key structures in the States system are intersubjective and non-material. 3) the identities and interests of the States are mainly constructed by the social structures instead of being given to the system by the human nature or by the domestic policies (Behraves, 2011).

1.3.4. Poststructuralism

Poststructuralism is a theory that emerges in France in the decade of 1960, as an opposite variant of structuralism that was headed by Gramsci. The basic premise of this theory is to analyze the world and challenge what is commonly accepted as “truth” and “knowledge”. What poststructuralists want is to question how some of the facts and beliefs contribute to reinforce the power and dominance of certain actors within the International Relations. The perspective of this theory is highly skeptical with respect to what is established within the universal narrative that has always looked to establish an objective vision of the world (Mc Morrow, 2017). The difference between this theory and the others dedicated to study the International Relations is that it seeks to discover the true diversity of it, something that other theories fail to achieve.

In this sense, the key factor to be analyzed by poststructuralists is the knowledge that, for them, came associated and is a power tool of certain actors that receive the name of “elites”, who impose themselves over the rest. These elites can be the governments, who are focused on deciding the course of politics and States; the business leaders, that run the markets; and the media that decide how an individual is exposed while reporting a story (Mc Morrow, 2017). However, the key point that the poststructuralists want to emphasize is the fact that the power that these elites get, are generally born through the discourse manipulation. The discourse is a tool that facilitates the acceptance of information as an indisputable truth, so it has the power to silence other opinions or options, suggesting that thinking outside of what the discourse considers is taken as something irrational.

Thus, poststructuralists, when analyzing the themes of discourse, put special attention in language. This factor is a crucial element at the time of understanding the dominant discourses because is through these ones that actors, concepts, and events are located in hierarchical pairs, where an element is favored over the other. It is said that International Relations are composed by these oppositions, and are used for the elites to create a favorable meaning of certain events and to allow this meaning to be accepted by the public. Is so that one of the most common binary components within the International Relations is to establish different groups or countries in terms of “them” versus “us” (Mc Morrow, 2017). As in all theories, it is convenient to know the perspectives of the main authors, being this the case of the renowned French philosopher Michel Foucault.

Michel Foucault (1926-1984) was one of the representative faces of poststructuralism due to his polemic postulates where he analyzes different aspects of the international system. One of the most relevant points from Foucault’s work is the analysis of power, understood not as a subjugation form, but as the multiplicity of force relations that are inside the sphere where it operates, and that constitutes its own organization (Foucault, 1978). This means that Foucault analyzes how power operates within the system, so that, if you want to analyze power, you cannot take the State for granted. For him, power is everywhere and it manifests in all circumstances depending of the context of the event that generates it. Foucault describes power as something that is exercised from innumerable points of relations. Also, knowledge means power since when we create knowledge of something, we are creating at the same time a power relation. He assures that power comes from below, for example, law has power because society accepts it (Foucault, 1978).

On the other hand, Foucault does not contemplate history as the succession of events, such as wars or disasters, or as important individual actions; he observes it as something characterized by constant changes and by the reorganization of discourses and its practices. For Foucault, it is in the discourse where power and knowledge reunite, because this element is use as a medium to obtain an end. This is called manipulation because Foucault considers that knowledge does not refer to identify

correlations between preexistent entities, but to clarify, regularize, and normalize with the objective of making things and people more manageable to an end. Transferred to the international system, the author affirms that “sovereignty of the State” and “anarchy” are constructs that limit and valid certain perspectives of the world politics to the detriment of others (Fournier, 2014). Thus, Foucault trespasses the simplicity of the analysis of the International Relations that other theories have made, because poststructuralism goes beyond the obvious.

1.3.5. Critical theory

Critical theory incorporates a wide variety of approaches aimed at people’s freedom with respect to the modern State and the economic system, by introducing the concept of emancipation. What this theory wants is to criticize the social repressive practices and the institutions that reign in the world, with the objective of advancing with the emancipation with the support of ideas and practices that add itself to the universal principles of justice. The focal points to which this theory is directed are focused in changing the national societies, international relations, and the emergent global society, starting from the premise of looking the historical events to proceed to change through the ideas and practices (Farias, 2017). Furthermore, critical theory analyzes the principal patterns of discourse in the international level, which not only has an explicit meaning of the term, but involves words and actions that in some occasions can tell hidden messages destined to manipulate the reality; being a common factor that shares this theory with poststructuralism.

As any theory of International Relations, critical theory emerges from the analysis of other postulates developed from history. It has as an initial point the historical period known as Renaissance, and it is clearly connected to the writings of renowned authors such as Emmanuel Kant, Friedrich Hegel and Karl Marx. However, it has been collated that some writings made in the period of the Classic Greece already contained some premises related to critical theory. But it is in only in the XX century where the critical theory starts to conceive its most remarkable basis, being associate with the current of thought of the so-called Frankfurt School (Devetak, 2005).

The Frankfurt School (1923) was a renowned intellectual movement that took some of the concepts of the authors previously mentioned, such as Hegel, Marx and Freud, to later strengthen the theory. It was a movement very critical about the paradoxes of the modern society in which the creative authors of this movement, such as Max Horkheimer. Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, Leo Lowenthal, and recently Jürgen Habermas, introduced the immanent critique method that consisted of criticizing every aspect of the society functioning. The essence of the Frankfurt School postulates was always to comprehend the key points of the contemporary society through its historical and social development, to later established the

contradictions in the present that can help to overcome the contemporary society pathologies and its different forms of domination (Devetak, 2005).

In this sense, the Frankfurt School was the principal movement that would give way to other authors as Richard Devetak, Robert Cox, and even recently Arturo Escobar, to contribute to the development of the critical theory. These authors, as their predecessors, chose to consider the existent postulates, as well as the historical facts, with the objective of criticizing the established and giving a new perspective of the international system and society.

As previously mentioned, Robert Cox (1926-2018) is one of the authors that is considered as the father of the critical theory due to his deep analysis, in which he has as a central axis the international system and the International Relations. Based in the ideas and postulates of Antonio Gramsci, Cox makes in some aspects a recapitulation of the concepts of the Italian author at the time of analyzing the State and its elements, as well as society and what both contemplate as the hegemony that Cox achieved to translate to the international scope, something that Gramsci always analyzed at the national level. The essence of his contribution to the critical theory lies in the fact that his analysis is aimed at the International Relations instead of focusing only in society.

Thus, Robert Cox proposes a critical theory with a focus on historicism and proposes to use the term “world order” when referring to International Relations. The author prefers this term because his argument goes beyond the inter-state relations, since for him the States constitute a single component. When referring to the International Relations in terms of world order, Cox eludes to take the State as the main actor, which has been always something characteristic of the discipline. However, he does not deny the active participation of the State, but he chooses to analyze it through the forms of it and how it can change under the influence of macro forces that come from the global order, as well as through the civil society pressures (Moolakkattu, 2009).

Furthermore, Cox makes a clear distinction between the conflict resolution theories (classic theories) and the critical theory in general. He affirms that the first, being of a positivist nature, assumes that States are not subject of fundamental changes; instead, the critical theory goes beyond the established and analyzes the origins and the transformation or potential development of the historical phenomenon. His study method is essentially based in the past, while he claims that traditional theories are only focused in the future without understanding the historical process (Cox, 1983).

On the other hand, Richard Devetak analyzes the main arguments of the different scholars of the International Relations, taking the critical theory to an International level. From the postulates of the Frankfurt School and authors, such as Marx and Kant, Devetak tries to understand the critical

theory from a society level. For Devetak, critical theory has always maintained inside the national environment, without achieving the international scope, which necessarily implies that International Relations are out of his scope of study. For this author, critical theory not only wants to dismantle the precepts of classical theories, but it wants to question and destroy the rooted forms of social life that limit the individual's freedom. In this sense, he claims that the international critical theory is an extension of the critique but in the international scope (Devetak, 2005).

As part of his arguments, Devetak says that the International critical theory seeks to take the global configuration of the power relations as an object for his study, to later ask himself how is that configuration originated and the costs that this entails. Also, the knowledge that this new approach generates is not neutral, because it is politically and ethically charged of a great interest related with the political and social transformation (Devetak, 2005). What he wants is to criticize and dismantle those theories that support the established system and claims his belief in progressive alternatives that promote emancipation. For this author, the concept of emancipation that is promoted by the international critical theory is clearly associated with a current of thought that finds its origins in the Renaissance project.

In this sense, Devetak concludes that the international critical theory has realized huge contributions to the study of International Relations. First, he assures that now it has increased awareness about the relationship that exists between knowledge and politics because this theory is immersed in social life and politics. Second, the international critical theory makes it possible to rethink some aspects of the modern State and the political community; this because traditional theories tend to take the State for granted, but the International critical theory analyzes the forms in which the community limits are formed, maintained and transformed (Devetak, 2005).

Finally, another author that has highly contributed to the development of the critical theory is Arturo Escobar. His analysis about development from a Global South perspective (developing countries) has made this theory to question various aspects beyond the obvious ones. The author recognizes that knowledge is not objective, so he introduces a relevant aspect which is the discourse analysis. For him, discourses do not comprehend only words told by some individual, but it also includes actions. A discourse that Escobar analyzes is that related with development and the division generated by the world powers between developed and non-developed countries (Escobar, 1994). This has caused that we tend to take for granted this reality construction that must be criticized and questioned in all its aspects, especially when analyzing the power influences that this carries.

1.4. Main concepts about international politics

1.4.1. State

Understanding what State is results relevant for the development of International Relations because in classic theories this element is the central axis of analysis. For the majority of western theories, the State has always been considered as the only actor within the international system, omitting the participation of other actors, such as organizations or citizens; however, the participation of the mentioned actors is already included nowadays. According to García Máñez (2006), quoted by Vázquez and González (2015), the State is “that legal organization of a society under a domination of power that is exercise in a limited territory, considering its state elements: population, territory, and power” (Vázquez & González, 2015).

Likewise, many scholars also consider correct to mention the State as nation-state, considering it as a bound through which the international activities are realized, such as the sign of treaties, agreements, intergovernmental relations, wars, etc. The State acts in the international system by responding to the interests of the president and the followers of his ideology; nevertheless, in some cases the State can act according to the interests of the nation project that seeks for its accomplishment, independently of the president in turn (Vázquez & González, 2015).

The classic configuration of the nation-state has experienced transformations as years go by. Some of these changes have been generated inside of the States with the intervention of civil society; and those changes generated in the outside have been caused by the globalization process. According to several authors and various constitutions worldwide, the State consists of several elements, these understood as the territory, population or people, political power and sovereignty; in the case of the last one, some consider it as a characteristic given to all States that was established in the world order through the Westphalian peace (Vázquez & González, 2015).

On the other hand, the introduction of the State into the western theories that support the International Relations has been changing depending on the theory. For some scholars, the State is the main actor in the system, but for others of a more critical tendency, the State is one of the elements that shapes the international system, and its conception is not always determined by the established parameters.

1.4.2. Anarchy

This concept has been a relevant study factor of the two main classical theories, such as realism and liberalism. In essence, anarchy is understood as “the absence of government; a state of disorder due to the absence or the inefficiency of a supreme power; generally, it is a political disorder” (Üstün,

2014). For theories derived from realism, anarchy can be understood as a state of chaos, in which each State must seek for its own survival in the system; however, other scholars like Mearsheimer state that anarchy must be understood as a system in which States are independent unities that lack of a superior authority (Mearsheimer, 1995). Nonetheless, for liberalism, anarchy is considered as a factor that could allow cooperation between States.

Inside this concept of anarchy, the State is conceived as the main actor, although it is recognized the participation of other actors, such as international organizations and civil society. However, for Constructivism, anarchy is considered as a social construction, and as Wendt establishes, anarchy is what States make of it. Thus, it can be understood as a state which may be subject to change and not understood as chaos (Wendt, 1992).

1.4.3. Power

Power is considered as one of the most relevant factors of the International Relations. For some scholars of the western theories, such as Morgenthau, the concept of political power represents one of the most complex problems of political science. However, there is a consensus between the scholars of International Relations when considering this element as one of the more complex at the time of giving a precise definition (Baldwin, 2016).

One of the commonly accepted definitions is the one given by Robert Dahl, in which he argument that power is based in the fact that A is who causes or has the ability to cause B to do something that generally would not do. In this sense, it would be The actor that exercises influence, and B the influenced actor (Baldwin, 2016). Within the study of international politics, power takes a relevant role because, inside politics, it necessarily exists.

Likewise, power has been intimately linked to terms like coercion and force, representing a negative repressive aspect that some actors exercise to achieve a task. For Max Weber, power in terms of State is contemplated through the quest for a higher status than the one it has, put out through the expansion of its scope affecting the others that are close to that State (Weber, 1986). However, within the International Relations, power varies in its conception because the several western theories position this factor in different ways. Within realism, power is one of the key factors that supports its study, because this would be consider as the cause of conflict between States and individuals. Instead, in critical theories, power is analyzed as a construction that generally varies in meaning and its origins have not been fully established.

1.5. Predominance of western theories

Through the analysis of the different western theories that join the International Relations discipline, it is possible to elucidate that its predominance inside the international system continues to be useful in the present. Although the International Relations is considered as a universal discipline in which other theories, such as the Oriental or the Islamic are considered, it is strongly influenced by the western theories because these ones have emerged from the historical events raised in the West. Nevertheless, the basis of those theories are also framed in the writings of scholars of this discipline that are from the West, and whose interest for knowing the different perspectives of the international system have generated that the study of this discipline focus on the West.

It is clear that inside the International Relations there is a generalization that considers the western theories as the main representatives of the whole discipline, when the reality is that there are other non-western authors that have been contributing to change this paradigm, including analysis that goes beyond the study of States. However, since the western theory was the first created for the study of the international system, it is appropriate to understand the reason for this massive acceptance around the world. Many of the reasons for this to happen is given due to the fact that it was developed by countries considered as world powers and with a great influence in the international sphere. Is in this sense that many times it is possible to elucidate the conflict that generates the application of this theory in the world stage, because its conception about several issues is not always similar to what other theories argues.

CHAPTER 2

2. ISLAMIC THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

2.1. History

The Islamic theory of the International Relations is clearly linked to a historical process that is based on religious premises. While the evolution and later presence of the Islamic theory within the International Relations is given recently in the last two centuries, there are several findings that prove that the postulates about International Relations from the Islamic view occurred several centuries ago. It is possible to notice that, during the time of the prophet Mohammed, and the creation of the Quran (Islam sacred book), both were manifested in different sets of principles, which, although those are not explicitly related with International Relations, clearly talk about how to handle certain links with the neighbor and are referred to social systems. However, an incipient political development is given with the immemorial systems of great extension, being those the Islamic caliphates that have contributed in essence to the formation of an Islamic theory of International Relations (Abu Warda, 1999).

Within this period of creation of caliphates, some theoretical essays arose that were related to certain elements of empirical politics; however, those did not contain a systematic description of the international historical events, so it did not prove validity for the creation of theories (Abu Warda, 1999). Nonetheless, with the teachings of the Prophet, the classic Islam is given, and there was not difference between religion and State. The Prophet was the one who made political decisions, organized justice and created certain laws, generating a close bounding between political power and religious power that lately was also linked to the international scope.

During the period of the Middle Ages, there was an expansion of the religious thought, having a high incidence in the international affairs of that time. Muslims achieved to define an extensive International society from religious perspectives determined by its own elements and characteristics (Berger, 2010). However, the Islamic theory was still unable to completely develop in the following centuries; so, the key historical point that marked a major presence of Islam within the International Relations took place in 1979 with the Iranian Revolution.

After a fairly long postcolonial period, the majority of the Islamic territories were commanded by socialism and secularism; however, a new period started, where the forces of Islam, both in the political, religious and ideological fields, managed to predominate. The year of 1979 was a key point for Islam and its presence within the international system, since, although the predominant event was the Iranian Revolution, there were other events of high impact for the Middle East and the western

world. The violence generated during these events in Middle East established a state of alarm in the politics taken by the West due to the fear that any political expression arises and that it could be motivated by Islam (Berger, 2010).

With the beginning of the XXI century, the Islam within the International Relations took even more importance from another perspective. With the start of the so-called by the West “War of Terror”, where several terrorist attacks perpetrated by extremist Islamic groups, such as the one committed against the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001 in the United States, generated a more negative vision towards Islamic theories. However, the birth of the Islamic State (ISIS), and the beginning of the Arab Spring currently became the central points for the development and the attempt to introduce the Islamic theories within the International Relations discipline.

2.2. Basis of the Islamic theories of International Relations

The Islamic theories of the International Relations has its basis in the high presence that the Muslim world has at the international level. There are 50 countries around the world whose official religion is the Islam; however, there are some countries where the Muslim population is relevant, especially in Europe, America and Africa. Likewise, the “Islamization” inside the West has become into a new force of globalization. Thus, due to the high presence of the Islamic world in the International system, it is prevailing to know the Islamic perspectives about the International Relations events (Simbar, 2008).

Furthermore, the Islamic theory conceives in a different way the elements and actors of the international system, so it is necessary to be able to expand the specters of the International Relations discipline based on these precepts. Although this theory is essentially based on religious texts, it is equally influenced by the human experience events, as well as by the human agents; sharing with the western theory the same development in certain aspects. The way in which the international politics has been carried, from the perspective of the Islamic countries, is also an interesting aspect of study because there is a variety in the form of government of many western countries.

The teachings of the Prophet, as well as the Quran, are the main basis for the development of the Islamic theory, so there is a clear link between religion and the way in which Islamic jurists conceive the international system. The human being connection, as well as the ontological essence of the Islamic theory is another factor of interest on which the theory is based and which allows to understand in a different manner the International Relations.

2.3. Main arguments and schools of the Islamic theory of International Relations

The Islamic theory comprehends a series of complex factors that has allowed its development through the history. It is closely linked to Islamic international laws, as well as with political Islam, because is through the Islamic law that Islamic theories work inside the international system, also linking other deep aspects as religion.

2.3.1. Quran and the International Relations

The Quran, for Muslim religion, is understood as the last word of God (Ala). Muslims believe that the Quran was originally revealed by the angel Gabriel to the Prophet Mohammed or Muhammad so he could recite it to his followers. The Quran proclaims the existence of God and his will, and that is why it is the sacred book for Muslims (Harvard Divinity School , 2005). It is therefore that the Quran is considered as the guide book for the Muslim community, transcending time and space. This sacred book has 114 chapters that vary from a length of 3 to 286 verses, and its translation to the different languages have never achieved to be precise and capture the essence of what the Arabian language expresses of it (Harvard Divinity School , 2005).

The importance of understanding correctly the legislative contest of the Quran lies in the fact that the fragments mentioned in the sacred book about these topics are the ones that give rise to the Islamic Law and the Legal theory. Furthermore, the Quran forms the foundations for the ethical behavior of Muslims and it serves as a guide for the social, political and economic activities (Oxford Islamic Studies Online , 2019). It is so that in the development of the Islamic theory of International Relations is essential the Quran's role because it is the key for the behavior of the Islamic States within the international system, and its dealings with other non-Islamic countries. In fact, historical events are told in the Quran, and those events are related with the International Relations of the Islamic people with other people (Yurdaok, 2019).

2.3.2. The Sharia within the International Relations and the Islamic law

The Sharia is the code of conduct or the religious law of Islam. It is commonly known that the Sharia derives its origin from two primary sources, being these the precepts of Quran and the pattern established by the prophet Mohammed in the Sunnah. It is so that Muslims considered that Sharia is the law of God, but there are different appreciations about what this means in reality. Modern Muslims, traditional and fundamentalists have different conceptions of what the Sharia means, even there is a difference of thought about this term in different Islamic countries (Commons, 2019).

In a general aspect, the Sharia is the guide of all the basic aspects of a Muslim's life, including daily routines, family and religious obligations, and financial matters. In countries where it has an

official status, the Sharia is applied by the Islamic judges in a strict manner, especially in States of a more fundamentalist tendency. Thus, there are strong legal impositions to the Muslim community, where a polemic and evident aspect is the difference of gender and the limitations that are imposed by the Islamic States to women; same as the limitations related to the territory (Commons, 2019).

Thus, there is a generational conflict that has made Sharia to cause polemic due to the content that, according to some jurists, is not adapted to the modern Islamic State. For example, within the international system, it is considered negative the fact that countries such as Saudi Arabia still applied laws that are so rigid based on Sharia. Also, part of the principles that are part of the Sharia have been strongly criticized by the international community, being this the principle of the Jihad theory. And it is that within this group of laws, this principle has been essential to achieve the spread of the duties of Muslims to defend and divulge the Muslim faith through war, if necessary (An-Na'im, 1987). Therefore, several fundamentalist groups based in what is predicated by the Sharia and its principle of Jihad, sees through violence the way to spread what they consider is right, being this the Islam.

This is why the Sharia must be studied, within the International system and the International Relations discipline, were stealthily, because the different interpretations that the several Islamic communities manage differed in certain cases. However, the weight of Sharia within the Islamic Law and its influence in the countries inside the international system makes it essential a deeper study to comprehend to what extent this group of laws and principles influence the acting of certain Islamic groups within the system.

2.3.3. Sources of the Islamic theory of International Relations (Islamic law)

Islamic law, as well as its international projection through the Islamic theories, lies in a set of primary and secondary sources that are the legal basis for countries to act within the international system. The ideas and the management of International Relations come from three main sources, being these the following:

- 1) First Source: it is formed by three key elements for the Muslim religion: Quran (sacred book), Hadith (sayings of the Prophet), and the Sunnah (behavior of the Prophet). As previously mention, the Quran is the primary source and is the one that establishes the guidance for the Islamic religion. Also, it is relevant to consider that Quran contains the explanation to all the Islam variants that actually exist. On the other hand, the Hadith contains what the Prophet transmitted to one of his companions in order that it transcends the following generations, containing the actions and stories of the Prophet. Finally, the Sunnah corresponds to the loyal observance of the example given by the Prophet in conjunction with God's commands expressed in Quran. The Sunnah includes the sayings, habits and norms of Mohammed's behavior (Bakircioglu, 2018).

2) Second source: this is essentially based on a complex analysis about the experiences lived by the Islamic world towards the ideas originated by the West. Mainly, a crash that has arisen as a difficulty for the Islamic world is the fact that each time there are more secular government systems that have neglected religion as part of the State with the objective to obtain political power. This source is mainly historical, because it analyses the encounters of both worlds over time, being one of the most important events when the Ottoman Empire was defeated and the process of western colonization starts, thus being born the nation-states. The constant introduction of westerners in the Islamic world caused two types of answers, one defensive and a reactive one (Bakircioglu, 2018).

For this reason, in the face of this threat, an effort was made to encourage the strengthening of Islam in those States threatened by the introduction of western ideas. This strengthening project was known as *Asr al Nahda* or Renaissance Age, and gave way to great authors to think different theories to “rescue” the Islam. Is so that they come to a conclusion that there are two types of Islam being the authentic and gradient. The authentic is the one that uses reason to decipher the religious sources and guide the human actions; instead, the gradient is associated with the corrupt Islam, which is the one that is far from its essence. However, a shock occurs when it comes to understanding the Islam from a more modern perspective according to the times, something that for fundamentalists results unheard of to conceive (Bakircioglu, 2018).

3) Third source: the third source comes related to the modern times with the birth of a movement named as “islamization of knowledge”. The main figure of this movement is Islamil Al-Faruqi. Although the Islamization of knowledge has its origins years ago, was Al-Faruqi who achieves to institutionalize it; thus starting the rescue of the tradition of classic of the Islamic thought. The foundation of this project is based on a diagnosis of the crisis of the modern Muslim world; so the proposal was a synthesis of knowledge framed in the Islamic epistemology, by making Muslims to turn into active participants of the intellectual life. Thus, it sought to create a fusion of modern knowledge and the Islamic legacy; thus destroying the dominant paradigms and analyzing the contradictions and the traditional knowledge to recover the knowledge left behind by the modernization and rationalization step. The objective that it seeks is to make the world understand the importance of the religious knowledge and the importance of its inclusion within the creation of itself. It seeks to combine faith with empiricism and with rationality in order to understand (Montenegro).

Regarding International Relations, this movement did not make large contributions to the analysis of it. The only proposal is to find a new interpretation of the Islam sources, especially the ones related to the world division in Dar al-Islam and Dar al-Harb, due to the drastic and complex of these concepts

and the interpretation of them that does not start from the Quran or Sunnah. However, the scholars of this movement has not find a correct form to handle the relations between Islamic States and non-Islamic States, since, due to mass migration, Muslims have spread around the world so it is not proper to maintain this division. Nonetheless, according to the migration context, the birth of other precepts such as Dar al Ahd (house of treaties) and Dar al Man (house of security) occur, which refer to the places in the world where Muslims inhabit, despite not being properly Islamic States, but where the rights and the integrity of Muslims is respected, being ensured by the United Nations (Montenegro).

2.3.4. Dar al Islam (house of Islam) and Dar al Harb (house of war)

To understand the Islamic theory of International Relations, it is fundamental to know two legal-territorial concepts that this theory handles, these being the Dar-al Islam and Dar-al hard. These terms are born from a world division created by some Islamic jurists and allows us to understand the several ramifications of Islam, such as Jihad. However, both concepts have caused many controversies because it is not possible to obtain a common acceptance, causing a division between those who consider that both concepts are closely related, and those who consider that its relation is based on hostility. Both terms can be defined under two perspectives, moral and legal, and it is where the different Islamic jurists oppose their theories (Ahmad, 2008).

It is precise to understand that the International Relations under the Sharia Islamic law has been always dominated by the definitions of war and peace, especially marked in the period of the Ottoman Empire, where there were a clear necessity of the towns and Islamic empires to regulate the relations with its neighbors, reinforcing the conception of the world division. Actually, these concepts of war and peace resurfaced with the birth of radical Islamic groups (Sadek, 2012). However, these precepts linked with that division go beyond hostile treatment towards the others, so it is pertinent to know the origins and perspectives of both terms and its bonding with war and peace.

In first place, the Hanafi school exposes a difference between both perspectives of the Sharia, in the first one, it exposes that the main command that Sharia orders is the love to God and a complete devotion to him, independently of the place where the Muslim is. Thus, if the Muslim violates any rule of the Sharia, he will be responsible for it to God on doomsday. So, under this perspective, the humanity has been divided in two different categories: those compromised and immersed in the will of God (Muslims), and those that do not desire to follow the will of God (other religions). So is there where these terms emerge, whose explanation does not have a single unified stream of thought (Ahmad, 2008).

When it comes to defining the Dar al-Islam, Islamic jurists do not achieve to give a uniform definition of the term. The great coincidence is the essence of the term that in Spanish means “House

of Islam” or “Dominance of Islam”, this conception finds in the interpretation several edges. First, some Muslim schools agree that a country could be considered as Islamic when this country uses the Sharia as the legal basis of its system, or it could include some characteristics of the Sharia. On the other hand, other schools consider that in addition to incorporating Sharia into its system, some countries of Islamic majority are also considered as part of Dar al-Islam. Likewise, other Muslim schools hold the belief that a territory can be defined as Dar al-Islam, as long as the Muslim population that lives there enjoys peace and security (Sadek, 2012).

On the other hand, when defining Dar al-Harb (House or dominance of War), there also can be found a series of various definitions. One of the most important schools of Islamic jurisprudence, such as the Hanafi, mentions that delimiting a territory as part of Dar al-Harb is highly dependent on security and religious freedom of the Islamic people within that territory. If a Muslim that lives inside a non-Islamic State is not allowed to practice with freedom his religion or enjoy security, then that territory is considered as Dar al-Harb. Likewise, other scholars reveal that those non-Islamic countries that attack or conquer Muslim territories are considered as Dar al-Harb (Sadek, 2012).

Is so that there is not a uniform conception of both terms, but it is possible to elucidate a relation or link between both. Transferred to the international system, this “division” of the world means a constant fight between the West and Middle East conceive from the Islamic perspective. This does not mean that it is about a struggle for power or a war of ideologies and religion; rather it is a link between both worlds seen from the Islamic perspective and how the relations between countries function.

2.3.5. Main schools of the Islamic law

The Islamic law as such, has been developing for approximately fourteen centuries, and within this time various legal schools have been created with different interpretations of the Sharia. Likewise, these schools align with different currents of Islam, such as the Sunni and Shiite, being the first the one that has more adepts within the Islamic world. For that reason, it is relevant to know the four Sunni schools that have predominated in the Islamic Law.

- Hanafi School: this school is one of the most important and transcendental within the Islamic Law; it was founded by Abu Hanifa (699-767), who was a scholar descendant of the Persians and a native of Kufa. This author was a supporter of using the instrument of opinion during the development of the process of analytical legal thought; with this method, this school was distinguished as rationalist, separating itself from the traditionalists. The Hanafi school has its peak moment during the period of the Islamic Caliphate, and it was also the official law school of the Ottoman Empire (Kakoulidou, 2018).

- Maliki School: it has its origins in the Arabian Peninsula and was born with the lawyer Malik Ibn Anas al Asbahi. The great contribution of this jurist was the *al-Muwatta*; this text being one of the most important within the Islamic jurisprudence in the caliphate period. Compared to the Hanafi school, the Maliki has much more conservative features at the time of analyzing the law and especially when it comes to topics like women (Al-Qazwini, 2009).

- Shafi'i School: this school is born under the tutelage of Imman Muhammad b. Iris al-Shafi'i (150-206) with a marked influence of Imman Malik and his writing *al-Muwatta* (Al-Qazwini, 2009). Unlike the rest of schools, this is not based on the traditions of a specific area or city, instead these are the compilations of a single jurist, who was clearly marked by the two schools that were previously mentioned. The experience of having known the different Islamic territories gave this jurist a new perspective about the Islamic Law and allowed him to postulate a new theoretical basis for Law, which is embodied in his book *Al-risalah*. His doctrines are related to the different transactions, religious holidays, penal and criminal issues and personal behaviors (Kakoulidou, 2018).

- Hanbali School: this school was chaired by Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal (165-240) whose postulates were influence by the Shafi'i school (Al-Qazwini, 2009). Same as the previous jurist, Hanbal travelled around several Islamic countries in order to collect the different traditions concerning all aspects of Law, which allowed him to write his master piece *Musnad al-Iman Ahmad*. This school considers five resources of the law: The Quran and the Sunnah, the fatwas, and the sayings and opinions of the jurists that agree with the holy texts, the traditions, and finally the reasoning based on analogy (Kakoulidou, 2018).

As evident, each school is developed inside a different social and political context, where the Islamic traditions were much more demanding and mandatory than they are today. Each school takes some precepts of its predecessors, so, in this sense the most important is the Hanafi school, being the first to explore the initial concepts of Islamic Law during the time of the Abbasid Empire. Hanafi is also the school that is more related to the International Relations due to the different contributions as the study of the world's division into Dar al-Islam and Dar al-Harb. Likewise, supported in the Islamic traditions, each school takes different perspectives that have allowed the knowledge about law to evolve with each one of them, also contributing significant issues of the actions of the Islamic countries in the international system.

2.4. The international Islamic theories

2.4.1. Traditional approach

This approach, being the most conservative of all, bears certain similarities with the realism established by Hobbes by painting a selfish and constantly struggling international system. However, for western realists, the world is ruled by insecurity and the constant fight for survival, while for the Islamic traditionalists the fight lies in spreading the Islamic ideology. This theory is the oldest of those all developed by Islam.

The first emergence stage occurred during the first years of formation of the Islamic conquests. The Islam felt in this period the threats of the Persian and lately of the Byzantine and Ethiopian Empire. It is here where this realist perception of feeling the need to survive with its ideologies is born. This approach begins to be marked later with the concept of Jihad and the world's division in Dar al-Islam and Dar al-Harb. Such importance has this approach that for many years the way of conducting International Relations from the Islamic perspective was defined in this way (Turner, 2009).

Furthermore, this approach contains strict epistemological foundations that are based on the literalist textual research, that is, it does not admit opinions outside of what is written within the sacred books. The texts from which this theory carries out this investigation are the Quran and the Hadith (Prophet's experiences). For the traditionalists, what is said in those texts do not conceive any variation in the interpretation and it does not adapt to the modernity of times, because it is considered as a lack of religion (Turner, 2009). Likewise, the interpretations that are made can be grammatical, historical, legal or philosophical, all these with certain parameters of each subject that do not distort the real meaning said in these texts.

For traditionalists, there is not the same meaning of State and sovereignty as there is in the West. They consider that there is a great community called *Umma* that reunites all Muslims; therefore, sovereignty lies in Ala, whose manifestation on an earthly level occurs through a divinely chosen by God to represent it on Earth. Although there have been several criticisms for the conservative and closed nature of this theory, it has had a great influence in the development of the discipline in modern times. Its influence is even manifested in the rescue of the concept of Jihad that is used by this approach as a weapon to make Islam survive within the system (Turner, 2009).

2.4.2. Non-traditionalist approach

The non-traditionalists have their origin and development in the XIX and XX centuries, thus showing more modern features. This theory has influence of authors such as, Jamal a din al Afghani,

who postulated writings that serve as mediators between the strictest traditionalists who do not allow the introduction of western ideas, and those who link the western ideas along with Islam (Turner, 2009). Is so that this approach seeks for answers to the modern traditionalist Islam.

If we compared it with western theories, this approach takes certain aspects of the liberalism taught by Locke. It means that it looks in a certain way the cooperation and the pacific coexistence of the Islamic and non-Islamic countries. Thus, it does not commune with the classic division of the world that the Islam of the traditionalists exposes, instead they choose to introduce a new concept which is the Dar al Ahd (dominance of treaties), alluding to a possible peace with the non-Muslims. They accept the existence of the nation-state, considering that Umma is rather a concept of feeling. Is so that they do not believe that Jihad should be used as a tool to guarantee the sovereignty of Islam, but that feeling of defense of Islam must be achieved through the will to work of people to achieve a stable system (Turner, 2009).

Although traditionalists and non-traditionalists agree that Quran and Hadith are the basis for all social structure, the interpretations that both made of the texts differ substantially. The traditionalists belief is that these texts are given directly by God and do not need a human analysis regarding interpretation; while the non-traditionalists analyze and search new ways of understanding the holy texts without missing the commandments of Ala and the prophet Mohammed. Also, the non-traditionalists claim that it is good to incorporate the western knowledge as some kind of cultural exchange, basing this argument in historical events, as when the Abbasid Caliphate incorporated ideas of the Hellenic world within its government system. In short, what the scholars want is to obtain western knowledge in order to make Islam more flexible and adapt it to modernity, without neglecting the identity and the Muslim faith (Turner, 2009).

2.4.3. Jihad/salafism school

This school comes from a complex historic process that develops in the contemporary world, more specifically from the Cold War and the 9/11 Attacks. This period can be described as the struggle of Islam to define itself within a world where the West is predominant. If this new approach is to be associated with any school, it is the traditional, emerging with new thoughts and rescuing the Jihad (Turner, 2009). This approach has not been essentially constructed from the intellectual base as traditionalism, rather it is born from the current events and conflicts that the world is going through.

This theory emphasizes the duty of Muslims to spread their faith through an aggressive war, if needed, until the entire world embraces Islam or joins Muslim sovereignty. Is so that, under this precept, Muslims do not recognize the territorial sovereignty of the non-Islamic States, so there will always be a state war with them (An-Na'im, 1987).

Salafism makes reference to the ideal of an Islamic world where the traditions from the Prophet's time are recovered, where a pure and authentic Islam was spoken. This ideology claims that the Islam was perfect until the distortion of religion caused by corruption that came in later centuries. The essence of this is not to interpret Islam in order to ingratiate with reality, but changing the reality so that it goes accordingly with Islam. The jihadism and salafism follow the ideals of a utopian world where they achieve to end with the infidels and build a great Islamic community, however, this is hard to achieve not to say impossible (Turner, 2009).

For the scholars of this school, sovereignty is absolute and universal and they conceive as unique the formation of caliphates as the idea of State. Likewise, they accept the idea of the division of the world and pretend to recover the territories that were once of the most relevant caliphates in the Islamic world (Turner, 2009).

2.5. Main terms of the International Relations according to the Islamic theories

2.5.1. Caliphate

The caliphate is the political and religious State that comprehends the Muslim community and the lands and towns that are under its dominance in the later centuries after the death of Prophet Mohammed. The caliphate was chaired by the "Caliph", who is the chief of the Muslim community Umma, being the successor of Mohammed. In the history of caliphates, it is possible to mention two recognized dynasties that succeed the four "well-guided" caliphs, the omegas and abbasids. In recent times, the last recognized as such is remembered as the Ottoman Empire, whose abolition was in 1924 (Movimiento de Lausana , 2017).

2.5.2. Umma

Within the Quran, the Umma is conceived as the human community in a religious aspect. It expresses the essential unity and the equity of Muslims of several Islamic settlements. If we took the word of the Quran, it could be said that the Umma is a group of people to which Ala has sent a Prophet to guide them. For the majority of the Islamic theories, Umma represents the concept of State as known in the West, essentially guided by religion (Oxford Islamic Studies Online , 2019).

2.5.3. Asabiya/Assabiya

For the Islamic theories and those jurists of a traditionalist tendency, Assabiya is a term that could be used instead of sovereignty, as we know within the western world. Assabiya has several meanings, one of them being "State vitality" or "the vital force of people". It is considered more than patriotism, the public spirit and the social solidarity, that takes the Islamic people to achieve their

goals and to join as a real Umma. It can be also considered as the manifestation of Muslims unity (Sulaiman, 2001).

2.6. Contributions of the Islamic theories in the International Relations discipline

Obviously, being theories that have been marginalized of the international system, the contributions of those have been ignored during a long time; however, and due to events related to the Islamic world, its study has been extended and key factors have been identified that allow us to understand the actions of Muslims.

First, as previously mentioned, one of the contributions of Islamic theories is that these do not distinguish between Islamic Law and International Relations. In fact, all the first developments of the political science were framed in the Siyar that literally means philosophy of life, which, being taken in the political sense, meant the attitude of Muslims against non-Muslims. On the other hand, unlike the common conception of the Islamic theory secrecy, its postulates suggest an openness to dialogue with those non-Islamic countries. It is about to generate relations between Muslims and non-Muslims based on generous premises and not as commonly believed to be based on terrorism and violence (Simbar, 2008).

Thus, jurists consider the International Relations for Muslim countries is a process that must be taken in peace and with good will towards the non-Muslim countries, as long as they also show reciprocity. Along the history of the Islamic International Relations, altruistic gestures have been evidenced with the non-Muslim nations, starting with the Prophet, who offered assistance to other people as a sign of good faith. This shows that, for Muslims, the International Relations are based on a pacific coexistence, transcending the religious precepts in favor of cultural interactions (Shuriye, 2004).

Second, it must be considered that the involvement of Islamic countries within the international system of States is relatively new, since the predominance of the West within the International Relations has always marginalized the Islamic world. Historically, it has been shown that there has been a marked Eurocentrism within the discipline, and also the introduction of Islamic countries in the international organizations is generated recently, once the colonization processes of some countries in the Middle East and Africa have been overcome. For this reason, there are few Islamic countries that are truly working on developing institutional means by which they can generate cooperation between both poles (Shuriye, 2004). Nonetheless, this does not mean that the Islamic theories of International Relations are not being analyzed by all the Islamic countries.

An Islamic perspective of the International Relations is to consider that it is part of a lifestyle. Being the Islamic religion the main element of this culture; politics and international law are seen as part of the daily life of a Muslim. Without a doubt this is a contribution to the western perspective that is much more secular and separates religion from the State. The contribution of religion as part of the matters of political interest have caused a major entailment of the Islamic people in the issues of each country, leaving aside the political frivolity that usually characterizes the West (Berger, 2010). Also, it must be recognized that today the Islamization of the discourse of these theories have caused that issues such as human rights, economics, politics, etc. to be discussed within the great world spheres in terms of Islam, which has positioned its status and legitimacy.

Finally, although for most of the international community this is negative, one of the more actual and polemic contributions that has been given is the conception of State that the Islam and its theories have offered. This mainly because now we see the resurgence of extremist Islamic groups as ISIS or Al-Qaeda, that have offered a new conception of State clearly based on a more complex interpretation of Islam, and that deserves especial attention. Although of what has been commonly installed in the International system about these groups or self-called States and terrorism, it is important to recognized the political diversity that this have brought to the International Relations in topics of ideology and the forms of relation between those groups and the West, also including other currents of Islam very different from theirs.

2.7. The conflictive relationship between the Islamic theories and the western world within the international system.

As evidenced within the international system, the relations between the Islamic people and the West have always been tense due to the distant cultures and ideologies of those poles. Is so that within the International Relations the inclusion of religion is not considered, in this case the Islam, within the study of it, because it generates a complex relation. The impact of religion within the development of the Islamic theories is obvious when topics such as war, nationalism and the conception of the nation-state, and human rights are being analyzed.

In addition, it should be noted that the linking of the Islamic religion within the International Relations has always been a controversial topic for the West, because they are far from considering religion as a key factor in the development of the International politics. So is here where the friction between both theories begin, because its perspectives are very different, being the western theory little conservative with respect to religion. For that reason, it is necessary to analyze the points and contributions that generate conflict inside the relationship of both theories.

First, in order to understand the Islamic theories within the International Relations, one must understand the relationship between Islam and politics. This link, as previously mentioned, is inseparable due to the high religious charge that exists in every discipline related to the Islamic countries. The Islamic politics are basically considered as a lifestyle because every Muslim is attached to the commandments of Ala that have been portrayed in the Sacred Book. Definitely, this have caused a strong contrast with the West due to the tendency that is managed there is of a more liberal and secular cut, without taking into account the religion, because it is considered as a limit to the political action.

Furthermore, it has been recently evidenced that in some countries there have been marches demanding the definitive separation of the Church and the State because this conditions public politics as abortion and gay marriage. However, the majority of countries do not consider religion as something important in the national politics. Thus, the western theories are influenced by the religious skepticism and not very conservative ideologies, especially those that have been developed in the last few years.

Some examples of this separation between Church and State have occurred over the centuries, the most important being when the King of England Henry VIII in 1528 decided to break relations with the Catholic Church to become the head of the Anglican Church (Gámez, 2010). Thus the West started to stop taking into account religion for public matters and especially international issues, being thus in a clear counterpoint with Middle East where the religious principles must be a priority in the national and international politics.

Even today, the relations between East and West are in a critical point due to the impossibility of achieving negotiations for a peace agreement, as the United States has started a highly dangerous conflict with Iran. Also, the West refuses to accept other forms of emergence of Islamic States, so it does not recognize ISIS as another Islamic State, although it counts with the necessary elements for that, but this will be deeply treated in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 3

3. THE ISLAMIC STATE (ISIS)

3.1. History and background of the Islamic State

Although the Islamic State has taken huge relevance in the last years, its origins are not from recent times, because there have been other groups and caliphates from which ISIS has been influenced. It is commonly considered that the origin of ISIS is in year 2003, parallel to the United States invasion of Iraq along with the growth of Al-Qaeda after the attacks to the Twin Towers in 2001 (Gomes & Mitri, 2018). However, it is necessary to remark that the birth of this organization has its roots two decades ago, when the tension in Iraq was growing under the leadership of Saddam Hussein. Thus, in order to understand why this organization was born, it is necessary to walk the path of the caliphates of which it has been influenced, and to also know the conflicts within which it has been used to emerge as an organization. Is so that it is convenient to place ISIS within Iraq and Syria, since it is in these places where the organization was born, even carrying it in its initials (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria).

First, the Islamic State, commonly known as ISIS, has been proclaimed as a caliphate for which, it is necessary to know the implications of it and the background of previous caliphates. The caliphate is considered as a political-religious State that comprehends the Muslim community and the lands and people under its dominance. It has its origins after the death of the prophet Mohammed and grew rapidly conquering the territories of Southeast Asian, Africa, and Spain (Salazar, 2014). However, after centuries of heyday and dominance, the caliphate fell into decline due to the conflicts of the dynasty and the destruction of Baghdad in 1258.

In modern times, the caliphate takes other meaning by being used as a new way of governing during the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the XVIII century. This new version was looking to exercise a little influence over the Muslim population in Ottoman territories, so it could maintain its legitimacy inside the Empire. Later, other groups would reestablish the state of caliphate, but taking other perspective in which the unity of the Islamic people is evoked; this is proper of extreme Islamist groups like Al-Qaeda or ISIS (Zeidan, 2019).

After the analysis of the Caliphate and its important evolution that is associated to ISIS's form of government, it is important to highlight the true origin of the organization as an "insurgent" group, and for that it is necessary to place its origin in Iraq 1988 (Zeidan, 2019). First, the conflict in Iraq focuses on two poles, on the one hand, the Kurdish people, and on the other hand the government in

turn that was commanded by Saddam Hussein. To understand a little more, the Kurdish people represents one of the most important indigenous populations of the ancient Mesopotamia; its main objective, for which they have been fighting these years, is the emancipation and formation of its own State. Even the Kurds have actually had confrontations with ISIS due to the different ideologies and objectives. President Hussein declared himself as a fervent enemy of the Kurds, so, since the 1980 decade he started a strong repression against them. Also, Hussein took advantage of the conflict that existed at the moment between Iran and Iraq to intimidate the Kurds by claiming that they supported the Iranian regime (Historia y Biografías).

Likewise, it must be considered that Hussein was a leader with a Sunni religious tendency, so he also denigrated the Shiites that were part of the Iraqi people, generating important political tensions. Those tensions moved to the international stage, since Iraq pretended to invade Kuwait and cause a conflict with Iran; so high economic sanctions were imposed to Iraq (Morera, 2012). However, Saddam Hussein generated a smuggling network to avoid said sanctions; thus managing to maintain rebel militias that supported his cause, and is there where the Islamic State, known in that time as ISIL, starts to gain strength within these revolts, and after the Hussein government, they achieve to manage these smuggling networks for their own benefit (Shamieh & Szenes, 2015).

On the other side, it is also important to highlight that ISIS has a great influence of another organization that has been relevant inside the international system, being this Al-Qaeda (Shamieh & Szenes, 2015). This is where we can understand why ISIS is clearly influenced by this group, since Al-Qaeda was found in Pakistan 1988, this being the time in which ISIS begins to have its first terrorist cells, that for a long time were belonging to Al-Qaeda. While Al-Qaeda was not always under the command of its most notable leader, Osama Bin Laden, the labor of creating an Islamic caliphate is attributed to this leader, who was the person that managed to expand the organization, provoking the United States when he perpetrated the Twin Towers terrorist attack on September 11, 2001. And thanks to Al-Qaeda, these groups called terrorists started to take relevance in the international scope. Together with who later would be the leader of ISIL, and the official representative of Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), Abu Musab al-Zarqawi achieved to dominate part of these territories (Orton, 2015).

Is so that Abu Must al-Zarqawi, a Jordan-Iraqi militant, forged ties since he was young with the Al-Qaeda terrorist group, and he was an important ally of Osama Bin Laden in Iraq. During the invasion of the United States to Iraq, he managed to give life to the ISIL organization (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant), perpetrating several terrorist attacks and positioning the organization next to Al-Qaeda within the Middle East, with an active participation in the conflict with the United States (Dimov, 2016). It is here where the ambition of ISIL was born in order to obtain universal authority over the Muslim community, with the objective of giving life to its own State. The leadership of the

group was maintained with al-Zarqawi until his death in 2006, after he was a victim of one of the bombings perpetrated by the United States (Zeidan, 2019).

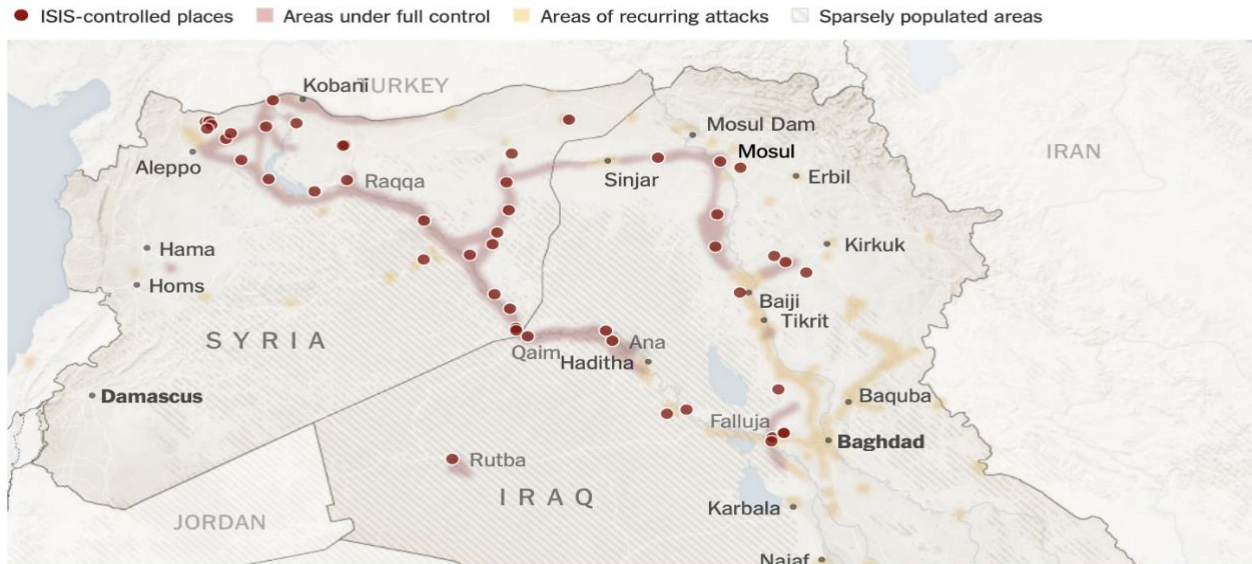
After the death of al-Zarqawi, ISIL, which was linked to Al-Qaeda, began to separate from that organization. It is here where Abu Omar al-Baghdadi takes the command, being a key leader of ISIL. It should be emphasized that ISIL joins Al-Qaeda, but it does not go under the command of Osama Bin Laden, who at the time was one of the most wanted terrorists. This union was rooted in the common objective which was to unify the Islamic people into a caliphate, and thus defeat what they considered as infidels. However, this achievement is of ISIL, under the command of al-Baghdadi, who immolated himself to avoid being taken as prisoner of United States in 2010 (Shamieh & Szenes, 2015). It is here where, following the death of al-Baghdadi, the most important leader of the organization Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi assumed command. With the assumption of this character, the growth of the Islamic State started, to later become ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria), enhancing its presence due to the conflicts occurred in Iraq and Syria within the period of 2011 until these days (Al-Marashi, 2019). It should be mentioned that the boom period of ISIS can be placed in the years of 2013 and mid-2017, which is when it receives a greater number of militants and position itself in key territories within Iraq and Syria (Shabot, 2018).

3.2. Main government structures of the organization

3.2.1. Territory

First, ISIS does not have its own and internationally recognized territory, instead, the spaces that occupy are inside of previously established States and with international recognition. The official establishment of the caliphate by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in 2014, served to demonstrate that the now Islamic State not only wants to establish itself in Iraq and Syria, but also in Israel, Jordan and the Levant area, and aspires to reach more territories. For the year 2014, the ISIS possession of territories was relevant since it has several cities in Syria and Iraq under its dominance; the main operation points from that time were Aleppo, Raqqa and Mosul, the two first being in Syria and Iraq (Neriah, 2014).

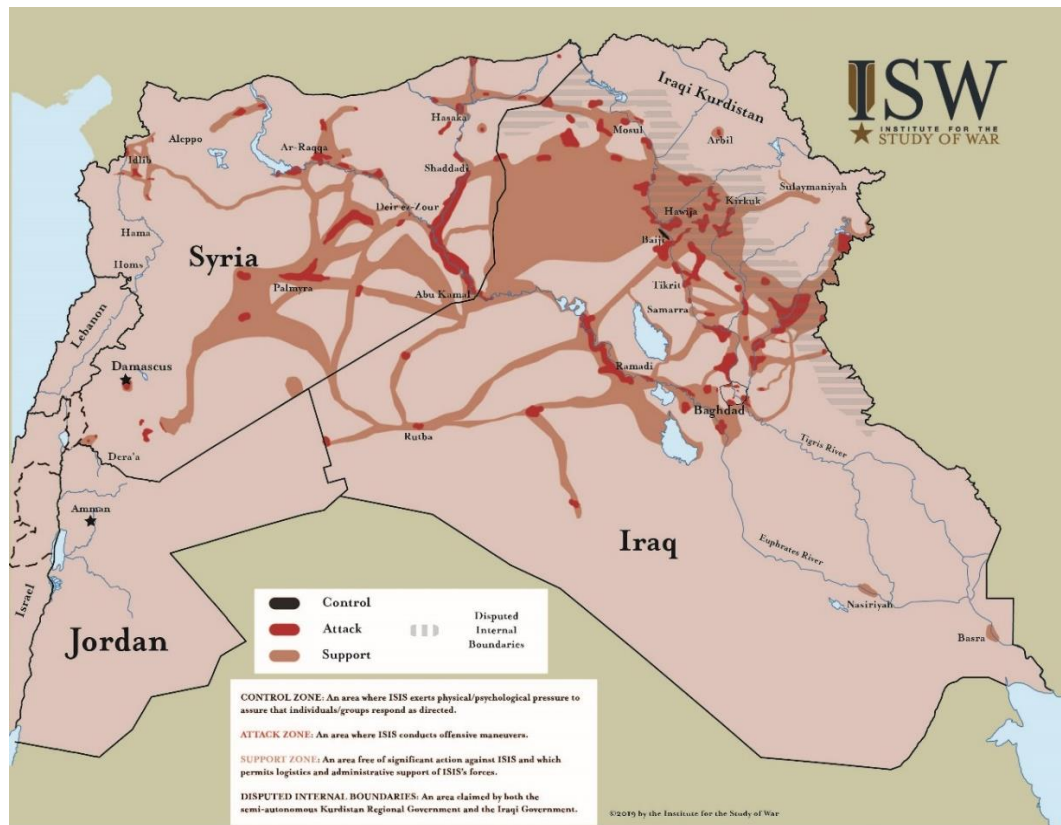
Illustration 1 Territorial Map of ISIS



Source: (Aisch, Burgess, & Parlapiano, 2014)

However, ISIS has now lost some key points of the caliphate, this because of the advancement of the armies of Iraq and Syria, as well as for the interventions of the United States in the area. So its area of influence has been weakened, maintaining small cells that operates in local areas of Iraq and Syria. Nonetheless, ISIS has claimed having the control of small sectors of Egypt and Libya, as well as a controlled portion of territory in the region of Khorasan, where it can exercise control of areas such as Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Likewise, it has generated alliances in the Democratic Republic of Congo where it maintains a small army. So, in the following map, it is possible to observe the black areas in which ISIS still has control, these being very small in comparison to the initial map. However, there are areas marked in brown, where it has operative support, which allows it to have freedom to operate and administrate territories more easily. Likewise, it can be evidenced that the grey stripes simulate the areas in which ISIS has internal conflicts, either with Kurdish forces or with the Iraqi government. Finally, it is possible to observe the areas marked with red, which are the places where ISIS carries out offensives to gain territory (Institute for the Study of War, 2019).

Illustration 2 Map of the operation areas of ISIS, October 2019



Source: (Institute for the Study of War, 2019)

3.2.2. Government (political power)

The Islamic State has a formed structure of government that contemplates several functions and jurisdictions. The governmental structure is clearly influenced by the political tendency of Saddam Hussein, being the majority of the leaders the supreme ex combatants of Hussein's army. For that, in a certain way, there is a greater governmental robustness in the Iraqi territory, where the organization has more strength and control (Aisch, Burgess, & Parlapiano, 2014).

The major leader is called Caliph, who is the one that makes the decisions inside the Islamic State. The Caliph is considered as the representative of prophet Mohammed on Earth; thus he has absolute power and does not share his authority with anyone of his lieutenants, except for who the leader considers as his adviser or trusted deputy (Neriah, 2014).

However, little has been published about the power structure of ISIS, mainly for security duties, but there is knowledge that the domes of power of the State are conformed by retired militants of the Hussein's government, having the system formed in the following manner:

- *Military council*: it is chaired by the supreme leader or Caliph. In this council there are included three more members, whose labor is to create plans and supervise the military commands and the current operations, always following the orders of the Caliph (Neriah, 2014).
- *Shura (consultative council)*: this is chaired by the second person in charge of the State. This council is presumed to have between 9 to 11 members, all previously chosen by the Caliph. Their labor is to supervise the matters of State (Neriah, 2014).
- *Judicial authority*: it is also chaired by the Caliph's adviser and his function is to solve the judicial matters and to spread the message of the Islamic State through recruitment and discourse (Neriah, 2014).
- *Security and intelligence council*: this council is a key part of ISIS, since through this the security of the Caliph is preserved, and the campaigns where the different cells of ISIS must participate are managed. This council is managed by a high rank military chief that generally has been a former military man of Hussein (Neriah, 2014).
- *The institution of public information of the Islamic State*: this is in charge of the official spokesperson of the Islamic government, and who usually appears in the videos that ISIS has made public during these years (Neriah, 2014).

3.2.3. Population

The population that can be named as belonging to ISIS is scattered in several territories. Those are the followers faithful to the ideals of the organization, that are mostly considered as combatants. Also, the recruits that have joined ISIS from several countries around the world can also be considered as part of the organization's population. Until December 2018, ISIS had an approximate population of 30,000 people, distributed in its main territories in Iraq and Syria, as published by the Defense Department of the United States (Departamento de Defensa de Estados Unidos, 2019). This number could be major because there are militants outside those territories and that are recruited through communication networks and the different propagandas that ISIS has used to spread its message.

However, in the latest confrontations of the last period 2018-2019, ISIS has suffered several casualties in its population; so, it is assumed that the number of combatants, especially in Syria, has dropped significantly, as well as in key cities as Mosul in Iraq, and the precise number of the actual population is unknown. Still, it is possible to notice that the composition of ISIS population is mostly male, and women representing a minority within the State (Ozeren, Hekim, & Canbegi, 2018).

3.3. Fundamental bases for the sustainability of ISIS.

3.3.1. Economy and trade

During the first years as an organization, ISIS received financing from the Gulf; however, when it consolidated as a caliphate, it started to self-finance through the illicit sell of oil, controlling the black market refineries. In addition, they received earnings through the kidnappings, and from the taxes charged to people to safeguard their safety. The backup of some Sunni tribes and the oil smuggling have caused ISIS to be one of the Islamic groups with more incomes, registering in 2015 an approximate income of \$ 900 million; being this the year of economic apogee of the caliphate (Lypp, 2016).

Also, ISIS subsists in the Islamic territories through the *zakat*, which is a tax that is contemplated in the Quran from which a person that has a good economic position must contribute to the economy of those who does not have resources; so, ISIS demands this commandment of the Quran to get ahead as a caliphate and to maintain its combatants. The delivery of *zakat* means that who gives it is supporting a fair sacred cause, this being the means by which ISIS justifies its receipt. On the other hand, and although in a minor grade, ISIS receives earnings from trade and agriculture, by taking advantage of the territories under its domain that are potentially productive, receiving the harvests as part of the *zakat*. Likewise, periodically ISIS trades with Turkey and the neighboring towns to Iraq, from which it receives trucks that travel with food and medicines that are exclusive for the combatants of ISIS. Also, the residents of nearby areas to the caliphate territories claim that it is more secure to move their trade to the territories of the caliphate because no one harms them or confiscates their assets since their only contribution is the payment of *zakat* (World Economic Forum, 2015). Furthermore, ISIS achieved to mint its own coin known as the Islamic dinar, classifying it in gold, plate, and copper; it is currently unknown if ISIS continues to handle these currencies (Sancha, 2018).

3.3.2. Recruitment

One part of the community under the dominance of ISIS has joined them in a forced way due to the conquest of the territories of Iraq and Syria. However, the caliphate has a considerable number of believers that have voluntarily joined them, either by the fact that they are adept to the beliefs and ideologies that ISIS defends, or by the simple fact that they agree with the idea of a State where the law of Sharia from centuries ago predominates. Besides these members, ISIS performed an intense recruitment program of foreigners, which has had success around the world. The central idea of attraction that ISIS presents is to fight against “heretics” and all the western civilization that is considered as infidel (Ozeren, Hekim, & Canbegi, 2018). They even use as a source of recruitment

the idea of not belonging of refugees in western countries, claiming that they are not accepted due to the Muslim religion that they profess, which in those countries is not common or well seen. This is precisely what have caused that thousands of people join the cause of ISIS as volunteers. Only in 2014, which was the year when ISIS established itself as a caliphate, it is estimated that ISIS reunites 12,000 foreigners to be part of its army (Neriah, 2014).

The presentation of a solid and charismatic structure is what many scholars believe has given ISIS that power to attract huge masses. The discourse that ISIS presents is about the religious reinterpretation by adapting elements of the Islamic tradition like the idea of forming a community (Umma). One of the main tools of recruitment used by ISIS are social media; tools like Twitter or Facebook have made the ideals of the caliphate to spread much faster, even becoming an international trend and managing to contact potential members through encrypted messages. Once the foreign militants are enlisted and indoctrinate with ISIS, they can return to their countries and carry out the work that has been entrusted to them, which is ending with the infidels (Villalba, 2016). This is what causes a major concern to western governments because it is difficult for them to determine who are terrorist cells of ISIS in their countries.

Also, another factor to consider is the facts that the majority of people that join ISIS are from a middle-low social class, and in certain way they seek in the caliphate stability with an important element which is religion. So, a way to achieve this link is also given through the kinship relations; this being one of the more effective methods used by ISIS to recruit people. This is given through the familiar bounding, which means, that a member of ISIS links his family to the caliphate; this causes in the new member an environment of greater trust within the organization and thus he or she accepts to be radicalized without trouble (Villalba, 2016).

3.4. Ideological foundation and main objectives of ISIS

3.4.1. Ideological foundation

The ideology that ISIS evokes comes from the current of thought known as Jihadist Salafism, which is an ideology based on certain idea and religious symbols of Islam to spread its cause (Moghadam, 2008). This ideology is considered as a political-religious tendency and transnational, whose main objective is to make the real Sunni Islam to come back; this according to what the supporters of this thought believe. For some scholars, this ideology represents the respect of its practitioners towards the holy books in its more literal way, compromising themselves to practice the Jihad in defense of the Islamic community in the world (Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2019).

For that, ISIS implements this religious ideology together with its own interpretation of the Quran, which comes from the Jihad, being this side the most literal from which the Sacred book can be interpreted, and that has to do with the fight (war) against those who are considered as infidels. Thus, ISIS takes this ideology as a basis for its operative method, so it is possible to elucidate how ISIS puts into practice the premises of this ideology in some of its actions. First, the caliphate destroys all the things that considers dangerous, and punishes those who have to do with such things; also, it is very strict about the rules of prayer, because, if a member prays every day but drinks alcohol or commits adultery, he is consider as an apostate (Leksing, 2016).

Likewise, it is an obligation for all the community to obey the rules of Ala; like they should follow all the Muslim leaders, since if a member follows a non-Islamic leader, he will be considered as an apostate (Leksing, 2016). Also, every soldier must be considered as an ISIS brother, and his family must be protected due to the compromise that these men give to the cause they are fighting for. Thus, every member of ISIS must respect the commandments of Ala, and those of the prophet Mohammed and his followers (Leksing, 2016).

On the other hand, the fact that ISIS believes in the Islamic caliphate must be also consider as part of its ideology for its actual advancement. More than an ideology, this is a government philosophy that, as previously mentioned, has been happening for centuries. This was established in order to shape the State that ISIS raised from the beginning, so all Muslims have the duty to worship the established caliphate. The status of caliphate is a way to legitimize the government of ISIS.

3.4.2. ISIS objectives

ISIS has several objectives that have to do with reaffirming its proclamation as a State around the world; as well as objectives of the Islam branch. This is why beyond its pretensions to position itself worldwide as an Islamic caliphate, ISIS tries to achieve internal objectives that allows it to consolidate a unique front and do not deviate from what they consider as the commandment of Ala. ISIS has as priority three axis, those being the military, political and religious.

Inside the main internal objectives of ISIS is to prevent any religious innovation or the introduction of some foreign cultural influence that goes against the principles that the Islam commands. Likewise, the caliphate tries to “purify” the Islam, it means destroying the infidels that threaten the Islamic community; and as the Caliph in charge is considered as the descendant of the Prophet, he has the right to take care of the community under its dominance, so he must take the actions needed to safeguard their security (Siebert, von Winterfeldt, & John, 2016). On the other hand, besides fighting the foreign enemies from the West, a clear objective of ISIS is to fight against the Kurds and Shiites, with whom they have had conflicts of high relevance due to the possession of

the territory with the first ones, and the relies differences that have always existed with the Shiites (Mitri, 2018).

On the other hand, one of ISIS political objectives is to revert the state of submission that for years has maintained the Islamic people in relation to the West. It is relevant for ISIS to position the caliphate and the entire Muslim community within the global stage as a political entity capable of contributing to the international system. In addition, another main objective is to expand its territory and achieve to definitely settle in the areas that are currently under its command, being these located in Iraq and Syria. By gaining more territory, ISIS desires to obtain the complete leadership over the Sunni community and to radicalize and teach the true and pure Islam (Siebert, von Winterfeldt, & John, 2016).

Nonetheless, ISIS also contemplates altruist objectives, since a fervent wish is for the war in Syria to end and to be able to help in the humanitarian crisis that has occurred due to the confrontations. Although ISIS is a direct participant in the conflict, its desire to fight is to restore the order and the social justice (Siebert, von Winterfeldt, & John, 2016).

3.5. Main actions carried out in defense of their ideology

ISIS, as a fundamental part of its advance within the Islamic and western world, has carried out several actions that in the West are defined as terrorist acts, but for them is nothing more than the necessary way to achieve its objectives. Thus, ISIS has carefully planned which strategic points should attack in order to gain international presence. The total amount of attacks perpetrated by ISIS is of 9200 approximately, counting with an approximate number of 15.424 fatal victims, taking into account the period of time since its proclamation as a caliphate in 2014 until today (ESRI, 2020).

Then, it is possible to see a list of the main ISIS attack objectives, being classified by continent and with an approximate number of the perpetrated attacks since 2014 until march, 2020 ¹.

Table 1 Number of attacks in America

AMERICA	NUMBER OF ATTACKS
United States	7

Made by: author

Source: (Institute for Economics & Peace) , (Johnson) , (Center for International Security and Cooperation) , (Lockie)

¹ The number of perpetrated attacks is approximate, there are not exact data because the caliphate is still executing attacks in several parts of the world. The exact number of attacks in Iraq and Syria varies because other active armed groups are in the area, including the US army.

Table 2 Number of attacks in Africa

AFRICA	NUMBER OF ATTACKS
Mali	7
Egypt	72
Burkina Faso	6
Libia	44

Made by: author

Source: (Institute for Economics & Peace) , (Johnson) , (Center for International Security and Cooperation) , (Lockie)

Table 3 Number of attacks in Asia

ASIA	NUMBER OF ATTACKS
Indonesia	11
Philippines	29
Sri Lanka	2
Bangladesh	12
India	4

Made by: author

Source : (Institute for Economics & Peace) , (Johnson) , (Center for International Security and Cooperation) , (Lockie)

Table 4 Number of attacks in Middle East

MIDDLE EAST	NUMBER OF ATTACKS
Afghanistan	99
Iraq	2744
Lebanon	2
Syria	1021
Saudi Arabia	3
Pakistan	30
Turkey	16
Israel	8
Iran	2
Jordan	3

Made by: author

Source: (Institute for Economics & Peace) , (Johnson) , (Center for International Security and Cooperation) , (Lockie)

Table 5 Number of attacks in Europe

EUROPE	NUMBER OF ATTACKS
France	11
United Kingdom	5
Spain	1
Belgium	4
Germany	3
Russia	3

Made by: author

Source: (Institute for Economics & Peace) , (Johnson) , (Center for International Security and Cooperation) , (Lockie)

As we can see in the previous chart, ISIS has perpetrated attacks in several key countries for its spread. In the West, countries like Germany or United Kingdom carry a great interest for the international community, so for ISIS this represents the perfect scenery to give its political propaganda and to give faith of the fight that is carried out against what they called the Western infidels. Conversely, in Middle East, it is about a territorial and religious matter, since for ISIS it is necessary to obtain more territory to operate more easily and to control the religious community. For that it is important to highlight the main acts perpetrated by ISIS around the world.

- January 7, 2015: an attack against the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, takes place in Paris, France. The attack left a total amount of 12 deaths and 11 wounded. The main reason was the satirical cartoons made, alluding to the Islamic community and its beliefs (Lister, y otros, 2018).

- June 26, 2015: attack in Susa, Tunisia. A member of ISIS open fire in a luxury hotel killing 38 people who were on the beach. The majority of them were European tourists (CNN Editorial Research, 2019).

- October 31, 2015: attack on flight 9268 of Kogalymavia in the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt. The caliphate attacked an airplane carrying 217 passengers and 7 members of the crew. All lost their lives due to the colocation of an explosive artifact in the airplane (Lister, y otros, 2018).

- November 13, 2015: an attack is carried out in Paris, France. 7 terrorist attacks were carried out, leaving 137 victims and 415 wounded. All the attacks were executed in strategic points of the French capital, such as the surroundings of the Stadium of France where the President François Hollande was, and in a concert hall called Bataclan where a concert of an American band was held. Without a doubt, this attack was the one with more impact in the western world due to the relevance that it had in the media, and by the subsequent French attack to the positions of the Islamic State in the city of Raqqa in Syria (Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2019).

- June 12, 2016: attack in Orlando, United States. A man who had sworn allegiance to the caliphate shot several people in a disco, of which 50 lost their lives. This was given as a warning of ISIS for the American country, and also as part of an infidel cleaning, since this disco was frequented mostly by people of the LGBTI community (Lister, y otros, 2018).

- July 14, 2016: attack in Nice, France. A man rammed with a truck and shot a crowd that was at a public event. The event left a total of 84 deaths and 202 wounded. With this event, the terrorist alerts in Europe got worse, especially in France, where minute controls began to be

carried out at airports and borders on possible ISIS cells infiltrating the country (Lister, y otros, 2018).

- August 17, 2017: attack in Barcelona, Spain. A van advanced against a crowd on the Paseo de la Rambla. The result was several wounded and 16 people death (Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2019).

- January 15, 2018: suicide attack in Baghdad, Iraq. Two members of ISIS immolate themselves killing 38 people and leaving 105 wounded (Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2019).

- April 22, 2018: Kabul, Afghanistan. A suicide attack took place in a voting registration center killing 69 people. It had a political reason (Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2019).

- May 13, 2018: Subaraya, Indonesia. In this occasion, three attacks occurred against catholic, Pentecostal and Christian churches. There were 28 deaths and 57 wounded (Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2019).

- July 13, 2018: Pakistan. During the discourse of the political leader Siraj Raisani, a member of ISIS immolate himself by detonating several explosives in front of a crowd of more than 1000 people, provoking the death of 149 assistants including Raisani (Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2019).

- July 25, 2018: attack in As-Suwayda, Syria. A series of bomb attacks and shootings killed 215 people and left more than 200 wounded (Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2019).

- April 21, 2019: Colombo, Sri Lanka. Suicide attacks occurred in three hotels and three catholic churches with a total of 300 deaths and more than 500 wounded (Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2019).

- December 27, 2019: Nigeria. ISIS publishes a video of the execution of 11 people of Christian religion (Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2019).

- January 9, 2020: Niger. A confrontation is given between the Army of Niger and members of ISIS inside the Niger military base. The total of deaths was 89 soldiers of Niger and 77 ISIS militants (Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2019).

3.6. Present of the organization and future plans

In the last years (2018-2019) ISIS has been affected by the attacks that some countries of the international community have executed against them. Mainly, ISIS has suffered the loss of important control territories, such as the cities of Mosul in Iraq, and Raqqa in Syria. Although its power decreased considerably within the mentioned cities, it still has certain cells that are operating in the area and have started to organize a counterattack to reclaim territory.

Definitely, the death of their main leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi caused instability in the group, losing some battles in which it was also affected by the number of deaths of its militants (Zeidan, 2019). However, according to the last report presented by the Security Council of the United Nations in 2020, ISIS is in frank expansion, especially in western Africa; while in Iraq and Syria it has chosen to stay in rural areas and gradually reconquer the lost territories (Noticias ONU, 2020).

Despite the fact that the President of the United States, Donald Trump, declared in late 2019 that ISIS is defeated, the situation seems not to be like that, since a Kurdish leader has declared that ISIS is reorganizing itself and planning its expansion that could be more lethal than when it was in its peak. This is based on the fact that they continue to recruit people and that their organization is still well-structured, having at least 20.000 combatants in Iraq and Syria. In fact, ISIS continues attacking Iraq and Syria, so it is obvious that it is still an active caliphate in the area (Giglio & Gilsinan, 2020).

Within the future plans that the organization has unveiled, its main objective is to expand the territory of the caliphate, for which it has published a tentative map of the territories that it intends to reach in the next few years. The Islamic State includes new territories as Andalus (Spain) and the north of Africa which is called as Maghreb; also, ISIS plans to expand into West Africa including Nigeria, a territory to which some ISIS cells have already arrived. In addition, its plans include the settlement in the territories of Libya and Egypt considered as a single geographic unit called Ard Al-Kinana. ISIS also considers to conquer the territories of Cameroon, Central Africa; the States surrounding Lake Victoria, Ethiopia and Somalia. The territories of Hijaz, where Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Gulf States are located; also ISIS includes Yemen until the territories of the Khurasan defined as the Islamic Central Republics of Asia, these being Azerbaijan, Pakistan, and the Southwest part of China that were the lands of Muslims of a Turkish origin. Finally, it includes the territories of Iran and Turkey that they called as Anadol, and some parts of Europe, especially the Balkans and some areas where the Ottoman Empire was located (Shamieh & Szenes, 2015).

Illustration 3 Map of the target territories of ISIS



Source: (Shamieh & Szenes, 2015)

CHAPTER 4

4. EVIDENCE OF THE APPLICATION OF THEORIES.

4.1. Western perspective about the Islamic State

For the West, ISIS represents one of the biggest threats for the international community; considered as a terrorist group, the caliphate has been the center of attention of many western countries that have been attacked by ISIS, and at the same time those countries have counterattacked the territories where ISIS has established its caliphate. Evidently, the perspective that the West has about ISIS is negative, since it does not recognize ISIS as a State, and if we go further, the West vaguely recognizes the Islamic countries as a great factor within the international system.

4.1.1. The historical “clash” with the Islam

The West and the Orient, especially the Islamic world, have always maintained a complex and tense relationship through the years. This has been mainly due to the cultural and religious differences that characterize both; being for the West “threatening” the expansion that the Islam has had, especially in the last periods of time. As it has been obvious through the history, the West has always been predominant with regard to the other cultures; considered as the cradle of civilization, it has wrought a huge part of the world’s history, contributing with knowledge to several of the academic and cultural disciplines, within which the International Relations and the national /international politics stand out. Being Christianity the religion with more followers in the world, followed by Islam in frank expansion, a worldwide friction has been generated due to this cause.

Christianity has been a dominant religion from centuries ago, being involved many times within the politics of kingdoms and governments, especially in Europe. Its peak was in the Middle Ages, when the religion even has more power over the leaders of State. However, the break and separation between the State and the Church was happening gradually taking as a historical reference the reign of Henry VIII in England, who decided to break with the Church. Since that point, religion became secondary in matters of State, becoming a personal process of the person (Gámez, 2010). That is why today the western governments are governed under policies and guidelines separate from religion, although it is possible to see conservative governments, this situation is not predominant around the world. As previously mentioned, Islam is a religion that, contrary to Christianity, is part of every aspect of the countries where it is official. The Islam is not only present in the spiritual aspect of the individual, but it is also present in politics, laws and other aspects of the Muslims (Berger, 2010).

Here are the main differences within the international system, since by not sharing the same religion it is complicated to solve problems between States, especially if one of them has religious

commandments as laws and policies. Besides that, the different invasions that have existed through the history and the cultural impositions that those have brought with them have increased the clash between cultures. However, in the last decades, the friction has been increasing due to the new Islamic groups of an extremist tendency, mostly jihadists, that have begun to be part of the international system.

4.2. Application of the western theories within the West-ISIS conflict

4.2.1. The classic theories versus the ambiguity of the modern theories

As previously analyzed, the classic theories of realism and liberalism appeal to a more conservative consideration about ISIS. Realism, applied in the case of the West-ISIS conflict, shows its classic characteristic elements. One of those elements that has been evident is the balance of power, observed in the joint offensives of the western countries against ISIS in Middle East. The threat that ISIS poses to the West brings out the principle of survival that realism contemplates, for which States are resorting to all possible means, especially military, to defend its national security (Antunes & Camisao, 2017). These two elements have been the most representative in this conflict according to the realist perspective. However, if we go to the vision of the liberalism, we can elucidate that this theory is not in favor of the conflict raised between the West and ISIS; furthermore, since it is clearly a theory that encourages cooperation, it cannot issue a clear analysis about the participation of ISIS in the international system. It can be said that liberalism favors peace and for that it does not see with good eyes the actions of ISIS, considering that it is not a recognized State.

As for relatively new theories, such as constructivism, critical theory and poststructuralism, it is obvious that those are presented as a variable for a better understanding of the International Relations from a simpler perspective, the one of the individual.

First, constructivism applies a more social analysis, and, by not having within the analysis a State per se but a caliphate that pretends to be a State according to the West, this theory is applicable to the case. As told by the constructivists, we live in a world where everything is socially constructed, that is to say that the individual takes active part within all we know (Theys, 2017). For that, if we consider this idea, it is not possible to say that countries do not exist, unlike, those are part of the socially constructed system, but are born from the will of the individuals. Now, considering this concept, ISIS can be defined as a State from the constructivist perspective since it was created by a group of individuals that jointly decided to be ruled under a caliphate. Therefore, there is an ambiguity by not being able to clearly define what would be the status of ISIS.

As for the critical theory, this sees the conflict with ISIS in a more critical way, not from the perspective of how the organizations managed it per se, but how the caliphate is conceived. Within the international system, there is a series of discourses that have been generated from the information that the West receives about the Islamic State. That is why, although it is true that we have facts that prove ISIS attacks, there has also been a manipulation of certain media and governments where no data and truthful facts are presented. When talking of a discourse with a particular intention, within the war between the West and ISIS, it is possible to claim that the Islamic world has been affected and that it has caused a series of discriminatory events for the Islam. The discourse manifests that ISIS is a terrorist group; however, their own definition is that they are a State, and many of its adepts confirm this version; so the critical theory emphasizes the fact that we cannot maintain ourselves within the international system with just a unique discourse.

The critical theory is not trying to favor the West or ISIS, but it tries to bring a different panorama. Likewise, as for the discourse, it does not seek to dismiss what the West has raised about ISIS, but would seek to understand why there is no other much more comprehensive perspective of analysis. However, the critical theory, being a theory born in the West, limits its action when confronted with ideas and precepts of a member of the international system like ISIS, so it is not possible to speak of a total involvement of the theory with the Islamic precepts of the International Relations.

Another theory raised that is within the more flexible ones at the time of analyzing ISIS within the west is the poststructuralism. This theory is a constant challenge to what we know as “truth” and “knowledge”, admitting that it is possible that not everything that has been taken for granted in the system is true (Mc Morrow, 2017). It seeks to focus on the matters of power and how this influences the International Relations. This theory is not pertinent at the time of analyzing ISIS and its influence in the West in a superficial way, but its actions becomes influential when analyzing the ways of power that are involved within the conception of ISIS. The poststructuralism analyses the power of elites, which, when analyzing the western perspective about ISIS, we can say that focuses on the governments involved that have emerged with some comment about the Islamic State, and also the media.

When talking about the governments as part of an elite I refer to the fact that those are the ones that are in a position of power within which they have issued statements regarding ISIS. Here, the binary principle of “them” versus “us” is clearly applied, which accentuates a discourse of western power that positions the western countries against ISIS, causing a war that is conceptual at a first instance (Mc Morrow, 2017). When I mention the word conceptual, I am referring to the fact that

through the discourse of the elites they define or give a concept about what they consider that ISIS is, and its influence within the West.

Likewise, the influence of the media at the time of giving a perspective about ISIS is equally negative. We have to consider that the media has a power of discourse that in my opinion can be major than the governments, of course, considering the language and not the exercise of political power per se. The discourse that is generally presented by the western media is the one of a terrorist group, emphasizing the perpetrated attacks and not the group per se. Few are the media that have done a deeper analysis about the origins and objectives of the caliphate.

If we continue with this perspective, but from the optics of Foucault (1978), it can be said that power is expressed in the way the West-ISIS relationship is going. The power of that relationship is expressed in the discourse of the West and the actions of ISIS. The West achieved to establish a negative discourse of ISIS; it built an image of a terrorist group that is an enemy of the West and that is not legitimate as a State. As for ISIS, power is reflected in its actions and strategies, since that is how it achieved to transmit the importance that it has in the international system. If ISIS is analyzed according to poststructuralist statements, we have a group or a potential State with high political power, but above all ideological power. The poststructuralism looks the birth and evolution of ISIS as a break to the conventional system.

4.3. Western perspective about ISIS as a nation-state

4.3.1. The Montevideo Convention

The International Relations, from a western perspective, which is the best known and most widespread, has always been supported by a series of treaties and conventions that have given the guidelines for the States to follow. Thus, within those guidelines there is the Montevideo Convention (1933), which is one of the States guides to know its rights and duties within the international system. The objective of the convention is to mainly quote which are the characteristics that the States must accomplish to be consider as such, and at the same time as subjects of International Law. According to the article 1 of the mentioned Montevideo Convention (1933), the State must accomplish the following requirements to be considered as a person of International Law:

- Permanent population
- Determined Territory
- Government
- Capacity to enter into relationships with the rest of States.

As for the case of ISIS, it is possible to see some of those elements within its composition. First, ISIS has a large number of people that have joined to its cause; it is not possible to specify an exact data since a census or an exact control of how many people are from ISIS is not carried out, but roughly the caliphate had at its peak about 40,000 members (Departamento de Defensa de Estados Unidos, 2019). Second, the territory that the Islamic State proclaims to be its own, in reality it is dispersed in the territories of Iraq and Syria, and in some places of Africa where they have several operation centers (Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2019). ISIS claims that these territories belong to them, however, those territories have not been recognized by the international community, nor have they been granted by those countries. On the other hand, as for the government, this is an element that the caliphate legitimately holds since they count with a hierarchical system of government, not democratic, by which they are governed. ISIS has all the state powers that a State needs, these being the executive, legislative and judicial powers; keeping in accordance with the Islamic government system (Neriah, 2014). Finally, the capacity to enter into relationships with other States is an element that ISIS partially fails to comply. This because it is not a recognized State, but it is actually dealing with other States in a military war with several western countries.

The recognition of the international community must be a fundamental requirement to be a State, since this enables the international relations of all kinds between countries. Nonetheless, in the article 3 is mention that the political existence of the State is independent of its recognition by the rest of the States; so, if a State has not been recognized, it also has the right to defend its integrity and independence and to legislate over its own interests (Convención de Montevideo , 1933). Under this perspective ISIS can exercise its right to organize internally and to defend its integrity as a nascent State.

Is so that according to what has been conceived as the state elements, and according to the western doctrine, ISIS is not considered as a State in its whole. Also, although it complies with part of these elements, one of the fundamental ones is international recognition, and obviously the caliphate lacks this one since neither the other States, nor the international organizations recognize it as a State.

4.4. Perspective of the sacred books about ISIS

4.4.1. ISIS 'link with the Quran

The Quran is the fundamental part of the life of every Muslim. Is from here where all the Islamic religion starts, and thus from here all the ideological precepts of ISIS are born. The Quran, being the basic guide for the Islamic world, also contains the basic parameters that are managed within the legislation of the Muslim States, so ISIS takes from here the essential norms for the direction of the

Islamic community that has formed. Although it does not act as direct law, since this is what the Sharia is for, the Quran exercises the function of a historical book for ISIS. In the holy book is related the adventures of Mohammed and are included the wars that the Prophet had to live to defend the Islam (Harvard Divinity School , 2005). Even though the time is not the same, ISIS, when implanting a fundamentalist model based on the Islam of the Prophet's time, follows the stories that are in the Quran. That is why somehow ISIS finds justification for its defense of the Islam in what is narrated in the Quran and the war times that the Prophet experienced.

4.4.2. The Sharia and the justification of the Islamic fundamentalism of ISIS.

ISIS, by calling itself an Islamic State, must follow in a certain way the model of the rest of States, whose fundamental legislative basis is the Sharia. As previously mentioned, the Sharia is the religious law of the Islam, but as Islam is part of each state exercise, it becomes the supreme law within the countries that have it arranged, including ISIS (Commons, 2019). Therefore, it can be observed that in countries where the Sharia is the supreme law, there is a rigorous and strict application of the laws, becoming fundamentalist.

Being a religious law applied to the traditional States, the Sharia is also the law of the Islamic caliphates, it means that ISIS, having a government system based on the caliphate, uses the Sharia as a primary commandment. However, it must be clarified that the group takes the precepts of the old Sharia. Within the old Sharia, the Jihad principle is taken into account as part of the Muslim duty to defend the essence of the Islam; and there is where the essence of ISIS lies. The Jihad within the Sharia is a principle that demands its faithful to defend the Islam and to spread the Islamic faith around the world, resorting to war if necessary (An-Na'im, 1987). This is where one of the main objectives of ISIS starts, having its basis in one of the oldest precepts of the Islamic religion; that is why ISIS has set the purpose of ending with what they consider as infidels.

ISIS considers as main infidels the West and those who are not truly devotees of the Islam. Therefore, following the commandments of the Jihad, it has started a war against the West by attacking the strategic points and sending its members to execute its attacks in the name of Ala. ISIS considers that the western world represents a threat for those who follow the Islam, and considers the counterattacks of the West as a challenge to Ala. Obviously, not all the countries of an Islamic tendency follow the Sharia as a national law, or use war as a way to spread the precepts of Islam. There is the difference in the interpretation that the Islamic communities make of the Sharia. ISIS is clearly following an established parameter in the Sharia, that, although it does not agree with the application of it today, the interpretation of the caliphate is valid although the generational gap.

4.5. The Islamic theories and the explanation of ISIS

4.5.1. Explanation of ISIS starting from the Islamic law sources.

As mentioned in chapter 2 of the Islamic theories, one of the basis to understand it are the sources of the Islamic law. Being part of the development of the Islamic theories with reference to politics and International Relations, the sources initially explain the introduction and the actions of ISIS within the Islamic politics and its relation with the international community. If the first source that contains the three key elements of the religion (Quran, Sunnah, Hadith) is analyzed, it can be shown that those are the essence of the Islamic religion (Bakircioglu, 2018). Thus, ISIS takes from all of them the modes of behavior, which also establishes its objectives by following the teachings of the Prophet. This does not define ISIS as a State, instead, it gives the guidelines to understand its actions within the organization.

As for the second source, it can be said that is the most related to the study of ISIS. This source is related to the clash and the relationship with the West that the Islamic community has had, focusing primarily on the ideological. Nowadays, the encounter that is taking place is the one of the West with ISIS, being purely religious for ISIS and of security for the West. This source supports the offensive actions of ISIS against the westerners; it does not establish any relation with them besides of finishing with the infidels that do not allow the correct spread of Islam. According to this source, the constant introduction of the West in the Islamic world is the main cause of conflict, making the governments to become secular and not considering religion as part of the political system (Bakircioglu, 2018). Being ISIS a State project based on the caliphate, it does not approve the fact that the Islamic governments stay away from religion.

Finally, the third source is not the one that better explains ISIS, since this one wants to develop the islamization of knowledge and a conciliatory encounter between the Islamic traditions and the modernity of the international system (Montenegro). Being ISIS a fundamentalist project, it does not conceive an encounter that would modify the Islamic traditions to adapt itself to the modernity of the world. Although it arranges a correct way of managing the discipline, the fact that the religion is involved does not allow full understanding to be given.

4.5.2. The division of the Islamic world and its connection with ISIS

The legal-territorial concepts, Dar-al Islam and Dar-al Harb, are an essential part of the Islamic theory of the International Relations. First, ISIS can be related with both concepts, since more than defining the caliphate, what allows is to know the reasons why it acts within the international system. Dar-al Islam (dominance of Islam) and Dar-al Harb (dominance of war) explain the situation of ISIS facing the West in a clear way (Sadek, 2012). While ISIS does not officially enjoy a State status, it

does have a significant stake within the international system and the discipline of the International Relations, thus, the concepts link its actions towards the States. ISIS would be inside the group of countries, communities and organizations that coexist in the Dar-al Islam, since those are territories where the Islam is respected and promoted, especially through the Sharia as a national law.

Conversely, those countries that predicate other religions, but especially where a Muslim person does not enjoy full exercise of his religion, are considered as territories of Dar-al Harb (Sadek, 2012). Therefore, if history is analyzed, it can be also said that the western countries that generally have conquered Islamic territories also belong to this concept. Is so that ISIS, within the international system, would try to end with the dominance of the war started by the West, that in this case is the infidel people. ISIS here acts as a community in defense of its faithful besides being a caliphate. And if we observed though the West-ISIS conflict, the first does not accept the idea of the caliphate stated by the jihadists, so it is considered as an enemy of the Islam.

If we start from this division of the world, the actions of ISIS are being justified according to this premise of the Islamic theories, since for the caliphate there is indeed such a division. This makes the International Relations between Islamic countries, especially fundamentalist, and the rest of participants of the international community to be conflictive. And if we consider the participation of ISIS, as a faithful supporter of Dar-al Islam, is unlikely that there will be a consensus other than political, ideological and religious, and if its recognition as a State becomes a reality, we can see the perspective that ISIS would handle with the West.

4.5.3. The vision of the different schools of the international Islamic law

First, one of the most recognized schools by the Islamic jurists is the Hanafi, which is rationalist and therefore far from the influence of the traditions (Kakoulidou, 2018). That is why this school, despite it was used during the glorious times of the caliphate, today does not commune with the purposes of ISIS. For this school, ISIS is a traditionalist group, attached to religion and it would be incapable of positioning itself as rationalist since its main objective is to defend the ancient Islam. This theory does not leave aside religion but it does not fully base its postulates on religion, and that is why ISIS is not seen by this theory as an objective institution, but as fully guided by religion, which would not allow it to be a rational State.

As for the Maliki school, although its postulates share some things with the Hanafi school, this one is distinguished for being more conservative, which means that is mainly attached to religion. Its analysis of the law goes according to the precepts of the Sharia. Is so that this school accepts the way in which the Sharia is applied because it takes the main precepts of the Muslim law (Al-Qazwini, 2009). However, a much deeper analysis would have to be done to verify if the Jihad and its more

fundamentalist practices are approved by this school, but if this school is also conservative, it is also likely to accept the theory of the Jihad. Nonetheless, the school has a historical development within the times of the caliphate so it communes with the principles of ISIS and considers it like a caliphate too.

Likewise, the Shafi'i school, by taking the essential basis of the two previous schools, and the travel experiences of its main precursor, does not adapt itself to the traditions of a single city or State. Therefore, this school has a greater openness of the Islamic Law, so, although it keeps traditions, it comprehends the way of carrying the laws of different people (Kakoulidou, 2018). Here ISIS represents the ideology of a people based on traditional customs, but, according to this school there is not and only and truly way to handle the national laws of the Islam, since it requires to be a compilation of all ways used by the rest of Muslim countries.

Finally, the Hanbali school is the most attached to the case of ISIS, since one of its main contributions is the salafism, which is a current of thought allied to the ideals of the caliphate (Kakoulidou, 2018). Thus, when analyzing ISIS, it approves its interpretation of the sacred texts and the sayings of the Prophet, since there must be total empathy between the objectives of the group and the commandments of the traditionalist religion. ISIS, by not admitting the opinion of jurists who try to carry out a more modern analysis about the laws of Islam, is associated with this school and maintains strict traditions and customs coming from the times of the prophet Mohammed.

4.6. ISIS according to the international Islamic theories

4.6.1. The traditionalist essence of the caliphate.

The traditionalist approach is one of the oldest and conservative within the Islamic theories. The traditionalism of ISIS lies in the fact that they pretend as an organization to rescue the first steps of the Islamic religion, this being something that the traditionalism defends as a priority. Also, for this theory, ISIS could represent the concept of Umma, being more than a State, a community that is attached to the religion of the Prophet time. Equally, when talking about the Assabiya, or sovereignty, the caliphate links this feeling with that of its faithful when forming a solid group that is guided by the precepts of Ala (Turner, 2009).

If ISIS is analyzed in greater detail and interpreted according to this theory, it can be said that it accepts the fact that ISIS participates within the international system. Both points coincide in the fact that there is a division of the world and that the Islam must be protected from the physical and ideological invasions of the non-Muslims. Although this theory picks up the principle of Jihad, it does not have the same meaning that ISIS has given to it nowadays. The time is different and the

traditionalists are focused on the defense of Islam to make it survive; instead, ISIS takes it as a defense, but also for Islam to be spread and imposed.

4.6.2. The discounter of ISIS with the non-traditionalists

This theory, whose pair within the West would be the liberalism, does not fit or approves the actions that ISIS raises. The theory has a more cooperative essence, which means that it seeks the conciliation between the western ideas and the Islam, something that ISIS does not contemplate. For this approach ISIS represents an obstacle to achieving communication with the West; it does not look at it as a State and neither does it approve that ISIS called itself as a caliphate, since this theory does not pretend to rescue the caliphates of the past. That is, for the non-traditionalists, the objectives of ISIS do not have any sense within the modern international system, neither within the Islamic system. The non-traditionalists do not conceive the idea of the world's division as something viable in these times, so it introduces Dar al Ahd to achieve treaties with the West without losing the Islamic identity (Turner, 2009).

On the other hand, what they agree on would be to prefer the term State instead of Umma. Although ISIS represents this concept by being a community united by the Islam, in the international level weights more to be considered as a State. However, by not communing with the ideals of ISIS, the non-traditionalists do not consider it as a viable project of nation-state and much less like an active participant of the International Relations. Another point that causes disagreement is the fact that the non-traditionalists do not contemplate the use of Jihad as a means of spreading Islam, since the application that ISIS makes of this concept is violent (Turner, 2009).

4.6.3. The new approach of Jihad according to ISIS

The last school to develop within the Islamic theories is the Jihad and salafism, being this theory the one that better describes the conception of ISIS. As it has been possible to analyze throughout the investigation, ISIS bases its objectives and actions in the theory known as Jihad. This approach has been given since the time of the Prophet, being used to defend the Islam. Within the theory is possible to note features of the traditionalists, although the focus here is completely directed to the defense of the Jihad and the recovery of the ancient customs (Turner, 2009).

The project of this school is quite ambitious, wanting to achieve the imposition of Islam over the rest of religions (Turner, 2009). This in fact is one of the main objectives that ISIS has, and has carried it out through the several attacks that have been given especially in places where Christianity predominates, being one of the most important religions around the world. In addition, ISIS also takes the commandment of this theory which is recovering the caliphates, in fact, ISIS is a self-styled Islamic caliphate, which is in accordance with the establishments of the Jihad and the salafism. Thus,

ISIS is currently the one who is developing this latter school, testing all the essential commandments of it, within a world that is mainly western.

4.7. ISIS conception under the essential terms of the international relations according the Islam.

4.7.1. Caliphate

The term caliphate is maybe one of the most recognized at the time of talking about the Islamic theories, even today because of the resonance given by ISIS. As we know today, there are not officially recognized caliphates in the world; however, ISIS has proclaimed itself as such. Within the structure of ISIS, it is possible to see how the same caliphate systems are maintained, having mainly as a leader the Caliph, who is the most important figure. When the Islamic State was formed as a caliphate, its leader was Abu Baker al-Baghdadi, being named as the official Caliph. Later, Baghdadi formed its power dome, surrounded by the so-called *hayids*, or ministers, who assist the Caliph in the administrative management (Movimiento de Lausana , 2017). Furthermore, ISIS also has an organized justice system, as well as people in charge of managing the territories that have been occupying within the 6 years that the caliphate exists.

4.7.2. Umma

The Umma is the human community grouped according to religion (Oxford Islamic Studies Online , 2019). In this case, the Islamic theories consider that the majority of States should be called Umma because they have reunited respecting the Islamic religion. Being in the Quran and as a fundamental part of the teachings of the Prophet, the Umma is part of the conception of ISIS. Despite ISIS has declared itself as a caliphate, it is still a Umma since it reunites an important group of faithful that have declared themselves as devotees of the Islamic religion. The analysis of ISIS is quite consistent, because we can see a group united by faith with similar objectives and Islam followers, whatever the form of interpretation.

4.7.3. Assabiya

Known as “State vitality”, or in western terms “sovereignty”; the Assabiya represents the group feeling of those who are linked in a Umma by the Islam (Sulaiman, 2001). When describing ISIS, Assabiya is a principle within its intern structure, since the devotion that they feel towards Islam is a symbol of State patriotism that is attached to its traditions. Even though ISIS has not been officially recognized as a State, is a Umma, and the essence of this community is the Assabiya. If one analyzes what is the main engine of this group feeling, it would be Jihad as a means to combat what they call infidels in the international system.

4.8. Final decisions and conclusions about the analysis

When taking into account the considerations of the western theories of the International Relations, it is possible to claim that ISIS is not worthy of being considered as an official State. The conclusion which leads to this statement starts from different perspectives, these being the classic theories like realism and liberalism, besides of the official treaty that points out the state characteristics, the Montevideo Convention. Moreover, there are theories with more open concepts, such as constructivism, critical theory and poststructuralism, which conceive the Islamic State in another way, having a broader vision about its function in the international system.

First, the position against the Islamic State from western classicism can be found in two parts, realism and liberalism. Realism conceives ISIS as a threat to the international security; is a phenomenon difficult to control and for that reason the States must take care of its security. Thus, considering all the options of realism, ISIS cannot be conceived as a State nor as part of the international system. Likewise, other theory that does not accept the presence of ISIS within the system is liberalism. ISIS is not in position to cooperate with other countries due to it has not the status of a recognized State. Furthermore, this theory condemns the acts of terrorism and the attacks against human rights that, according to this point of view, have been committed by the Islamic State. Thus, liberalism cannot conceive as State an Islamic project that attempts against fundamental principles of coexistence within the international system.

As for the Montevideo Convention, a distinguished document that describes the State characteristics, neither conceives ISIS as a State for lack of an element. Although it has been analyzed that ISIS has the majority of elements, it is doubtful how the majority of them have been obtained. The territory has been taken through violent means; population has been in part forced to join the caliphate, although we have to consider that great part of its followers have voluntarily joined. The political power is something undisputed, since they have an effective system of government. But, if we consider the fact that ISIS does not have international recognition, this represents a huge problem if the caliphate aspires to participate with influence in the system; even though it can declare itself as independent, as long as it can be sustained economically and politically. However, being a traditional convention, ISIS cannot be conceived as a State.

Second, we have the vision of the modern theories, such as constructivism, critical theory and poststructuralism. These theories agree that everything that exists in the international system is a social construction, or starts from an intentionally created discourse. This gave way to elucidate the possibility that ISIS can be somehow considered as part of the international system; however, the question that I can raised about it is the following: until what point we can consider the attacks of

ISIS, or its presence in the system, as a social construction? The answer to this lies in the fact that we all have witnessed the committed attacks, and even those attacks have been confirmed by them. Nonetheless, it is not possible to confirm that the ideologies of ISIS are part of a social construction since these are given by the religion and those are established dogmas from centuries ago, so it would be also possible to question the other religions, something that is complicated to do.

Now, analyzing all the western theories, jointly with the Montevideo Convention, I can conclude that ISIS cannot be officially considered as a State. There is the possibility of conceiving that ISIS is a radicalistic group or a religious organization, but according to the position of the western countries, ISIS is still a terrorist group. Although it has the characteristics of a State, what becomes its recognition illegitimate is the violence with which these characteristics were acquired. However, we have to consider a key factor, which is the fact that the international law contemplated with this convention, and per se in the State conceptions, has some shortcomings and gaps that have not yet been solved, leaving a space for different interpretations.

On the other hand, when we analyze the position of the Islamic theories, it is possible to see a partially divided panorama. Although, as ISIS is part of the Islamic world we would think that it would have greater acceptance, but this is not the case due to the different interpretations that are made of religion. In addition, we have to consider that the Islam, as well as the theories derived from the International Relations, has evolved according to the modern reality of today. However, there are some precepts that do commune with the ideals of ISIS.

In the first instance, the Islam is the essence of each country that belongs to the Muslim community, thus, when ISIS proclaimed itself as an Islamic State, it fulfills this premise. It must also be understood that religion is linked to every aspect of a State, which makes the form of government of these countries to be different from those known by the West. As for the essence of the Islamic theories, these can be mainly found in the Quran, Sharia, Sunnah and Hadith. It is precisely here where the paths of ISIS and the Islamic theories find its different positions.

In order to understand the conception of ISIS from the Islamic perspective, we have to start from its interpretation of the sacred books. The interpretation that the caliphate has made is called fundamentalist, for essentially following the first teachings of the Prophet. An important aspect is the fact that many Islamic States manage the Sharia as a fundamental law, and this is contemplated within the mentioned theories. In fact, ISIS follows the teachings of the Sharia; however, it uses the oldest precepts to govern, and here the conception of ISIS as a State cannot yet be affirmed or denied. Now, moving forward with the development of the theories, we found the main schools of Islamic law

whose focus takes the internal situations of the States or caliphates of the times where those were developed.

Within these schools it is not possible to find the conception of ISIS in the international level, since in this time the relationships between countries were not handled like we do now; however, these theories still have application today. It is with these schools that we can conceive ISIS at the Islamic level. Even though the theories came from the time that ISIS pretends to take as an example to set up its caliphate, many of them do not commune with the ideologies raised by them. This happens because despite of the time where those were developed, these schools have a mainly rationalist view, especially the Hanafi, Maliki and Shafi'i schools. Being these theories open, those do not conceive that ISIS can be a State that does not want to pick up the rest of interpretations that are made in the sacred texts. And it is here where the first divergence arises, since the problems within the Islamic theories and ISIS start from this interpretation.

One of the schools of Islamic law conceives ISIS as a possible state project, being this the Hanbali. And it is possible to accept this conception since this school developed in great part the salafism that ISIS makes allusion to, and that in fact is developing a theory with international perspective, which was also analyzed within the investigation. However, as I have expressed, these schools reduce its actions to the Islamic world, and little has been treated as for the management of the International Relations with the countries; so, I can say that its interpretation is kind of limited although it brings a general idea of how ISIS could be conceived.

On the other hand, more theories have been developed with a much more internationalist approach and explain better the presence of ISIS within the International system. For that, three are the approaches that, based on the customs but also in the actual reality, have allowed the development of this analysis, those being the traditionalists, non-traditionalists and the Jihad/Salafi perspective.

First, traditionalists are of a conservative tendency which is obvious to think that they conceive ISIS as a potential State that could defend the Islamic customs against the western attacks. Although some ideologies of ISIS can be accepted, the traditionalists do not take into account the evolution of times and the International panorama where ISIS is acting. ISIS is a new phenomenon, despite that it is based on ancient traditions, so this approach would be limited. Furthermore, it has not properly developed the knowledge about Jihad so, although it accepts its introduction within its study, is not predominant. Therefore, if we consider this meaning, ISIS would be a religious or political State or Umma formed by a large group of faithful and settled in a territory that belongs to Islam. Also, its right to be called as a caliphate is fully recognized.

Second, the non-traditionalists do not agree with ISIS to be a political State due to its practices do not promote the collaboration and openness with other States outside the Muslim spectrum; although it can consider it as a Umma because of the fact that it reunites a religious community. The ideals of ISIS are the main problem with this theory, since for them the Jihad and the connotation that actually has in the hands of ISIS is not correct and harms the links between the West and the Islam. The questioning to this theory would be that maybe there is a very extensive opening and thus the West can influence the Islamic systems and ideologies, so there would be a distortion of everything that has been conceived of that religion.

Finally, the theory that better explains the presence of ISIS in the international panorama is the Jihad/salafism. As evidenced, this is the theory that accompanies any structure raised by ISIS, it can be said that part of its development comes due to the actions of the Islamic State. It means that in this point ISIS is conceived as an Islamic State that could also be called Umma. Although in this frame ISIS would count with all the resources and characteristics of the rest of Islamic States, because it defends the territories of the ancient caliphates and the ancient precepts of the religion, and handles a government system called caliphate. These elements would be enough for ISIS to be conceived as a State. However, we have to consider the fact that this theory is mainly promoted by the advancements of ISIS and Al-Qaeda at that time, so there are not valuable precedents that allow us to confirm the positions of ISIS.

After analyzing all the main Islamic currents of thought, it can be said that within this perspective ISIS can be conceived as a Umma, whose national identity is strongly marked by fundamentalist features of the Islam of the times after the death of the Prophet; however, the problems of interpretation guide to a certain separation between ISIS and some of the approaches, although all of them do not deny that ISIS is a different actor within the international system. Furthermore, an essential part within these theories is the fact that those contemplate the different interpretations that are made of its essential bases, such as the sacred books, so the ideological form in which ISIS was conceived is not ruled out.

Once we have analyzed the final decisions as for the different positions of the West and the Islam, it is necessary to sketch out some final conclusions. The objective of this investigative work, besides of concluding which is the conception of ISIS, is to contemplate the possibility of including the study of the discipline of International Relations, from a new perspective being this the Islam. The importance of having different perspectives that allow us to analyze in a better way the events that occur around the world is high and vital for a better understanding. The discipline of International Relations has been constantly guided by a quite marked eurocentrism, that did not allow other perspectives, like the Islamic, to analyze precise cases as the one of ISIS. For that, it is interesting,

besides of concluding the case of study, to know how to value the Islamic theories as a variable of analysis.

During a long time, the western theories have been the focus of attention at the time of analyzing the historical events that have taken place around the world. World wars, ideological conflicts, negotiations and conflicts between countries, etc. have been given by the West and thus analyzed from the western perspective. Even though that within these conflicts the non-western countries have participated, the perspective that we tend to study is the western, marginalizing other visions. Surely, we cannot deny the fact that the diversity of knowledge that the western theories, such as realism, liberalism, constructivism, etc. is wide and considers several factors. In fact, the great international organisms manage themselves under these perspectives, having to be followed by all the member countries of the different organizations.

It is irrefutable the fact that for some time the western theories will remain to be the main weapon of study for all of us who study the International Relations. In fact, these theories evolve with the time and fit into every situation that is analyzed, no matter the theory chosen for the effect. But we also have to consider that these theories are born in developed countries, or “first world” countries as called, existing the case of some smaller western countries with other realities and new contributions, within which we can cite the case of Ecuador.

On the other hand, I have considered important to analyze other types of perspectives within the discipline of International Relations, these being the generated by the Islam. I have not only considered convenient the introduction of these perspectives for the exclusive analysis of the case of ISIS, but also to deconstruct the concepts established by the western perspectives in order to have a new vision. It is not about leaving aside all we learned from the West, what is sought is that the various issues can be jointly analyzed with other points of view. Not only Islamic and Western theories exist, there are also great contributions from the indigenous communities, the African theories or the oriental theories. All these theories are influent to conceive a much more fruitful analysis of the international system.

The Islamic theories represent a fundamental part of the International Relations discipline for two reasons. The first of them is because the Muslim religion is the second most important in the world; and second because now in the international system, the Muslim countries and other groups like ISIS are having importance in the issues between States. As It has been analyzed, in some aspects it does not coincide with the West, but presents important contributions that start from the individual and its conception of the world to how Islam sees the international scene from another perspective very rich in knowledge.

The different schools and Islamic approaches allow us to elucidate that it is possible to announce an analysis based on Islam and its different interpretations. However, being these theories guided by a religious basis, is important to know well the most relevant backgrounds of the religion to avoid emitting anticipate judgements. By using the ISIS case of study, we could observe that some meanings coming from the West were taken for granted; and when matching them with the Islamic theories, it was possible to see another reality, one more comprehensive towards ISIS, but not completely defender of it.

It is worth emphasizing that the case of study is an atypical phenomenon within the International Relations. This because ISIS is not an officially recognized State, neither can be considered as a terrorist group. So, the implicated theories in this analysis do not have any analyzed background that is equal to the case of ISIS. Thus, the West partially considers that ISIS is not a State, and rather that it is a terrorist or rebel group; all this based on the violent events that the caliphate has manifested. However, it can be concluded that from a part of the West there is a failure in the international law, since some of the concepts like the ones contemplated in the Montevideo Convention, leave a space for other interpretations, so within these failures we can conceive ISIS in a certain way as a state project.

On the other hand, the challenge of the Islamic theories as for the case of ISIS was of interpretation. Despite these theories are much more condensed than the western ones, its religious interpretation varies. The interpretative variant of ISIS is fundamentalist and many precepts of the theories are more open, although it does not discard the antique and conservative foundation. Nonetheless, I arrived to the conclusion that ISIS is a Umma and that it can be considered as an Islamic State, having as a unique failure the little ideological openness of the group. We cannot deny ISIS the validity of its interpretations, because they are fully justified by holy books and traditions, but in modern times like the ones we experience now, its actions do not match with the ones of the International system and the own Islamic system.

Although there is not a unified opinion about the conception of ISIS under both theories, we cannot deny that ISIS has a significant position within the international community. Beyond the attacks, or the takings of territory, the intern organization of ISIS deserves a special recognition. There is no doubt that they maintain a well-organized structure, their government is stable, the economy and their trade system allowed them to survive very well during all these years as a caliphate. In addition, the projected image of a nation united by a religious and political objective has kept it stable in its struggle to be influential in the international system. Without a doubt, there is still pending to know how the situation of ISIS evolves, its confrontations with the West, and if it finally will become a participant of the dynamic of the international system and the International Relations.

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